

LETTERS OF WELCOME

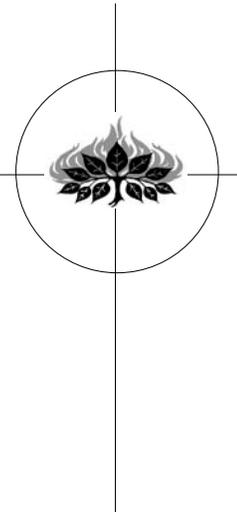
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EVENTS

First-Time Commissioner Orientation Breakfast
Presbyterian College Lunch
Knox College and Knox-Ewart Graduates Association Reception
E.H. Johnson Reception
Pension and Benefits invitation to dine

The Presbyterian Church in Canada L'Église presbytérienne au Canada



MODERATOR OF THE 141ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
The Rev. Karen R. Horst, B.A., M.R.E., M.Div.

May 2016

Dear Participant of the 2016 General Assembly:

Greetings as you prepare to attend the 2016 General Assembly in Toronto, Ontario in a few weeks.

The Presbytery of East Toronto will be welcoming us to York University. The committee members have been preparing for times of worship and expressions of hospitality.

Here is the Book of Reports that contains general information and the reports required for the Assembly. Some of you are receiving it in electronic form from the website while others are getting it as printed material. The pdf version contains bookmarks for easy navigation and can be found at www.presbyterian.ca/ga2016. The Book of Reports is divided into two sections:

General Information Concerning the Assembly

This section consists of information about things you will need for your preparation for the Assembly including: agenda and daily schedules, terms of references for the committees, practices of the Assembly, and specific information for this year.

Reports to the General Assembly

The list of reports and their page numbers are listed on the insert with the tab marked "REPORTS". This next section contains the reports of the committees of the General Assembly that have been submitted in time for this printing. You will receive some other reports in a supplementary package at the time of registration at York University. A complete version of the ebook with the revisions will be posted on the website just prior to the Assembly.

Presbyteries are to make arrangements for commissioners to be oriented to their roles as commissioners so please contact your presbytery clerk for further information on orientation.

Please check the General Assembly's website (www.presbyterian.ca/ga2016) for updates and last minute changes.

If you have any questions about the Assembly, please contact us at 416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301 or by e-mail.

On behalf of the Assembly Office staff, we look forward to seeing you at the beginning of June.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Kendall
Principal Clerk
skendall@presbyterian.ca

Terrie-Lee Hamilton
Senior Administrator
thamilton@presbyterian.ca

Clerks of Assembly: The Rev. Stephen Kendall, The Rev. Donald Muir, The Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp

stewards of the mysteries of God

1 Corinthians 4:1

April 29, 2016

Dear Commissioners and participants,

On behalf of the Presbytery of East Toronto, it is our pleasure to welcome you to our city to attend the 142nd General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We hope and pray that you will enjoy your time here in June.

Geographically, the Presbytery of East Toronto is a small presbytery. It stretches from Lake Ontario in the south to Steeles Ave in the north, and from Bathurst St in the west to Victoria Park Ave in the east. These boundaries form a rough rectangle that is about 18 km long and 10 km wide. The presbytery is made up of 19 pastoral charges, comprising 21 congregations. Our congregations range from 400 members to less than 40 members. The presbytery also has oversight, to a greater or lesser degree, over 5 missions that minister wholly or partially within its bounds: ARISE (Advocacy and Reclaiming Individuals involved in the Sex-trade through Empowerment), Boarding Homes Ministries, ECUT (The Ecumenical Chaplaincy at the University of Toronto), Evangel Hall, and Portland Place. In addition, both the denominational offices of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and Knox College are within the Presbytery's boundaries, and we are privileged to have both faculty from Knox and denominational staff on our constituent roll.

One institution that is not within the boundaries of the Presbytery is the Keele Campus of York University, where all of the Assembly's sederunts and other gatherings will be held. York is a beautiful facility, and its closeness to Pearson Airport, major highways and public transportation routes should make it a convenient location for you to get to, regardless of how or how far you are travelling.

When you arrive on campus, and throughout the Assembly weekend, look for the Local Arrangements Committee volunteers. They will be identifiable by their distinctive t-shirts, and will be happy to help you with any questions you may have.

Blessings to you as you prepare to do the work of the General Assembly!

Sharon Maharaj and Alex Bisset,
Co-Conveners,
Local Arrangements Committee
Presbytery of East Toronto



stewards of the mysteries of God

1 Corinthians 4:1

An invitation into the mystery: worship at General Assembly

Dear stewards of the mysteries of God,

In 1 Corinthians 4:1, Paul writes, “Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.” Being called stewards of the mysteries of God lends a different perspective to our vocation as followers of Christ. Throughout our work at Assembly this year, we will devote time for worship twice each day. These times of worship will help us to consider what it might mean to be a steward of God’s mysteries. We will explore this theme through scripture and reflection, sacrament and music, words and images.

God’s ways are not our ways and God’s thoughts are not our thoughts. Faith hinges on encountering mystery. God is not to be tamed or domesticated. God is not always predictable. We are not God. God is not us. According to the biblical witness, when humans encounter God, we are confounded and astounded at the same time (Moses, Isaiah, Job). In the vastness of God, we recognize our place. Encountering the mystery is the root of both adoration and confession. We do not fully know, but we are fully known.

Answering the call to be a steward of the mysteries of God requires us to become comfortable with not knowing, to have the courage to take up permanent residence in uncertainty and to grow familiar with strangeness.

In pondering the mysteries, there is wonder. It is intellectual wonder and spiritual wonder. But instead of getting lost in the mysteries, pondering also allows us discover certain foundations or signposts or stopping places. What do we know of God and God’s character through God’s own revelation? Those revelations give us places to stand, or points of entry, into the mystery of God. In Christ, we catch a glimpse of the fullness of God. In the sacraments, we are given the gift of a visible expression of an invisible grace. The call to be a steward of God’s mysteries respects and embraces the not knowing, while honouring and building on what we do know about God – as revealed through Jesus Christ and the scriptures that lead us to the Living Word, through the Holy Spirit at work within and among us and through the created order.

The truth of God’s mysteries is, ultimately, a freeing truth. We do not know everything. We cannot. We are finite and God is infinite. We are conditioned and God is unconditional. This freedom makes room for wonder and for joy.

We hope that throughout the important work of the Assembly, our work of discernment and our worship will merge together reminding us of God’s permeating grace. Come and join us as we seek to honour the call to be stewards of God’s mysteries, even as we are recipients of God’s unfathomable love.



**DAILY SCHEDULE
FOR THE
2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

NOTE: All events will be at York University, Toronto, Ontario.

Thursday, June 2, 2016

1:00 pm	-	9:00 pm	Registration	Lounge, Pond Road Residence
5:30 pm	-	7:00 pm	Dinner	Stong Cafeteria

Friday, June 3, 2016

6:45 am	-	8:30 am	Breakfast	Stong Cafeteria
9:00 am	-	12:30 pm	Registration	Lounge, Pond Road Residence
11:30 pm	-	1:00 pm	Lunch	Stong Cafeteria
1:00 pm	-	4:30 pm	Worship and 1st Sederunt	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre
5:30 pm	-	6:45 pm	Dinner	Stong Cafeteria
7:30 pm	-	9:00 pm	Worship with Celebration of Communion	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre

Saturday, June 4, 2016

6:45 am	-	8:30 am	Breakfast	Stong Cafeteria
7:00 am	-	8:30 am	First-time Commissioners Breakfast	Olga Cirack Room, Stong
8:30 am	-	12:00 am	2nd Sederunt and Worship	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre
12:00 pm	-	1:30 pm	Lunch	Stong Cafeteria
2:00 pm	-	5:00 pm	3rd Sederunt	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre
5:30 pm	-	7:00 pm	Dinner	Stong Cafeteria
7:00 pm	-	8:30 pm	4th Sederunt and Worship	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre

Sunday, June 5, 2016

7:00 am	-	8:30 am	Breakfast	Stong Cafeteria
9:00 am	-	12:00 pm	Worship and 5th Sederunt	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre
12:00 pm	-	1:30 pm	Lunch	Stong Cafeteria
2:00 pm	-	4:00 pm	6th Sederunt	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre
4:30 pm	-	7:00 pm	Reception and Dinner	Stong Cafeteria
7:00 pm	-	8:30 pm	7th Sederunt and Worship	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre

Monday, June 6, 2015

6:45 am	-	8:30 am	Breakfast	Stong Cafeteria
8:30 am	-	12:00 pm	Worship and 8th Sederunt	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre
11:30 pm	-	1:00 pm	Lunch (boxed lunches)	Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre

ROLL OF ASSEMBLY

Ministers	Elders
I. SYNOD OF THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES	
1. Presbytery of Cape Breton (Nova Scotia) Andrew S. MacDonald, Whycomagh Peter D. MacDonald, Big Bras d'Or	Charles D. Greaves, Albert Bridge Deborah C. MacLean, Ross Ferry
2. Presbytery of Newfoundland (Newfoundland and Labrador) Ian S. Wishart, St. John's	Kathleen McKay, St. John's
3. Presbytery of Pictou (Nova Scotia) Charles E. McPherson, Stellarton Lara Scholey, Scotsburn	Diane R. Hayman, Westville Cliff Wood, Pictou
4. Presbytery of Halifax-Lunenburg (Nova Scotia) Michael W.A. Henderson, Upper Musquodoboit Michael A. Koslowski, Halifax	Linda D. MacKinnon, Eastern Passage Cynthia J. Shea, Lantz
5. Presbytery of New Brunswick (New Brunswick) Douglas E. Blaikie, Fredericton Jeffrey M. Murray, Sackville Alexander D. Sutherland, Beersville	Mona H.A. Harris, Athoville Jessie A.M. Kelly, East Branch Stephen A. MacKay, Fredericton
6. Presbytery of Prince Edward Island (Prince Edward Island) Bradford E. Blaikie, Summerside Michael J. Hamilton, Summerside Douglas H. Rollwage, Charlottetown	John I.F. Barrett, Charlottetown R. Elmer MacDonald, Borden-Carleton Malcolm M. MacPherson, Montague
II. SYNOD OF QUEBEC & EASTERN ONTARIO	
7. Presbytery of Quebec (Quebec) Barbara J. Fotheringham, Thetford Mines	
8. Presbytery of Montreal (Quebec) Joel Coppieters, Cote St-Luc Roland J. De Vries, Montreal Douglas F. Robinson, Lachute Paul P.H. Wu, Montreal	Stewart G. Blott, Montreal David Christiani, Brossard Mark Farrell, Pincourt Guirguis W. Guirguis, Pierrefonds
9. Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry (Ontario) Samer Kandalaf, Kemptville Ian C. MacMillan, Williamstown	Kenneth P. Boulton, Cornwall Ruth M. Pollock, Crysler
10. Presbytery of Ottawa (Ontario) Denise P. Allen-Macartney, Ottawa William J. Ball, Ottawa Lazlo M. Peter, Ottawa	Mary E. (Lyn) Hughes, Montreal, QC Ann R. Hysert, Merrickville Sharon E. Stewart, Gatineau, QC
11. Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew (Ontario) Barry Carr, Almonte Sean (Seong-Ik) Kim, Perth	Gregory A. Bulloch, McDonalds Corners Douglas Powell, Arnprior

III. SYNOD OF CENTRAL, NORTHEASTERN ONTARIO & BERMUDA

- 12. Presbytery of Kingston (Ontario)**
Andrew J.R. Johnston, Kingston
Luke Vanderkamp, Trenton
Maureen Cooper, Belleville
Shirley I. Zehr, Odessa
- 13. Presbytery of Lindsay-Peterborough (Ontario)**
Jonathan G.W. Baird, Peterborough
Linda Park, Lindsay
Fred A. Stewart, Brechin
Douglas G. Archbell, Peterborough
Torrey Griffiths, Lindsay
Susan Wallace, Lindsay
- 14. Presbytery of Pickering (Ontario)**
Harry J. Bradley, Toronto
Kathryn Firth, Oshawa
Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal, Ajax
Jonathan W. Tait, Whitby
Alexander C. Wilson, Toronto
Agnes Browne, Toronto
Bruce A. Compton, Pickering
Margo A. Mackay, Toronto
Robert J. Shaw, Brooklin
Elizabeth E. Stark, Toronto
- 15. Presbytery of East Toronto (Ontario)**
J. Wesley Denyer, Toronto
Nita E. DeVenne, Toronto
Deborah M.K. Rapport, Toronto
Philip F. Reinders, Toronto
Ian A. Ross-McDonald, Toronto
Jean C. Bratrud, Toronto
Raymond Chin, Toronto
Alexandra Johnston, Toronto
Noel A. Ramsey, Toronto
Margaret E. Rockingham, Toronto
- 16. Presbytery of West Toronto (Ontario)**
Giovanna Cieli, Toronto
Jin Hyuk (Thomas) Kim, Toronto
Lance T. Odland, Toronto
John-Peter C. Smit, Toronto
Zoltan Vass, Toronto
Fred Apraku, Toronto
Janet Brewer, Toronto
Susan B. Chopp, Etobicoke
Ted Little, Toronto
Patricia Ramkhelawan, Woodbridge
- 17. Presbytery of Brampton (Ontario)**
Jacquelyn Foxall, Oakville
Gale C. Macdonald, Mississauga
Stuart Macdonald, Toronto
Kristine E. O'Brien, Oakville
Geoffrey M. Ross, Brampton
Sherif Bakhoun, Mississauga
David J. Birrell, Brampton
Jeremiah T. Halliday, Mississauga
Beatrice A. Henderson, Picton
Debora A. Jones-Snyders, Oakville
- 18. Presbytery of Oak Ridges (Ontario)**
Laura J. Duggan, Newmarket
Duncan J. Jeffrey, Richmond Hill
Jeffrey F. Loach, Nobleton
Peter T. Ma, Markham
Mary Asselstine, Schomberg
John A. Gilchrist, Bolton
James M. Martin, Coldwater
Neil Murray, Toronto
- 19. Presbytery of Barrie (Ontario)**
H. Douglas L. Crocker, Stroud
Karen R. Horst, Orillia
Timothy Raeburn-Gibson, Collingwood
Peter Rombeek, Orillia
Myrna A. Adamson, Thornton
E. Jan S. Kaye, Milford
Donald W. Stewart, Collingwood
- 20. Presbytery of Temiskaming (Ontario)**
Hansel Chen, Englehart
Daniel B. Hartford, Englehart
- 21. Presbytery of Algoma & North Bay (Ontario)**
Leslie H. Drayer, North Bay
Emily C. Webb, Sundridge

- 22. Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington (Ontario)**
Chris Ji Hoon Cho, Waterloo
Mark B. Gaskin, Cambridge
Kathleen D. Morden, Harriston
John J. Paeng, Cambridge
David J. Whitecross, Fergus
Candace I. Dunn-Delane, Cambridge
Joan Knox, Guelph
Janet E. MacDowell, Kitchener
David P. Ogram, Waterloo
Tom Vanderstelt, Kitchener
- 23. Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca**
Sung Hoon Jang, Toronto
Jinsook Khang, Concord
Kyung Seuk Min, King City
Eun Sung Moon, Toronto
Won Chul Lee, Toronto
Young Jin Lee, Toronto
- IV. SYNOD OF SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO**
- 24. Presbytery of Hamilton (Ontario)**
Victoria E. Eldridge, Dundas
Garfield G. Havemann, Hamilton
Stephen F. Jenvey, Dundas
J. George Robertson, Waterdown
Richard B. Warne, Jarvis
Gordon J. Fielding, Burlington
Anne Forsyth, Hamilton
Lukas Mills, Burlington
Robert J. Salmon, Binbrook
Christine P. Stevenson, Hamilton
- 25. Presbytery of Niagara (Ontario)**
Adam A. Bartha, Port Colborne
Wally W. Hong, Niagara Falls
Douglas U. Schonberg, Niagara Falls
William J. Baker, Lowbanks
Doris Eaglesham, St. Catharines
Gail L. Opie, St. Davids
- 26. Presbytery of Paris (Ontario)**
Dean Adlam, Brantford
J. Stanley Cox, Waterford
Carol I. MacLachlan, Innerkip
Patricia A. White, Brantford
- 27. Presbytery of London (Ontario)**
Charlotte L. Brown, Glencoe
Keith A. McKee, London
Heather H. Paton, Dorchester
Esther-Mary (Em) Cameron, London
Bruce E. Curtis, London
Steven T. O'Neil, London
- 28. Presbytery of Essex-Kent (Ontario)**
Andrew M. Cornell, Dresden
John A. Giurin, Chatham
Dan L. Lenover, Morpeth
Ian H. Panton, Kingsville
- 29. Presbytery of Lambton-West Middlesex (Ontario)**
Lloyd A. Murdock, Sarnia
Shirley F. Murdock, Sarnia
Harvey W. Osborne, Petrolia
B. Jean Clark, Sarnia
Mabel E. Horsburgh, Point Edward
- 30. Presbytery of Huron-Perth (Ontario)**
Gwen M. Ament, St. Marys
Catherine Calkin, St. Pauls
William W.T. Vanderstelt, Goderich
Elaine T. Armstrong, Ethel
Mary E. Gascho, Stratford
Bessie T. Hounsell, St. Marys
- 31. Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland (Ontario)**
Dana H. Benson, Owen Sound
Katherine A. Fraser, Kincardine
F. James Johnson, Durham
Grant S. Dexter, Holland Centre
Jan Middelkopp, Tara
- V. SYNOD OF MANITOBA & NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO**
- 32. Presbytery of Superior (Ontario)**
Susan S. Mattinson, Thunder Bay
Kathleen Noy, Kakabeka Falls

33. **Presbytery of Winnipeg** (Manitoba)
Saehoon Lee, Winnipeg
Robert J. Murray, Pinawa
Sheila M. Anderson, Winnipeg
Laurine J. Shone, Selkirk
34. **Presbytery of Brandon** (Manitoba)
Jeanie S. Lee, Neepawa
Herbert O. Burrige, Rapid City
- VI. SYNOD OF SASKATCHEWAN**
35. **Presbytery of Assiniboia** (Saskatchewan)
Jay Song, Weyburn
KiHoon (Ryan) Ryu, Swift Current
36. **Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan** (Saskatchewan)
Charles Kahumbu, Prince Albert
Fred J. Grant, Glenbush
- VII. SYNOD OF ALBERTA & THE NORTHWEST**
37. **Presbytery of Peace River** (Alberta and British Columbia)
George S. Malcolm, Grande Prairie
Lorna D. Price, Dawson Creek
38. **Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland** (Alberta)
O. Heinrich Grosskopf, Edmonton
Kenneth W. MacRae, St. Albert
Randy Osgood, Edmonton
David E. Rodgers, Sturgeon County
39. **Presbytery of Central Alberta** (Alberta)
Joo An (Joanne) Lee, Innisfail
Ralph E. Richards, Red Deer
40. **Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod** (Alberta)
Nancy L. Cocks, Medicine Hat
Peter D. Coutts, Calgary
Grant T. Gunnink, Calgary
M. Dianne Ollerenshaw, Calgary
Terry G. Hagen, Calgary
Marlene V. LaMontagne, Calgary
Toomas Paasuke, Canmore
Craig Robertson, Calgary
- VIII. SYNOD OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**
41. **Presbytery of Kootenay** (British Columbia)
Meridyth A. Robertson, Trail
Hans D. Wollenberg, Slocan
42. **Presbytery of Kamloops** (British Columbia)
Shannon K. Bell-Wyominga, Nazko
Anna-Marie Carstens, Kitimat
43. **Presbytery of Westminster** (British Columbia)
Martin Baxter, North Vancouver
Steven A. Filyk, Vancouver
Glenn E. Inglis, Sechelt
Geoffrey B. Jay, Surrey
Willem H. van de Wall, Chilliwack
Ruth Y. Chueh, Vancouver
Isabel M. Evans, Richmond
Raymond A. Jansen, Surrey
Augustin E. Ovono, Vancouver
Gregory E. Toll, Maple Ridge
44. **Presbytery of Vancouver Island** (British Columbia)
Irwin B. Cunningham, Saanichton
Gordon A. Kouwenberg, Sooke
Margaret R. Clow, Qualicum Beach
Bob H. Munnik, Nanaimo
45. **Presbytery of Western Han-Ca**
Alfred H.S. Lee, Pitt Meadows
Cheol Soon Park, Vancouver
Hyo Jin Park, Surrey
Munhyun Ryu, North Vancouver
Joon Choe, Surrey
Eric E. Choi, Edmonton

YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVES

Presbytery

	<u>Young Adult Representative</u>
1. Cape Breton	Sarah-Kate MacKinnon, Sydney
3. Pictou	Blake K. MacDonald, Merigomish
5. New Brunswick	John C. Stam, Notre Dame
6. Prince Edward Island	Angela D.M. Richard, Summerside
8. Montreal	Raymond Diamonds, Montreal
10. Ottawa	Claire I. Mahaffy, Ottawa
13. Lindsay-Peterborough	Caleb Kim, Fenelon Falls
16. West Toronto	Mfonobong E. Udoh-Orok, Brampton
21. Algoma & North Bay	Sarah F. Savill, North Bay
26. Paris	Dayna A. Opersko, Kitchener
28. Essex-Kent	Nathan Sharpe, Windsor
30. Huron-Perth	Amy L. Zavitz, Listowel
32. Superior	Cheong Lo Lee, Thunder Bay
35. Assiniboia	Rachel K. Kotei, Regina
37. Peace River	Spencer E. Wiseman, Grande Prairie
39. Central Alberta	Noah A.F. Law, Eckville
41. Kootenay	Megan R.R. Robertson, Trail
43. Westminster	Alexa M. Davis, Abbotsford

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

1. Knox College	Lisa I.J. Dolson
2. Presbyterian College	Katie S. MacIntosh, Montreal
3. Vancouver School of Theology	Shelley M. Chandler, New Westminster

**142ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PROVISIONAL AGENDA FRIDAY THROUGH MONDAY**

FIRST SEDERUNT

Friday afternoon, June 3, 2016

1:00 pm

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Worship
2. Constitute the Assembly
3. Roll of Assembly (p. B-1)
4. List of Young Adult and Student Representatives (p. B-5)
5. Election and Installation of Moderator
6. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
7. Committee to Advise with the Moderator (p. 1.1.1)
8. Commissioner Orientation
9. Briefing Panel – 1
 - Assembly Council (2.1.1)
 - Clerks of Assembly (7.1.1)
 - Pension and Benefits Board (16.1.1)
10. Education and Reception Committee
11. Committee to Nominate Standing Committees (p. 14.1.1)
12. Assembly Council (p. 2.1.1)
13. Life and Mission Agency Committee (p. 12.1.1)
14. Briefing Panel – 2
 - Life and Mission Agency Committee:
 - Program Support and Administration (12.1.1)
 - Canadian Ministries (12.1.5)
 - Communications (12.1.18)
 - Stewardship and Planned Giving (12.1.77)
15. Presentation of Records of the 2015 General Assembly, the Synods and the Assembly Council
16. Announcements
17. Adjournment at approximately 4:30 pm

WORSHIP WITH THE CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Friday evening, June 3, 2016

7:30 pm

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

SECOND SEDERUNT

Saturday morning, June 4, 2016

8:30 am

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Constitute the Assembly
2. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
3. Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw
4. Committee on Bills and Overtures (p. 4.1.1)
5. Clerks of Assembly (p. 7.1.1)
6. Briefing Panel – 3
 - Committee on Church Doctrine (6.1.1)
 - Committee on History (10.1.1)
 - Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee (9.1.1)
 - Life and Mission Agency Committee:
 - Justice Ministries (12.1.27)
7. Reports without Recommendations (presented for information):
 - Atlantic Mission Society (p. 3.1.1)
 - Commission re Matter Left and Uncared For (7.1.13)

- Life and Mission Agency Committee
 - Canadian Ministries (p. 12.1.5)
 - Communications (p. 12.1.18)
 - Maclean Estate Committee (13.1.1)
 - Nominations (15.1.1)
 - Presbyterian Church Building Corporation (17.1.1)
 - Theological Colleges:
 - St. Andrew's Hall Board (24.1.1)
 - Vancouver School of Theology (25.1.1)
 - Trustee Board (26.1.1)
 - Women's Missionary Society (27.1.1)
 - Special Commission re Appeal No, 1, 2015 (20.1.1)
 - Special Committee re Pension Fund Solvency Funding (21.1.1)
8. Briefing Panel – 4
- International Affairs Committee (11.1.1)
 - Life and Mission Agency Committee
 - International Ministries (12.1.20)
 - Ministry and Church Vocations (12.1.40)
 - PWS&D (12.1.51)
9. Announcements
10. Adjournment at approximately 11:30 am
11. Worship

THIRD SEDERUNT

Saturday afternoon, June 4, 2016

2:00 pm

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Constitute the Assembly
2. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
3. Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw
4. E.H. Johnson Award Recipient
5. History Committee (p. 10.1.1)
6. Assembly Council (p. 2.1.1)
7. Life and Mission Agency Committee (p. 12.1.1)
8. Ecumenical/Interfaith/International Guest (p. 9.1.1)
9. Presbyterian Church Building Corporation (p. 17.1.1)
10. Presbyterian Record Inc. (p. 18.1.1)
11. Atlantic Mission Society (p. 1.1.1)
12. Moderator of 2015 General Assembly
13. Presentation of Minutes
14. Announcements
15. Adjournment at approximately 5:00 pm

FOURTH SEDERUNT

Saturday evening, June 4, 2016

7:00 pm

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Constitute the Assembly
2. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
3. Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw
4. Theological Colleges
 - The Presbyterian College (p. 22.1.1)
 - Knox College (p. 23.1.1)
 - St. Andrew's Hall (p. 24.1.1)
 - Vancouver School of Theology (p. 25.1.1)
5. International Affairs Committee (p. 11.1.1)
6. Maclean Estate Committee (p.13.1.1)
7. Moderator nominates Special Committees
8. Presentation of Minutes

9. Announcements
10. Adjournment at approximately 8:30 pm
11. Worship

FIFTH SEDERUNT

Sunday morning, June 5, 2016

9:00 am

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Worship at 9:00 am
2. Constitute the Assembly
3. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
4. Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw
5. Committee on Bills and Overtures (p. 4.1.1)
6. Church Doctrine Committee (p. 6.1.1)
7. Pension and Benefits Board (p. 16.1.1)
8. Committee on Terms of Reference
9. Presentation of Minutes
10. Announcements
11. Adjournment at approximately 12 noon

SIXTH SEDERUNT

Sunday afternoon, June 5, 2016

2:00 pm

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Constitute the Assembly
2. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
3. Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw
4. Life and Mission Agency Committee (12.1.1)
5. Ecumenical/Interfaith/International Guest (p. 9.1.1)
6. Education and Reception Committee
7. Assembly Council (p. 2.1.1)
8. Committee to Nominate Standing Committees (p. 14.1.1)
9. Pension and Benefits Board (p. 16.1.1)
10. Special Committee re Pension Plan Solvency Funding (p. 21.1.1)
11. Special Committees of 2016 General Assembly
12. Committee on Terms of Reference
13. Trustee Board (p. 26.1.1)
14. Moderator nominates Special Committees
15. Presentation of Minutes
16. Announcements
17. Adjournment at approximately 4:00 pm

SEVENTH SEDERUNT

Sunday evening, June 5, 2016

7:00 pm

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Constitute the Assembly
2. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
3. Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw
4. Ecumenical/Interfaith/International Guest (p. 9.1.1)
5. Clerks of Assembly (p. 7.1.1)
6. Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee (p. 8.1.1)
7. International Affairs Committee (p. 11.1.1)
8. Special Committees of 2016 General Assembly
9. Presentation of Minutes
10. Announcements
11. Adjournment at approximately 8:30 pm
12. Worship

EIGHTH SEDERUNT

Monday morning, June 6, 2016

8:30 am

Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University, Toronto

1. Worship at 8:30 am
2. Constitute the Assembly
3. Committee on Business (p. 5.1.1)
4. Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw
5. Assembly Council (p. 2.1.1)
6. Women's Missionary Society (p. 27.1.1)
7. Church Doctrine Committee (p. 6.1.1)
8. Life and Mission Agency Committee (p. 12.1.1)
9. Remits (p. 19.1.1)
10. Examine Records
11. Moderator nominates Special Committees
12. Special Committees of 2016 General Assembly
13. Student Representatives
14. Young Adult Representatives
15. Courtesies and Loyal Addresses
16. Commission re Matters Left Uncared for
17. Adoption of Minutes
18. Completion of Business
19. Announcements
20. Adjournment at approximately 12 noon
21. Worship

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FOR THE 2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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PRE-ASSEMBLY INFORMATION

VENUE FOR ASSEMBLY

The 2016 General Assembly begins at 1:00 pm on Friday June 3, 2016, in the Gym of the Tait McKenzie Centre of York University in Toronto, Ontario with Worship and the First Sederunt. The election and installation of the Moderator of the 142nd General Assembly will be during this sederunt.

On Friday evening Worship including the celebration of Communion will be at 7:30 pm in the Gym of the Tait McKenzie Centre. The service will be led by the Presbytery of East Toronto and the Rev. Karen Horst, Moderator of the 141st General Assembly will preach.

Accommodation will be in the university residence, Pond Road Residence. Meals at the university will be in the Stong Cafeteria.

The Presbytery of East Toronto is the host for this General Assembly.

TO ASSEMBLY

Information for those arriving by plane

Every effort will be made to transport those participants arriving by plane at Pearson International Airport in Toronto to York University on Thursday June 2 or Friday June 3 provided:

- your air ticket was arranged by the Assembly Office, or
- you have given your travel particulars to the Assembly Office prior to May 16.

Some people will have made *other* arrangements for local transportation. Advise the Assembly Office if you do not require it to arrange ground transportation before May 16.

You are responsible for finding and paying for your transportation to the university if you purchased your own air or bus or train ticket and failed to inform the Assembly Office prior to May 16 of your travel particulars.

Pearson International Airport

Those who are arriving at Toronto Pearson International Airport will be transported by the ground transportation company, Red Car:

At Terminal 1, Red Car desk is located one floor below the Arrivals Level. Once you have collected your luggage exit the restricted area into the public concourse. Turn right and follow the signs for Ground Level or Ground Transportation/Out of Town Van Services (not Taxis and Limos). Do not go outside; the desk is inside the terminal. Go downstairs to Ground Level. If you use the elevator, walk straight out of the elevator and then turn left. The desk is on your left. If you use the escalator, the desk is located at the bottom of it.

At Terminal 3, Red Car desk is located on the Arrivals Level, between exit doors C and D. Do not go outside; the desk is inside the terminal. Turn right when you exit baggage claim and proceed to Out of Town Ground Transportation located just past the C exit doors on your left. If you cannot find the Out of Town Ground Transportation Desk please call 416-776-9550 (local call) and speak to the representative. When you arrive at the Out of Town Ground Transportation Desk, make sure you check in with the agent for Red Car. The agent will record your arrival and alert your driver when it's time to pull up to the curb.

Billy Bishop Airport

Those who are arriving at Billy Bishop Airport, Toronto will have to arrange their own transportation to the Downsview subway station where you will be met by a local arrangements volunteer, providing you have informed the Assembly Office by May 16th of your travel plans and approximate arrival time at the Downsview subway station. Porter Airlines offers shuttles to the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. From there, go to the TTC system and take the subway north (Line No. 1 (Yonge-University) to the Downsview station.

Information for those arriving by bus or train

Take the TTC subway south (Line No. 1 (Yonge-University)) to the Downsview station.

A representative from the Local Arrangements Committee will meet you at the Downsview subway station in Toronto, provided you have notified the Assembly Office by May 16th of your travel plans and approximate arrival time at the Downsview subway station.

Contact numbers for last minute changes

If last minute circumstances necessitate a change in your travel plans, contact Frances Hogg:

Prior to Wednesday June 1 at 4:00 pm:	416-441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301 or fhogg@presbyterian.ca
Thursday June 2 to June 6:	905-324-2199 or 905-324-7599

If having difficulties on arrival at the airport or bus or train station, phone

Thursday:	416-275-0393
Friday:	416-837-0245

If having problems reaching the Assembly Office, you may try the front desk phone number at Pond Residence:

- 416-736-2100 ext. 33506 (Pond Residence front desk, open between 8:30 am and 10:00 pm)

By Car to Pond Road Residence, York UniversityFrom Highway 401

Take Hwy. 401 to Keele Street. Exit at Keele Street and go north (follow the posted detour signs). Follow Keele Street north of Finch Avenue (the campus is on your left). Turn left at The Pond Road. Go to Atkinson Road and turn right. You may park here for a short time while registering at the Pond Road Residence. Directions to the residence and commuter parking lots will be given at registration.

From Highway 407

Take Hwy. 407 to Keele Street. Exit at Keele Street and go south. Follow Keele Street south of Steeles Avenue (the campus is on your right). Turn onto the campus at The Pond Road. Go to Atkinson Road and turn right. You may park here for a short time while registering at the Pond Road Residence. Directions to the residence and/or commuter parking lots will be given at registration.

From Highway 400

Take Hwy. 400 to Hwy. 7. Exit onto Hwy. 7 and go east. Follow Hwy. 7 to Keele Street. At Keele Street go south (the campus is on your right). Turn right on The Pond Road and go to Atkinson Road and turn left. You may park here for a short time while registering at the Pond Road Residence. Directions to the residence and/or commuter parking lots will be given at the registration.

IMPORTANT: Due to the subway extension project, some of the main arteries into York are under construction. Consider exiting on Jane Street and go Jane to Shoreham Drive to enter the campus. Turn right on The Pond Road go to Atkinson Road and turn left. You may park here for a short time while registering at the Pond Road Residence. Directions to the residence and/or commuter parking lots will be given at the registration.

REGISTRATION

Registration on Thursday afternoon and evening and Friday morning will be in the Main Floor Lounge of the Pond Road Residence.

Registration Hours

The registration area will be open:

Thursday	1:00 pm to 9:00 pm (Pond Residence)
Friday	9:00 am to 1:00 pm (Pond Residence)
Friday	1:00 pm to 5:00 pm – Assembly Office in the Lounge of the Tait McKenzie Centre

Arriving outside Registration Hours

Anyone arriving outside the registration hours must make arrangements with Terrie-Lee Hamilton (thamilton@presbyterian.ca) prior to May 16. She will inform such persons about accommodation arrangements so that they can collect a key to their room.

Items at Registration

When you register you will be given a number of items, among which you will find:

- **Supplementary reports** are new reports or revised pages for the Book of Reports. Those who are using the electronic pdf version will be able to download the full final Book of Reports with all of the revisions.
- **Voting card** (yellow) for commissioners.
- **Expense form** that is to be completed and returned to the registration area or the Assembly Office no later than **Saturday noon**. The reimbursement cheque for travel expenses will be mailed following the Assembly.
- **Name badge** that you must wear at all times:

<u>Commissioners</u>	blue badges; only those wearing this colour are permitted to vote
<u>Young Adult Representatives</u>	yellow badges
<u>Student Representatives</u>	peach badges
<u>Resource Persons</u>	raspberry badges; these include conveners and staff of General Assembly agencies, boards and committees
<u>Special guests</u>	green badges
<u>Spouses</u>	orange badges
<u>Visitors</u>	beige badges

Return name badge to the boxes in the Assembly Hall or to the Assembly Office at the close of the Assembly.

Yellow Dots: First Time Commissioners will have a yellow dot on their name tag. If you are a first time commissioner and there is not a dot on your name tag, please see Frances Hogg at registration or the Assembly office

- **Meal card and tickets** for those attending the First Time Commissioner's Breakfast (Saturday).

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Commissioners, Young Adult and Student Representatives

Travel: The Assembly is responsible for the cost of return travel from home to the Assembly at the rates stipulated in the Travel Regulations that were sent in the registration package.

Travelling by car, the reimbursement is:

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|
| - | one commissioner/YAR in a car | \$ 0.20 per km return |
| - | two commissioners/YARs in a car | \$ 0.26 per km return |
| - | three or more commissioners/YARs in a car | \$ 0.32 per km return |

Accommodation: The Assembly will pay the cost of accommodation at the university for 3 nights starting Friday June 3 through to the morning of Monday June 6. It will also be cover the cost for commissioners/YARs/student representatives requiring accommodation on Thursday June 2 and/or Monday June 6 due to flight schedules, as outlined in the travel regulations in the pre-registration material.

Food: The General Assembly Office is still working with the university to finalise meal cost. The prices below are the current amounts, but please note that they may be slight changes to these figures when the invoices are prepared.

The Assembly does not pay for the cost of food. The full food package (breakfast, lunch, dinner and breaks) for those staying in the university is \$182. The partial food package for commuters (lunch, dinner and breaks) is \$136. Please note that these prices may change.

Other Participants

All other participants: spouses, guests (apart from special guests of the Assembly, resource persons, staff) are responsible for the costs of their travel, accommodation and meals/breaks.

If you informed the General Assembly Office that you will be accompanied by a spouse or friend and that person is no longer able to come, you must cancel this reservation with the Assembly Office no later than May 16, otherwise you will be responsible for paying the full cost of accommodation and meals.

The charge for accommodation for spouses or visitors at General Assembly is \$180 (includes Friday through to Sunday nights). An extra charge of \$60 per night will be added for those spouses and guests who need accommodation on other nights than those noted above. Similarly, extra meals will be about \$50 per day.

The meal costs for other participants is \$182 for the full meal package and \$136 for the commuter package.

Payment

An invoice will be sent to participants regarding any extra costs and costs for spouses or visitors.

Presbyteries have indicated that they will cover the costs of the meal package for commissioners and YARs.

ACCOMMODATION

Commissioners, young adult and student representatives, resource persons, guests and others requiring accommodation will be housed in the Pond Road residence at York University. Your room assignment will be given to you when you register. Bed linens and a towel and facecloths are provided (you may wish to pack an extra towel).

Accommodation, at the Assembly's expense, will be available starting Friday night, except for those who must arrive on Thursday due to distance. Young adult representatives (YAR) will also be accommodated beginning Thursday June 2. The Assembly will cover the costs for those commissioners, YARs and student representatives, having to stay Monday June 6 due to departing flights.

It is possible to accommodate other persons on Thursday night, provided prior arrangements with the Assembly Office have been made (Terrie-Lee Hamilton, 416-441-1111, thamilton@presbyterian.ca) no later than May 16. The per night cost is \$60 along with the cost of breakfast (\$15), and this amount will be invoiced to you.

The charge for accommodation for spouses or visitors at the General Assembly is \$180 (from Friday through to Sunday nights). An extra charge of \$60 per night along with the cost of breakfast (\$15) will be added for spouses and guests who need accommodation on other nights than noted above.

The check-out time is 11:00 am.

On Monday, there will be a space to leave your luggage. Local volunteers will staff this area.

Room keys are to be returned to the front desk. Missing or unreturned keys will be charged \$25 to the participant.

MEALS

Meals at York University will be held in the Stong Cafeteria. Those whose accommodation is at the university must purchase the full meal package which includes continental breakfast, lunch, dinner and refreshments each day starting with lunch on Friday June 3 and concluding with lunch on Monday June 6.

Meals will be available for those arriving early beginning with Thursday dinner.

PARKING

In Residence

Parking passes for those staying at the university will be available at registration. The parking structure for participants in residence is the Student Services Parking Garage.

Commuting

Commuters will need to pay for parking and may be reimbursed this expense. Parking receipts must be submitted. The cost of parking is \$20 on Thursday, Friday and Monday; and \$7 on Saturday and Sunday. The parking lots for commuters are Arboretum Parking Structure and Thompson Road lot.

Remember to obey parking signs and regulations.

WIRELESS INTERNET

Wireless internet is offered throughout the university, including the residence. Specific information will be provided at registration.

LAST MINUTE CHANGE – YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND

Sometimes a commissioner is unable to attend and another is appointed. If this happens, contact your presbytery clerk who is to inform the Assembly Office **immediately**. Make sure you forward to that person any material you received from the Assembly Office.

If you are being accompanied by a spouse or friend who is no longer able to attend the General Assembly, you must notify the Assembly Office of this no later than May 16 or you will be responsible for paying the full cost of accommodation and food.

ASSEMBLY BUSINESS

OPENING OF ASSEMBLY

The Assembly will open with worship and the first sederunt 1:00 pm on Friday June 3 in the Gym of the Tait McKenzie Centre, York University in Toronto. After the Assembly is constituted, the first sederunt will include the election and installation of the moderator, orientation and business items.

REPORTS TO ASSEMBLY

The reports to the General Assembly are the most important part of the documentation you received for this Assembly. Be sure to bring the reports with you to the Assembly as **there is no replacement of the printed material if you forget yours**. The pdf format of the Book of Reports can be downloaded at presbyterian.ca/ga2016/.

Included are the reports to this Assembly from agencies, boards and committees of the General Assembly as well as overtures and appeals from synods, presbyteries and sessions. These should be studied before coming to the Assembly and notes made about questions or comments you may want to raise.

Page Numbering

The reports are listed alphabetically with the exception of overtures and appeals. Each report has a number that appears on the top right side of the page. There are 3 parts to each page number. An example is **Page 7.1.5**:

7. The number on the **left** refers to the order of the report in the Book of Reports
1. The number in the **centre** indicates that it is:
 - 1 = report of agency or committee, or
 - 2 = financial statements, or
 - 3 = other pertinent information.
5. The number on the **right** refers to the consecutive paging of the report.

An example of paging is: Page 12.1.5: 12 – Life and Mission Agency Committee;
1 – the report of; and
5 – the fifth page of the report.

Page 2.2.5: 2 – Assembly Council;
2 – the financial statements; and
5 – the fifth page of statements.

Supplementary Package

Not all of the reports to the General Assembly are included in the initial circulation of the Book of Reports. At registration, you will receive an envelope containing, among other things, reports not included in the original mailing, supplementary reports and a revised list of commissioners (for those who purchased the printed format), a voting card, etc.

For those using the pdf format of the Book of Reports, a complete revised version will be available online at presbyterian.ca/ga2016 just prior to the General Assembly. Participants will be notified by email when it is available.

Insert these reports in your printed material, as determined by the page number. If underneath the page number the word "REVISED" appears, **discard** the page that it is replacing.

REPORT BRIEFINGS

This year commissioners will be introduced to some General Assembly reports through a series of briefings held during the sederunts. There will be four panels and each one consisting of three or four report presenters. The presenters will briefly summarize their reports and recommendations if any and respond to questions for clarification that were submitted prior to the Assembly (at gaquestion@presbyterian.ca). After which, there will be time for table group discussions. Formal consideration of the reports will occur at a later sederunt. More information on this format is on page F-1.

PROTOCOL

Commissioners rise when the moderator enters the court.

When a commissioner wishes to address the court, she/he goes to a microphone and waits until recognized by the moderator. When recognized, the commissioner gives his/her name and presbytery and then addresses the court. If the moderator stands when a commissioner is speaking, the commissioner stops, and waits until the moderator has presented whatever may be on his/her mind.

PARTICIPATING IN THE COURT

Every commissioner has a right to speak once to any motion or amendment, and vote on it. Young adult and student representatives can speak only with permission of the court, normally granted at the first sederunt for the entire Assembly.

If a commissioner wishes to make a motion on a matter referred to in a report, but not mentioned in a recommendation, this can be presented as an "**Additional Motion**" after all the recommendations in the report have been dealt with, but before the Assembly adopts the report as a whole. (If in doubt, ask the convener or a staff person of the agency reporting when your motion should be made.)

When a commissioner makes an amendment to a motion, or an additional motion, it must be written out on the yellow motion sheet and submitted to the Business Committee. Two copies of the yellow motion sheet are found in the Book of Reports. Extra copies will be available at the Assembly through the Business Committee.

Some reports will begin with a "Consent Recommendation" proposing that one or more of the report's recommendations be adopted altogether, without debate, by the consent of the court. At that moment, any commissioner may ask for one (or more) of the recommendations to be removed from the consent agenda in order for it to be discussed and voted on in the usual manner. The request to remove such a recommendation is not to be debated. (For more information see General Assembly Consent Recommendations, page E-1).

If you wish to make a motion, or speak to a recommendation, go to a microphone and wait until the moderator recognizes you and invites you to speak.

Remember there are about 300 commissioners. It is important that many commissioners participate rather than a few speaking on most issues.

More information about participating can be found in "Practice and Procedure of General Assembly" starting on page G-1.

OFFICERS, CONVENERNERS AND STAFF OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The list of officers, conveners and staff of the General Assembly can be found on page D-10.

COMMITTEES OF ASSEMBLY

Some commissioners will be appointed to committees that meet during the Assembly. A letter, via email, will be sent to inform those commissioners serving in this capacity. Committee on Business report (in the supplementary package) will list the membership of these committees. Check the list to see if there are changes.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY WORSHIP AND CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

The Service of Worship and Celebration of Communion for the 2016 General Assembly will be held on Friday June 3 at 7:30 pm in the Gym of the Tait McKenzie Centre.

WORSHIP DURING THE ASSEMBLY

“An invitation into the mystery: worship at General Assembly” located at the front of the Book of Reports, indicates “that throughout the important work of the Assembly, our work of discernment and our worship will merge together reminding us of God’s permeating grace. Come and join us as we seek to honour the call to be stewards of God’s mysteries, even as we are recipients of God’s unfathomable love”. Times of worship will be interspersed throughout the sederunts and will take place in the gym of the Tait McKenzie Centre.

SEATING IN ASSEMBLY HALL FOR SEDERUNTS

Commissioners, ecumenical/interfaith visitors, young adult representatives and student representatives are asked to sit towards the front and centre of the hall. Resource people, guests and visitors are asked to sit at tables towards the back and side of the seating area.

Be in your place at least **5 minutes** before the time to begin.

There will be designated tables with electrical outlets for tablets, etc. There will also be a charging table close to the wall.

PRAYER

Each commissioner is requested to remember the Assembly, its agencies, staff and members in prayer. Each sederunt is constituted with prayer. Some commissioners may wish to have the Assembly engage in prayer. It is the prerogative of the moderator alone to call the Assembly to prayer (Book of Forms sections 310 and 310.1).

DRAFT MINUTES

Draft minutes of sederunts will be posted on the website as quickly as possible for as many sederunts as time allows. There will be a few printed copies for commissioners to review.

There may be typographical or other minor errors, which will be picked up by the clerks as they review these minutes. If you note an error, give the correction in writing to one of the clerks: Stephen Kendall or Donald Muir; or to Terrie-Lee Hamilton.

EVALUATION

Participants are invited to complete an evaluation of this Assembly. Copies of the evaluation forms will be available at the Assembly or participants may fill the online form found at presbyterian.ca/ga2016.

FOLLOWING ASSEMBLY

Commissioners are expected to report diligence to their presbytery at its first meeting after the Assembly. It is suggested that commissioners from each presbytery meet and decide which items each individual will speak about. Also, why not offer to speak to some congregations in your presbytery about the highlights of the Assembly.

AT ASSEMBLY

ASSEMBLY OFFICE

Terrie-Lee Hamilton is responsible for the Assembly Office and will be assisted by Elizabeth Bartlett and Frances Hogg.

On Thursday and Friday, during registration hours, at least one of them will be in registration area (Main Lounge, Pond Road Residence) and will answer inquiries or direct you to someone who can assist.

As of Friday morning, the Assembly Office will be in the Lounge of the Tait McKenzie Centre for the duration of the Assembly. It will open at 9:30 am on Friday and Sunday, and 8:30 am Saturday and Monday.

Elizabeth Bartlett or Frances Hogg will be in the office whenever Assembly is in session, and during the noon and evening meal breaks. One of them will assist you or put you in contact with someone who can.

If a committee requires office assistance or a place to meet, contact Terrie-Lee Hamilton.

PHONE NUMBERS

The General Assembly Office telephone numbers and university numbers are:

Assembly Office (Thursday June 2 to Monday June 6)	905-324-2199 and 905-324-7599
Pond Residence	416-736-2100 ext. 33506
Tait McKenzie Centre	416-736-5185

If having difficulties on arrival at the airport or bus terminal or train station, phone a local volunteer who will assist you. The numbers are:

Thursday:	416 275-0393
Friday:	416-837-0245

EMERGENCIES

In case of an emergency, a message can be taken and passed on to you.

DRESS

The mode of dress at the Assembly is at the discretion of the moderator. Respectful casual dress is acceptable at the Assembly. Your co-operation in this matter will be appreciated.

ALLERGIES

There are a number of people who are sensitive or allergic to perfumes, aftershave, scented lotions and other toiletries. Please refrain from using such products.

LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

In addition to the Assembly Office, the Local Arrangements Committee will have a table located by the Assembly Hall where you can obtain assistance with items relating to the local community as well as with transportation arrangements throughout the Assembly.

DISPLAYS

Many General Assembly agencies will have displays that will be located in the Assembly Hall.

FIRST-TIME COMMISSIONERS BREAKFAST – SATURDAY

The First-Time Commissioners Breakfast will be held on Saturday June 4, at 7:00 am. The location will be announced at the Assembly. General Assembly Deputy Clerk, the Rev. Don Muir, and General Assembly Office Senior Administrator, Ms. Terrie-Lee Hamilton will outline key features of the General Assembly and answer questions.

If you would like to attend contact **Frances Hogg** by email fhogg@presbyterian.ca or by phone (**800-619-7301, or 416-441-1111 ext. 224**) before **Monday, May 16**.

OFFICERS OF THE 142ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Moderator of the 2016 Assembly: The Rev. Douglas H. Rollwage (to be elected)
 Moderator of the 2015 Assembly: The Rev. Karen R. Horst
 Principal Clerk: The Rev. Stephen Kendall
 Deputy Clerks: The Rev. Donald G.A. Muir, The Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp

CONVENERS AND STAFF OF ASSEMBLY AGENCIES 2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Advise with the Moderator, Committee to: Convener The Rev. Dr. John-Peter C. Smit
 Assembly Council: Convener The Rev. Dr. Robert H. Smith
 Principal Clerk of the General Assembly The Rev. Stephen Kendall
 Associate Secretary, Assembly Office and Deputy Clerk The Rev. Donald G.A. Muir
 Atlantic Mission Society: President Ms. Bonnie Langille
 Business Committee: Convener _____
 Church Doctrine: Convener The Rev. R. Ian Shaw
 Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations, Committee on: Convener The Rev. Amanda Currie
 History, Committee on: Convener Ms. Marilyn Repchuck
 International Affairs, Committee on: Convener The Rev. Wendy Adams
 Life and Mission Agency: Convener The Rev. Wendy Paterson
 General Secretary The Rev. Ian A. Ross-McDonald
 Canadian Ministries, Associate Secretary Ms. Jennifer De Combe
 Communications, Associate Secretary Ms. Barb Summers
 International Ministries, Associate Secretary The Rev. Dr. Glynis R. Williams
 Justice Ministries, Associate Secretary Mr. Stephen Allen
 Ministry and Church Vocations, Associate Secretary The Rev. Susan Shaffer
 Presbyterian World Service and Development, Associate Secretary Mr. Guy Smaghe
 Stewardship and Planned Giving Ms. Karen Plater
 Maclean Estate Committee: Convener Mr. David Phillips
 Managing Director, Crieff Hills Community Mr. Lawrence Pentelow
 Nominate, Committee to: Convener The Rev. E.M. Iona MacLean
 Pension and Benefits Board: Convener The Rev. J. Cameron Bigelow
 Presbyterian Church Building Corporation: Convener Mr. Siegfried Quickert
 General Manager Mr. William Collier
 Presbyterian Record: Convener Mr. Botond Fejes
 Editor The Rev. David Harris
 Support Service: Chief Financial Officer Mr. Stephen Roche
 Theological Colleges:
 Knox College Board of Governors:
 Principal The Rev. Dr. J.D. Gordon
 Convener Dr. Peter Ross
 Presbyterian College Board of Governors:
 Acting Principal The Rev. Dr. Dale S. Woods
 Convener Mr. Ralph Loader
 St. Andrew's Hall Board, Vancouver:
 Convener Mr. Rod Thompson
 Dean The Rev. Dr. Robert S. Paul
 Vancouver School of Theology: Acting Principal The Rev. Dr. Richard R. Topping
 Trustee Board: Convener Mr. Tim Herron
 Women's Missionary Society: President Ms. Susan McLennan
 Executive Director The Rev. Sarah Y.M. Kim

GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONSENT RECOMMENDATIONS

What is a consent recommendation?

The General Assembly gathers prayerfully to discern God's will for the church. Sometimes the court finds itself spending significant time on fairly routine matters leaving less time to focus on issues requiring extra thought and discussion. As a way of addressing this situation, the General Assembly has introduced the concept of consent recommendations. A consent recommendation is one that is intended to be adopted by the Assembly without discussion. When those preparing reports for the Assembly consider whether a recommendation should be a consent recommendation or not, they might be guided by the question, "Is this item self-explanatory and straightforward or does it warrant discussion?" Recommendations that are deemed to be self-explanatory and straightforward are the type that might be proposed as consent recommendations.

How are consent recommendations dealt with by the Assembly?

A report might contain a number of consent recommendations. For example, a report might have seven recommendations with three of them marked by a "▶". This symbol indicates these three recommendations are consent recommendations. Believing these recommendations are "self-explanatory and straightforward" and that the Assembly may not need to discuss them, the Assembly will be invited to adopt all three with one motion. By adopting a group of consent recommendations simultaneously, time can be redeployed to issues that may require more of the Assembly's prayerful attention. This is not to suggest consent recommendations are unimportant or simply "house-keeping" matters. They may, in fact, be fundamental decisions, but ones that the Assembly has no further need to discuss.

If a report has recommendations, they are listed on the report's first page. The ▶ will clearly indicate which of them, if any, will be proposed as consent recommendations.

May a consent recommendation be discussed?

A commissioner may ask for a recommendation to be lifted from the list of consent items presented to the Assembly. No reason for the request needs to be made. Normally, the request will be granted without question. The recommendation is put before the meeting in the usual way affording opportunity for it to be discussed before the vote is taken.

Commissioner preparation

It is vitally important that commissioners familiarize themselves with every recommendation in the Book of Reports so that they can vote thoughtfully. It is also important for commissioners to know which recommendations are going to be proposed as consent recommendations so they can be prepared to ask that one or more be removed from the consent recommendation list if they think it ought to be discussed before the vote is taken.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT BRIEFINGS – 2016

This year commissioners will have the opportunity to engage with some of the General Assembly reports through a series of briefings during the sederunts and by raising questions both during the briefings and, in advance, by email. The primary purpose of this approach is to help commissioners make informed decisions. It is hoped the process will also connect staff and conveners more closely with commissioners.

Email: Commissioners may email questions for clarification about reports to the General Assembly using gaquestion@presbyterian.ca. Each email should include the name of the report along with the question. These messages will tell presenters what part of a report may require further explanation. Report presenters may also choose to respond directly to the email. The General Assembly Office will forward questions to the applicable presenter.

Briefings: There will be four briefings. Each will last approximately 45 minutes. During the briefings, report presenters will succinctly summarize their reports and recommendations, if any, and may respond to questions submitted online. After the presenters have spoken, commissioners will meet in table groups. In table groups, commissioners will be invited to discuss the reports presented. This discussion will conclude with an opportunity for a few questions for clarification to be asked of the presenters. A briefings facilitator will guide the process. There will be no PowerPoint presentations during briefings.

Paper Question Forms: Questions not answered during the briefings may be submitted on a supplied form and placed in committee folders. Report presenters will be responsible for checking their folders for questions and may use these questions to guide them when their report comes before the Assembly.

When the report comes before the Assembly, PowerPoint slides and videos may be used at the beginning of the report. Presenters may address further questions or move directly to recommendations. Briefing reports without recommendations will also be allotted time for presentation.

The briefings will take place at the following times:

Briefing 1 (Friday Afternoon)

Assembly Council
Pension and Benefits Board

Clerks of Assembly

Briefing 2 (Friday Afternoon)

Program Support and Administration (LMA)
Canadian Ministries (LMA)

Communications (LMA)
Stewardship and Planned Giving (LMA)

Briefing 3 (Saturday Morning)

Justice Ministries (LMA)
Committee on Church Doctrine

Committee on History
Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations

Briefing 4 (Saturday Morning)

International Ministries (LMA)
International Affairs Committee

PWS&D (LMA)
Ministry and Church Vocations (LMA)

Note: LMA stands for Life and Mission Agency

The theological colleges will have their own time on the agenda to present as usual.

The conveners or resource people for reports without recommendations will be able to speak to their reports at some point during the Assembly. These reports will be presented for adoption as a group under the agenda heading “Reports Without Recommendations”. If a commissioner wants to address a report without recommendations, the commissioner must ask that it be withdrawn from the group when they are presented for adoption. The reports in this category include: Atlantic Mission Society, Women’s Missionary Society, Presbyterian Church Building Corporation, Presbyterian Record, McLean Estate, and Trustee Board.

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

AT

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

There are three sources for the material contained in this section. The source is identified at the beginning of the first paragraph in each section.

1. When a number, for example, 277, appears at the beginning of a paragraph it indicates the section number in the Book of Forms where this paragraph can be found.
2. When “A&P” followed by a year, e.g., (A&P 1977), appears at the beginning of the first paragraph in a section it indicates the year when the material quoted was submitted to the General Assembly.
3. When the wording used is that of the Clerks of Assembly, the reference “(Clerks)” will appear at the beginning of the first paragraph of the section.

THE ASSEMBLY

HIGHEST COURT	<p>277. The General Assembly is the highest court of the church, and bears the title of “The General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada”.</p> <p>277.1 The General Assembly differs from the lower courts of the church in that it has, as a body, no permanent existence. The Assembly meets to perform specific duties assigned to it by the constitution of the church, and devolving on its particular members by virtue of their commissions from their respective presbyteries. When those specific duties have been performed, its members have no further powers, and the General Assembly, after fixing the time and place for the calling of another Assembly, dissolves itself. All the powers and functions of the General Assembly belong to it solely as a representative and temporary body.</p>
AUTHORITY OF ASSEMBLY	<p>294. As the supreme court of the church, the General Assembly possesses the authority to determine and order such things as are necessary to be done in a pending case and for which there is no legal provision. It cannot overrule law, but only supply the want of it when necessary.</p>
DUTIES OF ASSEMBLY	<p>292. The General Assembly receives and disposes of petitions, overtures, references, complaints and appeals from lower courts, and all other matters regularly brought before it; reviews the records of synods; deals with matters respecting doctrine, worship, discipline and government of the church; prescribes and regulates the course of study of students having the ministry in view; admits ministers and certified candidates for ordination from other churches; forms new synods and presbyteries; corresponds with other churches; conducts the missionary operations of the church; receives and disposes of reports in respect to the colleges and from the committees charged with the care of the different departments of the work of the church; and in general adopts such measures as may tend to promote true godliness, to repress error and immorality, to preserve the unity of the church, and to advance the kingdom of Christ throughout the world.</p>
OPENING OF ASSEMBLY	<p>282. At the time appointed for meeting, a diet of public worship is held when a sermon is preached by the moderator of the last Assembly, or, in his/her absence, by a former moderator. Immediately thereafter the Assembly is constituted with prayer, and a provisional roll, consisting of the names of commissioners appointed at least twenty-one days before, is submitted in printed form by the clerk. The General Assembly elects its moderator on nominations made immediately after the Assembly has been constituted, who then takes the chair.</p> <p>(Clerks) The General Assembly will begin with a service of worship, however, the Moderator of the previous General Assembly, will preach on Friday evening. The Moderator of the last Assembly will constitute the Assembly with prayer.</p>
SEDERUNT	<p>(Clerks) Sederunt is a specific time period designated for business, for example “morning sederunt” refers to the hours of meeting between breakfast and lunch, “afternoon sederunt to the meeting between lunch and dinner, and “evening sederunt” to the meeting between dinner and adjournment for the night.</p>
DOCKET	<p>(Clerks) Docket is synonymous with agenda. It is a list of the business to come before the Assembly.</p>

QUORUM 278.10 Forty-one commissioners, of whom one is the moderator (or acting moderator), another twenty are ministers ordained to Word and Sacraments or members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries and another twenty are ruling elders, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. But twenty commissioners who were appointed twenty-one days before, being met at the place and time appointed, may constitute the court, and adjourn from time to time until a full quorum is present.

FUTURE ASSEMBLIES 281. The General Assembly ordinarily meets once a year; and each Assembly fixes the date and place of the next before it dissolves; notwithstanding, any Assembly may determine the location of future Assemblies for the ensuing five years.

SPECIAL ASSEMBLY 281.1 The General Assembly ceases to exist as soon as it is closed and, apart from the powers entrusted to the Commission re Matters Left Uncared for or Omitted, no provision has been made for summoning a special Assembly in the course of the year.

PARTICIPANTS

THE MODERATOR 282. The General Assembly elects its moderator on nominations made immediately after the Assembly has been constituted, who then takes the chair.

(Clerks) By action of the 99th General Assembly a procedure was adopted to determine the name of the person to be placed in nomination for Moderator. However, once this person has been nominated, an opportunity will be given for commissioners to make other nominations.

(Clerks) By action of the 119th General Assembly, elders and members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries may be placed in nomination for Moderator.

283. The moderator's duties are: to constitute the Assembly; to open and close each sederunt with prayer; to preserve order; to see that the business is properly conducted and the minutes are correctly taken; to take the vote; to announce decisions; to sign all documents having the authority of the Assembly; and to exercise any other functions assigned to him/her by the court.

284. The moderator may express his/her views on any subject under discussion; but if he/she wishes to take part in debate or to submit a motion, he/she leaves the chair and calls another member of the court to take his/her place.

RETIRING MODERATOR (Clerks) The Moderator of the last General Assembly following the opening worship, constitutes the court. Under his/her moderatorship, the roll of Assembly is established and the call for nominations for election as Moderator extended. After the new moderator is elected and installed, the Moderator of the last General Assembly, who has been appointed by his/her presbytery as a commissioner to this Assembly, assumes his/her responsibility as a commissioner.

CLERKS OF ASSEMBLY (Clerks) There are normally three Clerks of Assembly, a Principal Clerk and two Deputy Clerks. During sederunts of the Assembly, the Clerks are responsible for keeping the record of proceedings, advising the Moderator on legal and procedural matters, assisting the Moderator in noting those who want to address the court, and serving as scrutineers when required. At some Assemblies one of the Clerks may have been appointed a commissioner by his/her presbytery and can, therefore, participate in debate.

COMMISSIONERS 278.1 The General Assembly shall consist of one-sixth of the total number of ministers and members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries whose names are on the constituent rolls of the presbyteries of the church, and an equal number of elders. (Declaratory Act: A&P 1992, p. 275, 31)

278.2 When the number of names on the roll of the presbytery is not divisible by six, the sixth shall be reckoned from the next higher multiple of six.

278.9 The roll to be called at the opening of the Assembly shall be made up from the rolls of the several presbyteries, as transmitted to the Clerks of Assembly, containing the names of the commissioners appointed at least twenty-one days before. At its first session the Assembly shall appoint a committee to which shall be referred the reports of presbyteries regarding commissions issued at a later date and all matters affecting the roll. On the report of this committee the Assembly shall order such changes to be made in the roll as may be required. The roll thus amended shall be the permanent roll of the General Assembly.

12. A member of the court ought not to withdraw from attendance without leave.

YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVES (Clerks) Since the late 1960s there have been Young Adult Representatives (YARs) at Assembly. Each year, on a rotation basis, one half of the presbyteries are invited to send a YAR. The program is under the direction of the General Assembly Office and the age grouping as set by the Assembly in 1986 is 16 to 25 years.

YARs have a time of orientation prior to the Assembly. YARs should try to attend a presbytery meeting and have met with the commissioners from their presbytery before coming to Assembly.

YARs are expected to sit in the court. Depending on the plans arranged by the YAR advisors, YARs will either sit as a group or with one or more of the commissioners from their presbytery. The 1997 General Assembly adopted a guideline calling each Assembly to adopt a motion extending open permission for young adult and student representatives to speak at that particular Assembly and be granted an advisory vote. This recommendation is presented by the Business Committee at the first sederunt. In recent years, YARs and student representatives have been granted an advisory vote from time to time. Coloured voting cards are issued for this purpose and the procedures are explained during orientation.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES (Clerks) Soon after the introduction of the YAR program in the mid 1960s, it was agreed to add to the group of YARs a student from each of the church's colleges. In 1986 these student representatives were dropped from the YAR program as it was felt that their interests and concerns vis à vis the Assembly were quite different. Their present status was established on recommendation of the Board of Ministry in 1987.

The intent of the student representative program is to provide an opportunity for students to attend an Assembly and observe what is happening. The 1997 General Assembly adopted a guideline calling each Assembly to adopt a motion extending open permission for young adult and student representatives to speak at that particular Assembly and be granted an advisory vote. This recommendation is presented by the Business Committee at the first sederunt.

RESOURCE PERSONS (Clerks) The convener of each General Assembly board, committee and agency normally attends Assembly. Some are able to remain until the Assembly concludes its business. The executive staff of General Assembly agencies as well as the principals/dean of the colleges also attend.

ECUMENICAL/ INTERFAITH VISITORS (Clerks) Each year the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee invites visitors to Assembly from other churches, either from within Canada or abroad, or from an ecumenical organization; or from another faith tradition. Each visitor is given an opportunity to address the Assembly sometime during the week, usually for approximately 15 minutes. Commissioners, YARs and student representatives are urged to seek out these visitors and help make them feel a part of the Assembly.

OTHERS (Clerks) The spouses of commissioners, resource persons and others often attend Assembly. While they are not officially a part of the Assembly, they are welcome to attend all sederunts and other special events.

COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEES 288. The Assembly ... appoints standing committees, which are intrusted with conducting the business of the church in its several departments during the year, and which report annually to the General Assembly.

(Clerks) Some standing committees are known as committees while others are called boards. Under current usage, there is no clearly defined distinction between a board and a committee.

COMMITTEES OF THIS ASSEMBLY 288. The Assembly appoints a Committee on Bills and Overtures, a Committee on Business, and other committees to consider matters specially referred to them.

(Clerks) These are committees of commissioners appointed at the opening sederunt on recommendation of the Business Committee; they have a specific task to perform in relation to that Assembly; and will be terminated with the close of Assembly.

Bills & Overtures (Clerks) This committee recommends to Assembly procedures for dealing with all unrefereed overtures, memorials, petitions and appeals.

Business	<p>296.4 The Committee on Business shall fix an order of business and print the docket to be available for all commissioners before the opening sederunt.</p> <p>(Clerks) At the beginning of each sederunt the committee will recommend the docket for that sederunt. Conveners of special committees should arrange through the Committee on Business for a place on the docket.</p>
To Confer with the Moderator	(Clerks) This committee has, as one of its duties, to suggest to the Moderator the names of persons to serve on committees whose membership is nominated by the Moderator.
Courtesies & Loyal Addresses	<p>(Clerks) According to the 1987 decision, this committee is to prepare the Loyal Addresses just prior to the last sederunt of Assembly and incorporate into them a summary of decisions made by the Assembly which pertain to matters of state.</p> <p>The other aspect of this committee's responsibility is the preparation of the minute of appreciation to all those who contributed to the smooth functioning of the Assembly.</p>
Examine Records	(Clerks) A committee is appointed to examine the minutes of the last General Assembly, the several synods, and the Assembly Council to ensure that they are carefully and correctly kept.
Remits	(Clerks) During the first sederunt of Assembly, the Committee on Remits is appointed. This committee studies the replies from presbyteries re remits sent down under the Barrier Act by the previous Assembly and recommends the action to be taken by this Assembly on each remit.
Roll & Leave to Withdraw	(Clerks) The Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw, appointed during the first sederunt, has two responsibilities. Firstly, to determine the roll of Assembly as mentioned in 278.9 above. Secondly, to consider and recommend to Assembly action re requests from commissioners for permission to leave before Assembly concludes its business. (Please see A&P 1986, p. 286 for more detail)
SPECIAL COMMITTEES	<p>(Clerks) Special committees can be divided into two groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Those named by the Moderator at the request of Assembly to deal with a specific matter such as an overture, appeal, resignation, etc., and present a final report to that Assembly. 2. Those named by the Moderator at the request of Assembly to undertake a specific task during the ensuing year and report to the next Assembly, for example, to advise with the Moderator, to study our church's approach to youth and young adults.
COMMISSIONS	4.4 ... it is competent for a court to remit, from time to time, particular business to "a delegated court", or commission, with power to issue.
Commission (Ordinary)	<p>289. The Assembly may appoint a commission, which powers are defined by the terms of the appointment.</p> <p>289.1 The commission chooses its own convener, who is commonly the moderator of the preceding Assembly if present. The Clerks of the Assembly act as its clerks.</p> <p>289.2 The commission is appointed for the transaction of judicial and administrative business. It has no legislative function.</p> <p>289.3 If it appears that a commission has exceeded its powers, or has acted in any way contrary to the acts or constitution of the church, the next Assembly may set aside or reverse its procedure.</p> <p>(Clerks) Each year the Assembly appoints a commission to deal with matters left, uncared for, omitted. This is made up of the Moderator and the Clerks of Assembly.</p>
Special Commission	<p>290. The General Assembly may remit any cause before it to a special commission, with such powers as the Assembly shall see fit, whose decision and sentence shall be final, and shall be reported to the next General Assembly.</p> <p>290.1 The special commission may, if it see cause, refrain from deciding or pronouncing sentence, and may report the matter to the next Assembly, so that the latter may itself issue.</p>

290.2 A special commission is not subject to the authority of the commission of Assembly (section 289), and reports only to the next General Assembly.

290.3 What is determined in a judicial cause at one diet of any commission, general or special, cannot be altered at another diet, but continues in force, unless disapproved of by the next General Assembly.

290.4 The sentence of a commission of the General Assembly is final, and must be obeyed. Complaint may be taken against such sentence, on the ground of its being beyond the legal authority of the court, and the matter may be brought up to the next Assembly. But no such process will justify disobedience in the meantime.

(Clerks) A special commission is normally appointed when the Assembly is unable to deal with a matter during the regular course of its business, as, for example, an appeal or other judicial process where individuals not present at the General Assembly must be cited to appear.

MOTIONS

GENERAL

39. No discussion is in order until a motion is before the court. Speakers should confine themselves to the matter referred to in the motion, and if they depart therefrom they may be called to order.

Must be in writing

40. Every motion or amendment shall be given in to the clerk in writing as soon as it has been made, and it cannot be discussed until it has been duly seconded.

(Clerks) Motion/amendment sheets are distributed to each commissioner in the Book of Reports and extras are available at the Assembly. If presenting a motion or an amendment, these are to be completed and submitted to the Business Committee. A chart outlining types of motions are in the supplementary material.

Withdrawing a Motion

41. After a motion or amendment is in the clerk's hand and discussion has commenced, it cannot be withdrawn or altered without leave of the court.

Dividing a Motion

50. A motion under discussion that consists of two or more distinct parts, shall, on the call of any two members, at any time before the final vote is taken, be divided, and each part shall be voted on separately.

AMENDMENT

46. A motion is amended by adding certain words or clauses thereto; by striking out certain words or clauses; by substituting other words or clauses for those in the resolution; or by striking out all after the word "resolved" and substituting another motion disposing of the matter in hand.

Amendment to the Amendment

47. It is in order to propose an amendment to the first amendment, but no other can be entertained until the amendment to the amendment has been disposed of; when this has been adopted or rejected, other amendments to the amendment may be considered and disposed of one by one; when these all have been disposed of, the first amendment is voted on in answer to the question, "Shall the motion be thus amended – yea or nay?" If this is decided in the affirmative, the main motion is amended accordingly, and the discussion proceeds. Other amendments to the motion are then in order. When all amendments have been disposed of, the motion, as then before the court, is put in answer to the question, "Shall this motion be adopted – yea or nay?"

Amending Reports

(Clerks and A&P 1988, p. 281-82)

Reports to Assembly are an expression of opinion on the part of the reporting agency. The Assembly does not have the right to amend the body of a report. Assembly, if it is so inclined, can place in its minutes a statement about the report, such statement can be either in support of or in opposition to the report or a section of the report. Since "a court is entitled to say what shall have a place in its records" (Book of Forms section 29) the Assembly can agree to delete part or all of a report from its records.

When a recommendation in a report specifically refers to information contained in the preamble to the recommendation (i.e., "That a bursary fund be established for the purpose of providing financial support for candidates in doctoral theological study as per the six principles stated above), and a commissioner wants to change the wording of one of the principles, this can be accomplished by moving an amendment to the recommendation which would add to the recommendation the actual revised wording of the six principles (i.e., "That a bursary fund ... theological study as per the following six principles:" and then list the revised wording for the six principles).

**MOTIONS THAT
HAVE
PRECEDENCE**

42. When a question is under discussion, the motion before the court must be disposed of, and no other motion can be entertained unless to adjourn the court, to adjourn the debate, to lay on the table, to refer, to amend, or to take an immediate vote; and these several motions have precedence in the order in which they are herein arranged.
- to adjourn 43. A motion to adjourn is always in order, and is voted on without debate.
- to lay on the table 44. A motion to lay on the table is voted on without debate. If carried in the affirmative, the subject to which it refers together with the motion and pending amendments, remains on the docket and may be taken up at a subsequent sederunt, but only by a resolution adopted by a majority of the members of the court present.
- (Clerks) This motion is not used to defer debate until some other matter is dealt with.
- to refer 45. Any subject with the motion and pending amendments may be referred to a committee for consideration and report. (Declaratory Act 2001, p. 272-73, 21)
- (Clerks) Debate is restricted to where it is referred, when a further report should be made, and whether or not it should be referred.
- to take immediate vote 48. A motion to take an immediate vote is put without debate. If carried in the affirmative, the amendment or amendments pending are put to the court without further discussion; then, if no further amendments are offered, the main motion is voted on, and the subject is disposed of. If the motion is lost, the debate continues, just as if no such motion had been made.
- 48.1 When the motion to take an immediate vote pertains to Declaratory Acts or to matters that must be dealt with under the Barrier Act, it requires a two-thirds majority vote to pass.

**OTHER
PROCEDURAL
MOTIONS**
to defer

(Clerks) When there are matters to be considered by the court later in the agenda that may have bearing on the motion currently under discussion, or when it seems wise to halt debate temporarily and resume it later, a motion to defer is in order. The motion can indicate deferral until after a specific event or it can simply be in terms of deferral to a later sederunt.

to reconsider

49. A motion to reconsider a decision of the court cannot be entertained at the sederunt in which the decision was given; nor at any subsequent time, unless notice of such motion has been given at a previous sederunt. A motion to reconsider can only be made and seconded by members who voted in the majority.

PROCEDURES**ADDRESSING THE
COURT**

51. When a member rises to speak, the moderator announces his/her name. If two or more rise at the same time, the moderator decides who shall speak first.

52. Every speaker addresses the moderator, and may not address any other member directly.

56. No member shall speak more than once to any motion or amendment, unless by permission of the court, and in explanation or to correct mistakes. The right of reply, however, belongs to the mover before the final vote is taken on the main motion.

**PERMISSION TO
SPEAK**
Convener

(Clerks) Only commissioners have the right to address the Assembly. However, when a report of a board or committee is before Assembly, the person presenting the report, usually the convener of the board/committee, is authorized to speak. Such persons, unless they are a commissioner, cannot speak to the report of another board/committee without first obtaining permission from Assembly.

Executive Staff

(Clerks) On occasion, a board or committee wants a non-commissioner who is a member of the board/committee or on its staff, to speak during the presentation of the report. In such cases, the permission of Assembly must be obtained. This is normally granted when the report is first introduced.

Clerks

(Clerks) At the request of the Moderator, a Clerk of Assembly may speak to help clarify an issue, give procedural guidance, or to interpret the law of the church.

YARs & Student Representatives	(Clerks) Since young adult and student representatives cannot address the court without permission being granted by the Assembly, the Business Committee will bring a recommendation to the first sederunt asking that Young Adult and Student Representatives be permitted to participate in the debates of Assembly and be granted an advisory vote. (A&P 1997, p. 261, 24; A&P 2009, p. 261-63, 17; A&P 2010, p. 362-63, 283, 13)
RECEIPT OF REPORTS	(Clerks) The first motion put to the Assembly when a report is initially introduced is that the report be received and considered. This motion is normally adopted without discussion. However, this need not be simply a perfunctory action. If a commissioner is of the opinion that an entire report, or part of a report, contains material that should not come before the Assembly, then he/she has the right to speak against the receipt of the report, or move an amendment that a specific section of the report not be received.
VOTING	<p>57. The vote may be taken by any method determined by the court. It is ordinarily taken by a show of hands, but the moderator may ask members to vote by rising to their feet. Further, if so required by one-third of the members present, the vote shall be by ballot. At the final vote on the main motion, the roll may be called, if required by two members of the court. Ordinarily the state of the vote is not recorded, but this may be done in regard to any vote, if required by two members of the court.</p> <p>58. Members should not, without good cause, decline to vote; and unless excused by the court from voting, all who do not vote are held as acquiescing in the decision of the majority.</p> <p>59. When it is agreed that a vote be taken, the moderator may order the doors to be closed, and no further debate or remark is allowed, unless to correct a mistake. When it is discovered that a mistake has been made, the vote may be taken anew.</p>
Advisory Vote	(Clerks) Since 2009, Young Adult Representatives and Student Representatives have been granted an advisory vote whereby these representatives are occasionally permitted to vote first on a matter before the Assembly. Having been so advised of the representatives position the commissioners then vote. Only the commissioner vote is used to determine whether or not a recommendation has been approved.
Dissent	<p>91. Any member of a court who has voted on a question and is not satisfied with the decision is entitled to have his/her dissent recorded. By so doing he/she relieves himself/herself from responsibility for the decision and saves himself/herself from censure on account of it. The dissent must be given in when the decision is announced. Reasons for dissent may be given in at that time or within ten days. If in proper language, they are entered in the minutes. When deemed necessary the court prepares answers that are disposed of by being entered in the appropriate minutes.</p> <p>92. Members who voted in the minority may signify their adherence to a dissent, and have their adherence recorded, either at the time, or at the following sederunt when the minutes are confirmed, but not afterwards.</p>
Consent Recommendations	A consent recommendation is intended to be used for recommendations that are expected not to require the discernment of the court in order to allow more time for subject that do require further prayerful deliberation. Some reports will propose that one or more of the report's recommendations be adopted by consent. At that moment, any commissioner may ask for one (or more) of the recommendations be removed from the consent agenda in order for it to be discussed and voted on in the usual manner. The request to remove such a recommendation is not to be debated..
FINANCIAL MATTERS	296.6 Undertakings for which new or increased expenditure is required shall not receive final approval of the General Assembly until a report from the Assembly Council has been received.
MODERATOR'S DECISION CHALLENGED	54. Any member who is dissatisfied with the ruling of the moderator may appeal to the court. The question of sustaining the ruling of the chair is then put by the clerk, and decided without debate.
DOCUMENTS FOR DISTRIBUTION	(Clerks) Before any document can be distributed to commissioners, regardless of whether or not it is related to matters that will be before the court, the permission of Assembly must be obtained.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

60. In order to allow greater freedom in discussion, the court, when considering any particular matter, may, on motion duly seconded, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole. On motion duly made, a convener is appointed and the moderator leaves the chair.

61. While the court is in committee, the motions considered are not recorded in the minutes, and members are at liberty to speak more than once on any motion. A separate minute of the proceedings is taken. When the committee rises, its convener presents a report to the court embodying the result of the committee's deliberations, or he/she reports progress and asks leave to sit again.

NOTICE OF MOTION

(A&P, 1974) The purpose of a notice of motion is to enable the commissioners to acquaint themselves with the subject of the notice of motion and thus be prepared for any debate. Thereby the Assembly is not taken by surprise and is able to avoid hurried, too-little considered judgements.

The proper form of a notice of motion is, "I hereby give notice of motion that it is my intention to move or cause to be moved at a future sederunt that ..." It is always assumed that the mover has a seconder ready. The notice of motion is always for the future sederunt, not the one in which it is presented. The printed minutes will duly contain it, and it is the practice of the Business Committee not to place it on the docket until it is before the commissioners in the minutes.

It is to be strictly observed that a notice of motion deals with some subject that is definitely before the Assembly. It is customary not to present such a notice until the subject is before the Assembly. However, there are notices of motion in the bodies of Board and Committee reports, and the statement is made there that they will be presented. For these, as they are already in the texts, the notices are often given at an early sederunt.

Upon this statement, that the subject must be within the documents, there is misunderstanding. At each Assembly there are commissioners who believe that their commission entitles them to raise any subject they wish. This is not so: the commissioners concerned should have had their subjects presented out of their presbyteries as overtures. There are occasions when the subject is related to the report of a certain Board of Committee, and when that subject is presented they may take their desired action by way of amendment.

Particularly, it must be noted that no commissioner can raise a subject which has been before a lower court and is a closed matter. For example, a party to a case fails to take appeal at the level of presbytery or synod and believes the matter can "be raised in Assembly" if a friendly commissioner can be found to raise it. This cannot be: a notice of motion is not a means to bypass the ordinary procedure of appeal.

Assembly is master of its own docket. It is conceivable that, in emergency, a matter not within the documents of Assembly should be brought before Assembly. This can be, by the grace of Assembly, following a motion to permit, but the Clerks consider that a two-thirds majority of those present and voting should be required.

There are times when it is difficult to distinguish between that which is properly an amendment and that which should require a notice of motion. In this dilemma it is wiser to rule the matter requires a notice of motion.

TECHNICAL TERMS**OVERTURE**

67. An overture is a formal proposal made by a lower court, or by a member or members of the court overtured, and seeking the enactment of a law or rule, or some executive action, of a general kind, competent to the court overtured, and binding upon all within its jurisdiction.

76. Only matters of general interest can be sought by way of overture, and there can be no parties of the court overtured in respect thereof.

78. If no one appears to introduce an overture in the court overtured, it falls without a motion to that effect.

79. An overture may be promoted before a court only by a member, or members, thereof; or by a lower court, in which case no member thereof can be heard unless he/she is also a member of the court overtured.

80.1 It is an instruction to clerks of presbyteries to forward all overtures to the Clerks of Assembly prior to the date that shall be indicated yearly by a circular to the clerks of presbytery from the Clerks of Assembly, namely February 1st, except in the case of unREFERRED overtures, which shall be April 1st; but overtures in reference to names on the constituent roll of presbytery may be forwarded later if the need arises. (see section 297.5 and Appendix A-7)

(Clerks) Sometimes a presbytery, when forwarding an overture, petition or memorial from a session or individual, does not wish to express an opinion on the matter raised. In such cases they send it forward “without comment”. Other times a presbytery will send it forward “with approval” or even “with disapproval”.

Overtures are sometimes referred to more than one committee of the General Assembly for response. Normally one committee is named as the primary reporting committee, and may be asked to consult with other committees prior to presenting a response to a future Assembly. The 2007 General Assembly approved a number of models for this consultation and committees are encouraged, early in their work on any overture requiring consultation, to be in communication with other named committees to be clear on how the consultation will take place. Three models for this communication are as follows: 1) establish a joint task group, 2) send a working copy to the other committee or agency for discussion and dialogue, 3) send the final draft to the other committee or agency for approval. The report of the Church Doctrine Committee urges that early on in the work on any overture, the primary reporting committee communicate with any committee they are to consult with and seek to be clear in the timing and method of collaboration that is envisioned. The Clerks of Assembly note that the primary reporting committee bears the responsibility for presenting the response to a future Assembly.

COMMISSIONERS OVERTURE

(A&P 1982) It is only rarely that a “Commissioner’s Overture” is justified. It is conceivable that a great or grave emergency may arise which could not be foreseen prior to the meeting of the Assembly. Under such circumstances a commissioner or commissioners could present an overture to the Assembly. However, if the matter has not suddenly become an emergency, then the usual procedure should have been followed of having the overture come up through synod or presbytery. The whole purpose of having deadlines for overtures, petitions, etc., so as to get the material into the hands of the commissioners prior to Assembly is frustrated if someone can raise and introduce a subject concerning which commissioners cannot prepare themselves sufficiently on short notice. The individual commissioner is not prohibited from presenting an overture, but such should be most rare and the burden is on the commissioner to show that the matter could not have been brought before the Assembly through a lower court.

PETITION

65. A petition is a formal written request, made to a court, by one or more individuals, by a body of church members, or by a lower court to a higher, and initiating business generally concerning the affairs of the petitioners. A petition may initiate, but may not replace judicial process (see non-disciplinary case, sections 324–344 and corrective case, sections 381–392).

68. When a petition is presented to a court, three steps become necessary. (1) It must be read, or held as read. (2) It must then be decided whether to receive it, or not to receive it. (3) If received, the court must determine what action is to be taken in answer to its prayer.

70. A petition must be presented to the court of first resort. It may be presented directly to a higher court only when the petitioner claims to have been obstructed in his/her proper remedy of commencing a corrective case. (Appendix A-63).

MEMORIAL

66. A memorial is a written representation of facts made to a court, and may be the ground of, or embody, a petition.

73. Every member of the church has the right of access to any church court by petition or memorial. He/She has direct access to the session of the congregation to which he/she belongs, but a petition or memorial to a higher court must, in the first place, be presented to the session, with a request for its transmission.

DECLARATORY ACT

293. The Assembly may pass a Declaratory Act affirming what it understands to be the law of the church regarding any particular matter; and such act may be passed without submission to presbyteries.

BARRIER ACT	<p>293. ... any action contemplating a change in the law of the church must be dealt with according to the provisions of the Barrier Act (A&P 1877) which is as follows:</p> <p>293.1 No prepared law or rule relative to matters of doctrine, discipline, government or worship, shall become a permanent enactment until the same has been submitted to presbyteries for consideration. Such consideration shall be given by each presbytery, at an ordinary meeting, or a special meeting held for the purpose; and an extract minute of the presbytery's judgment shall be sent to the clerk of the General Assembly, before the next meeting of that court.</p> <p>293.3 If a majority of the presbyteries of the church express their approval, the Assembly may pass such proposed law or rule into a standing law of the church. If a majority of the presbyteries express disapproval, the Assembly shall reject such proposed law or rule, or again remit it to the presbyteries.</p> <p>293.4 If a majority of the presbyteries of the church replying to a remit sent down under the Barrier Act, as specified in section 293.1, express their approval and this majority of presbyteries constitute an actual majority of ministers, members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries, and elders on the constituent rolls of all presbyteries, the Assembly may pass such proposed law or rule into a standing law of the church. (The original Barrier Act is from the Church of Scotland, 1697.) (Declaratory Act: A&P 1946, p. 121, 67)</p>
INTERIM ACT	<p>293.2 The Assembly, if it sees cause, may by a majority of two-thirds of those present, pass such proposed law or rule into an Interim Act, which shall possess the force of law, until the presbyteries have, as herein required, reported their judgment upon it to the next General Assembly.</p>
REMIT	<p>(Clerks) When Assembly sends a matter to presbyteries under the Barrier Act, the matter sent down to presbytery is called a remit.</p>
REFERRAL	<p>(Clerks) Often Assembly agrees to refer to synods or presbyteries or sessions a matter for study with the request that a report be submitted by a specific date, usually in January or February of the next year. This is called a referral.</p>
EX OFFICIO	<p>(Clerks) The term "ex officio" means "by virtue of office" and is most commonly used at Assembly in connection with the membership of boards and committees. For example, ex officio (by virtue of office) Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer of the church is a member of the Assembly Council. Such membership may be with or without vote, as specified in each case.</p>
SITTING WITH CLOSED DOORS	<p>(Clerks) In private, secretly. When by decision of Assembly all but commissioners are ordered to leave so that the Assembly may sit alone, this is referred at Book of Forms sections 10-10.1.</p>

LEGAL TERMS

BOOK OF FORMS APPENDIX H	<p>The following definitions of legal terms were approved by the 108th General Assembly and ordered placed in the Appendix to the Book of Forms.</p>
Law	<p>Law may mean statute or long settled principles. It has been defined as the body of rules, whether formally enacted or customary, which a state or community recognizes as binding on its members.</p> <p>Law has also been defined as that which must be obeyed and followed by citizens, subject to sanctions or legal consequences.</p>
Enabling Legislation	<p>Legislation is defined as the making of laws by express decree, and enabling legislation is often referred to as primary or governing legislation. A body enacting subordinate legislation must do so in accordance with the authority granted to it under the enabling or governing legislation passed by the sovereign legislative body and may not exceed its jurisdiction. This term is also applied to any statute enabling persons or corporations to do what they could not do before. It is applied to statutes which confer new powers.</p> <p>For example, pursuant to enabling provincial legislation, municipalities are created and municipal councils are granted authority to enact by-laws in accordance with the limitations set out in the enabling provincial legislation. Similarly, the Trustee Board was created by enabling</p>

legislation called “An Act to Incorporate The Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada”, and by that Act, the General Assembly was authorized to make resolutions, rules and regulations for the government and control of the Trustee Board.

Regulation	Regulation has been defined as a rule prescribed for the management of some matter, or the regulating of conduct; a governing precept of direction. Under enabling legislation, the power to make statutory instruments such as regulations and by-laws is delegated to an inferior body.
Precedent	Precedent means that a principle of law actually presented to a court of authority for consideration and determination has, after due consideration, been declared to serve as a rule for future guidance in the same or analogous cases. It may also involve a previous judicial decision, method of proceeding or draft of a document which serves as an authoritative rule or pattern in similar or analogous cases.
Practice of the Church	<p>Practice has been defined as a repeated or customary action; habitual performance; succession of acts of a similar kind; habit; custom; usage. The term may also be used in the sense of the form, manner or order of instituting and conducting a suit or other judicial proceedings through its successive stages to the end, in accordance with the rules and principles set down by law or the regulations and precedents of the court.</p> <p>There is case law which indicates that practice of the Church does not mean the practice of the local church or congregation, but of the church of which the congregation is a branch.</p>
Usage of the Church	A usage is akin to the practice. It has been defined as a habitual use, established practice or customary mode of action on behalf of a number of persons. It has also been defined as a reasonable and lawful public custom in a locality concerning particular transactions which is either known to the parties or so well established, general and uniform that they must be presumed to have acted with reference thereto. A usage is different from a custom in that it need not have existed from time immemorial. The grounds upon which a practice or usage will be considered to have crystallized into a custom or convention are as follows: continuous operation; open exercise; exercise conducted peaceably and as of right; reasonable, certain and obligatory in nature; consistency with other customs and compatibility with statutes.

**TERMS OF REFERENCES
STANDING COMMITTEES/ORGANIZATIONS
REPORTING TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Terms of Reference for each of the standing committees are approved by the General Assembly. In the late 1990s all terms of reference were reviewed and since that time, there have been revisions. The date of approval by the General Assembly is under the title of each committee. Below are either the specific terms of references or summaries of constitutions depending on the nature of the committee. For example: the Assembly Council has terms of reference whereas the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation has a summary of their responsibilities.

COMMITTEE TO ADVISE WITH THE MODERATOR
(A&P 2002, p. 214)

The Committee to Advise is appointed each year by the Moderator at the General Assembly.

PURPOSE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Committee to Advise with the Moderator of the General Assembly is accountable to the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and provides advice and support to the Moderator of a particular General Assembly. This committee does not develop policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- supporting, advising with, and praying for the moderator during her/his moderatorial year;
- meeting with the moderator to assist in establishing the itinerary of events;
- listening to reports from the moderator of his/her travels and activities;
- reporting to the General Assembly on the travels and involvement of the moderator;
- counting ballots for the moderator-designate and placing that nomination before the next General Assembly; and
- normally, meeting three times a year.

MEMBERSHIP

- Moderator of the General Assembly;
- members and the convener are named by the Moderator; the number is 6 members, some of whom may be corresponding members.
- Principal Clerk as consultant and Senior Administrator of the Assembly Office as secretary.

ASSEMBLY COUNCIL
(A&P 1999, p. 201-203; A&P 2011, p. 220)

PURPOSE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The General Assembly itself establishes policy and the Assembly Council is responsible for the implementation of that policy.

In its role as both a co-ordinating body and a prophetic one, Council will report to and be responsible to the General Assembly, and shall be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the work of the church is carried out efficiently and effectively within the policies established by the General Assembly.

The Assembly Council will be of central importance in the life of the church. It assumed all the legal powers vested in the Administrative Council on July 1, 1992.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In all matters, the Council will carry out its business and communications in a manner that demonstrates faithfulness, openness and transparency to the membership of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and a commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the furtherance of his reconciling mission in the world.

In its co-ordinating role, the Assembly Council will:

- co-ordinate the work of the national Agencies of the church, having direct links with national staff.
- recommend policy, submit short- and long-range plans, co-ordinate and recommend a realistic and balanced budget and generally present the current and future needs of the national Agencies to the General Assembly.
- have final responsibility in matters financial under the authority of the General Assembly.
- ensure that the decisions of the General Assembly are carried out and communicated to the church.
- assist the General Assembly in making responsible decisions by ensuring that both the Council, and the Assembly, have before them all the information that is needed and that is pertinent to the matter in hand in order to make a wise decision.
- with its diverse representation from across the church, provide the broadest possible viewpoint on proposed changes in policy direction. Thus, agencies are required to inform the Council of any proposed new directions, including additional executive staff positions. The Council will advise the Assembly. In some cases, the advice of the Council will be contrary to the wishes of the Agency Committee. In such circumstances, the General Assembly, with all the information before it, will make the final decision.

In its prophetic role, the Assembly Council will:

- present a vision for the mission of a church that looks to God for continual renewal.
- dream about the future of the church and seek to be a leading edge of what the church might be in the future.
- affirm the work of the agencies of the church as they carry out a prophetic role for our denomination.
- call itself and the church to account when in need of critique.
- invite input, when helpful, from committees of the church that do not normally report through the Council, mindful of its servant role.

MEMBERSHIP

The Council consists of 40 individuals:

- eight persons appointed by Assembly from the church at large, with the convener being named from among the appointees;
- fifteen persons appointed by Assembly for a term of three years, one from each of 15 different presbyteries, selected from among those nominated by presbytery, rotating by alphabetical order of presbyteries and alternating between clergy and non-clergy each time a presbytery's term comes in the rotation; five presbytery positions will rotate every year;
- eight persons appointed by Assembly for a term of three years, one from each of the synods, selected from among those nominated by synod and alternating between clergy and non-clergy at the end of each three year term;
- five persons ex-officio, namely the President of the Atlantic Mission Society, the President of the Women's Missionary Society, Convener of the Life and Mission Agency Committee, the Moderator of the General Assembly, Moderator of the previous General Assembly;
- four persons ex-officio without vote, namely the senior executive staff persons in the Life and Mission Agency and the Support Services, one of the heads of Colleges and the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly who will be Secretary of the Council; and
- it is understood that among the 31 members appointed by Assembly, a balance will be maintained, in as far as possible, between clergy and non-clergy, men and women, and reflect the ethnic diversity of our denomination. All members of the Assembly Council must be professing members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

COMMITTEES

To ensure that the Assembly Council can fulfil its terms of reference, the following committees will carry out much of the work of the Council and, as necessary, report through it, to the General Assembly:

1. Executive of the Assembly Council
2. Archives and Records Committee
3. Audit Committee
4. Benevolences Committee (including the responsibilities of the Fund for Ministerial Assistance)
5. Church Architecture Committee
6. Commission on Assets of Dissolved and Amalgamated Congregations

7. Commission on Proxies
8. Ewart Endowment for Theological Education Committee
9. Finance Committee
10. Governance Committee
11. Management Team
12. Nominating Committee
13. Personnel Policy Committee

AD HOC COMMITTEES

The Assembly Council may appoint ad hoc committees as necessary.

COMMITTEES RELATED TO THE COUNCIL

1. Theological Education Liaison Group

ATLANTIC MISSION SOCIETY

PURPOSE AND MOTTO

The purpose of the Society is to glorify God, and to support with prayer, study and service mission endeavours through The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces and the Presbyteries within its bounds. The motto is: The World for Christ.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership consists of: active members; associate members; life members and affiliated members.

STRUCTURE

The structure of the Atlantic Mission Society corresponds to that of the courts of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Society parallels the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces with each presbyterial taking in an area similar to the presbytery and the auxiliary being drawn from the local congregation. The president of the Society reports directly to the General Assembly each year.

Each auxiliary meets regularly and is bound by the Constitution and By-Laws of the Atlantic Mission Society which was revised in September 2000. A copy of the Constitution and By-Laws may be obtained from the AMS corresponding secretary.

The president of each auxiliary is a member of the presbyterial executive, along with officers elected by the presbyterial. Each presbyterial has an annual meeting. All members of all auxiliaries within the presbyterial are encouraged to attend. Voting members include one delegate from each auxiliary (in addition to their presidents) and one leader or delegate from each affiliated group, along with the members of the presbyterial executive.

There are eight presbyterials in the Atlantic Synod namely: Cape Breton; Halifax-Lunenburg; Miramichi; Newfoundland; Pictou; Prince Edward Island; St. John and Truro-Wallace. The president of each presbyterial and the executive officers of the Society form the executive committee of the Society. The executive committee meets at least three times per year, including sessions at the time of the Annual meeting.

The Society meets annually and each auxiliary, affiliated adult, youth and children's group within the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces is entitled to send one delegate. Others are free to attend at their own expense.

The Society has representation on the Assembly Council; the Life and Mission Agency; Synod Council and some other committees of the denomination.

THE PRESBYTERIAN MESSAGE

The Society produces ten issues a year of The Presbyterian Message. This excellent little magazine is concise, interesting and informative. It contains materials for the current studies, mission news, worship resources and other information to enable Presbyterians to be more effective partners in mission.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH GROUPS

The Society promotes and encourages children's and youth groups. The Society provides study material and leadership training for affiliated mid-week groups such as COC (Children of the Church), Explorers and CGIT (Canadian Girls in Training).

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Through free will offerings the Society is able to fulfil its purpose and fund special projects from time to time. The emphasis placed on study and sharing of information results in a committed and informed membership who support the Society as they are able.

CHURCH DOCTRINE COMMITTEE

(A&P 2006, p. 239)

PURPOSE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Church Doctrine Committee is a standing committee of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The purpose of the committee is to maintain a review of doctrinal issues as required.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To consider and to report on all matters of faith and order which the General Assembly may from time to time refer to it.
2. To make recommendations to the General Assembly for the furtherance of the church's continuing ministry of determining and declaring the church's confessional position.

MEMBERSHIP

24 members, namely:

- 21 General Assembly appointees, 6 of whom are by correspondence
- 3 ex-officio (Knox College, Presbyterian College, St. Andrew's Hall)

CLERKS OF ASSEMBLY

There are three Clerks of the General Assembly. The Clerks are most visible during the week of the General Assembly. At the briefing sessions, the Clerks meet with commissioners and answer questions about their report. They also help orient the young adult representatives by talking with them about what they might expect to experience at the General Assembly. During each business session, they record minutes and advise the Moderator on procedure. After each session adjourns, they prepare draft minutes that are printed and distributed to commissioners. Once the Assembly closes, the Clerks complete the official minutes, construct an index of minutes and reports, participate in the production of the Acts and Proceedings, and review evaluation forms submitted by commissioners.

Throughout the year, the Clerks of Assembly respond to queries from officers and members of lower courts, and from individual members of the church. In addition, they monitor the receipt of answers from presbyteries to remits sent down under the Barrier Act and to referrals from the General Assembly. They also act as consultants to General Assembly commissions and committees. The Clerks meet together twice each year. In autumn they discuss and designate the work referred to them by the Assembly. In spring they finalize their responses to overtures, report on findings from "study and report" matters and prepare their report to the General Assembly. Matters of polity are discussed at both meetings.

ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

(A&P 2001, p. 299-300, A&P 2004, p. 299-300, A&P 2015, p. 287)

PURPOSE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee facilitates national and international relationships of the denomination and is accountable to the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The following responsibilities are not meant to encompass all the church's involvement in ecumenical work as it is involved in a variety of ecumenical activities at different levels from the local congregation to international endeavours. The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee is to:

- provide information on and co-ordination for ecumenical and interfaith matters;
- maintain and strengthen relationships with ecumenical and interfaith councils, committees and consultations, and to recommend to General Assembly the establishing of new ecumenical and interfaith relationships;
- articulate the church's ecumenical vision;
- facilitate discussions within our denomination with respect to our interfaith responsibilities and understandings;
- endeavour to develop strategies concerning ecumenical and interfaith work;
- educate members and adherents of the church about national and international ecumenical and interfaith involvements;
- promote and encourage peace, respect and understanding between ourselves and those of other faiths, even on issues of significant disagreement;
- to encourage Presbyterians to acknowledge, understand and appreciate other faith traditions, and to help Presbyterians to live in good relationship with persons who belong to other religions;
- appoint delegates to ecumenical and interfaith bodies and enable those delegates to represent The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and
- establish and maintain grants to ecumenical and interfaith councils.

MEMBERSHIP

The membership consists of:

- 6 General Assembly appointments, one of whom will be the convener;
- 2 ex-officio members: Principal Clerk, General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency;
- Corresponding members: CANAAC (first named of the delegation), WCRC (one delegate from the last General Council), WCC (one delegate from the last Assembly), WMS (one representative), Record (one representative).

ECUMENICAL COUNCILS

The following councils relate to the denomination through the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee:

- Canadian Council of Churches (CCC)
- Caribbean and North American Area Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (CANAAC)
- World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)
- World Council of Churches (WCC)

DOCUMENTS RELATING TO ECUMENISM

Three documents which relate to the work of this committee are: Definition of Ecumenism (A&P 1997, p. 291-92), When the Church Speaks (A&P 1998, p. 338-39) and Interfaith Mandate (A&P 2007, p. 269-70, 47).

COMMITTEE ON HISTORY

(A&P 1999, p. 264-65)

PURPOSE

To encourage an appreciation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Reformed heritage as a part of the Church, Holy and Catholic.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Committee on History is accountable to the General Assembly to which it reports annually.

RESPONSIBILITY

1. To ensure that Presbyterians are aware of their past as the People of God in ways that will enable the church most effectively to understand the present and prepare for the future.
2. To encourage church agencies and other committees to include an historical perspective within their several mandates.
3. To collect, catalogue, interpret and display materials and artefacts relating to the life and mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
4. To develop policies for implementation by the Archives and the National Presbyterian Museum.
5. To support the programs of such organizations as the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History.
6. To provide human (visitations, speakers, etc.) and material (publications, publicity, etc.) resources for the accomplishment of the above goals.

MEMBERSHIP

- Six members, appointed annually by the General Assembly
- By correspondence, one member from the Atlantic Provinces
- Ex Officio: Synod Conveners; Professors of History from Knox College, The Presbyterian College, Montreal and the Vancouver School of Theology
- Consultants as required, including Archivist, Assistant Archivist and Archivist Emeritus

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

(A&P 1999, p. 284–85)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To hold meetings of the Committee for the following purposes to:
 - consider and discuss international issues;
 - reflect from time to time on the theological dimensions of events of international significance;
 - make recommendations to the General Assembly on matters of international concern;
 - communicate with the Canadian government on matters of international concern to The Presbyterian Church in Canada
2. To help Presbyterians across Canada to be informed and aware of important international issues for study, prayer and action.
3. To consult with Christians of other church bodies on matters of international concern to Christians.

The following re-wording has received the approval of the Committee:

The overall goal of the International Affairs Committee is to help Presbyterians across Canada to be informed and aware of important international issues for study, prayer and action.

OBJECTIVES

1. Consider and discuss international issues.
2. Reflect on the theological dimensions of events of international significance.
3. Consult with Christians of other church bodies on matters of international concern.
4. Make recommendations to the General Assembly on matters of international concern.
5. Develop educational initiatives on matters of international concern for use by congregations.
6. Communicate with the Canadian government on matters of international concern to The Presbyterian Church in Canada consistent with the document “When the Church Speaks”, adopted by the 124th General Assembly. (A&P 1998, p. 339)

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE

(A&P 2009, p. 303–307, 21, A&P 2011, p. 299–300, 22, A&P 2012, p. 298)

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE

The Life and Mission Agency Committee is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the Life and Mission Agency in response to the goals and objectives of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency reports directly to the Committee, and the Committee, in turn, reports to the General Assembly with information to the Assembly Council as appropriate throughout the year.

The Agency Committee will consist of 15 members, three of whom will be named by the Assembly Council from its membership, and 12 of whom will be named by General Assembly. The convener will be named by General Assembly from among those 12. In addition, there will be the following ex-officio voting members:

- representative of Atlantic Mission Society;
- 2 representatives of Women's Missionary Society;
- representative of Presbyterian World Service and Development Committee.

The Committee

- will assist the General Secretary in the development of programs, goals and objectives for the Agency,
- will receive from staff reports, programs and budgets for approval,
- will, in consultation with staff, develop the policies, plans and recommendations for the General Assembly,
- will insure liaison with the Assembly Office and Support Services,
- will report to the General Assembly and work with the Assembly Council through the convener,
- will make recommendations to the General Assembly for new members of the Committee as appropriate.

The Agency Committee will meet at least twice each year.

GENERAL MANDATE FOR THE AGENCY

In all its work the Life and Mission Agency, with the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, will strive to enable The Presbyterian Church in Canada to serve faithfully where it has been called in the world, and thus to be a sign of the reign of God. The agency will carry out its duties and responsibilities in such a way as to be faithful to the Mission Statement of the church, affirming the vision and desire of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to be a church integrating discipleship, evangelism, social action and justice.

The Life and Mission Agency will give leadership in the specific programs mandated by the General Assembly. The agency will respond flexibly, creatively and effectively to the needs of congregations and courts of the church as they seek assistance in responding to the call of Jesus Christ to mission.

The agency will give priority to doing what must be done at the national level, and will seek to facilitate tasks that can be done more appropriately at another level of the church, or ecumenically.

The Life and Mission Agency is mandated to be the program arm of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It shall work collaboratively through the Management Team, with the General Assembly Office and Support Services.

Canadian Ministries

Believing that congregations are of vital importance and that presbyteries have a pivotal role in the oversight of their constituencies, Canadian Ministries will strive to provide human, on-line, printed, financial and other resources to enhance the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Canadian Ministries will engage with and facilitate church leaders, supporting them as they carry out their ministry of furthering the spread of the gospel. Canadian Ministries:

- provides accessible, thorough and prompt responses to requests for information for all aspects of congregational life;
- produces on line and print resources for the church in the fields of evangelism, Christian education, youth, congregational development, change and transition, worship and leadership development;
- draws upon the gifts and talents of the leadership of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and connects them and their ideas to the wider church through leadership opportunities and print resources;
- assists presbyteries as they evaluate, vision and execute programs as a part of their strategic planning emphasis and supports presbyteries in the development of workshops, consultations and conferences for growth and renewal;
- supports and provides grants to congregations and to presbyteries as they oversee new church development, renewing ministries, Aboriginal ministries, chaplaincies, rural and remote ministries, and other specialized ministries;
- aids presbyteries in their search for new and innovative mission and ministry initiatives by providing grants from regular budget sources, from internally restricted funds, and from designated bequests;
- makes appointments based upon presbytery requests;
- will be current, creative, responsive, proactive and innovative in aspects of congregational ministry in seeking to carry out this mandate.

Ministry and Church Vocations

The Ministry and Church Vocations department shall assist the church to discern, prepare and support professional leaders in ministry, by such means as:

- stimulating theological reflection about ministry;
- maintaining effective working relationships with the Committee on Theological Education and the theological colleges;
- co-ordinating the work of special committees, such as the Committee on Education and Reception, the Continuing Education Grants Committee, and the Women in Ministry Committee;
- maintaining effective networks with synods and presbyteries, and serving as a resource in the use and interpretation of particular policies;
- assisting presbyteries, colleges and candidates in their decisions regarding candidacy for ministry;
- equipping presbyteries for their decisions regarding calls and designations, appointments and benefits;
- facilitating placement of professional church leaders through a congregational and personnel profile referral system;
- assisting the church in the ongoing support, nurture and development of professional church leaders;
- establishing and identifying resources to support the work of crisis intervention and conflict resolution across the church;
- formulating policies and managing a feedback loop on the church's use of them, proposing revisions as appropriate;
- serving actively in appropriate ecumenical coalitions/structures.

Planned Giving

The Planned Giving department shall include a strong teaching component, well grounded in the theology of stewardship and the ethos and mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The department will encourage and enable individuals to make gifts of their accumulated resources to all levels of the church.

The Planned Giving department will help congregations to understand the linkages between money and faith better and provide them with materials and opportunities to develop planned giving ministries of their own that are integrated into their own stewardship and mission education programs.

At the national level, the Planned Giving department will assist other departments in the establishment of ministry-based funds and specific mission initiatives that will invite gifts of money.

The Planned Giving department will provide clergy with materials and opportunities to learn, understand, embrace and implement planned giving programs.

The Planned Giving department will facilitate the development of networks of:

- congregations that have committed themselves to developing their own planned giving ministries;
- individuals who have made planned gifts to the church;
- professionals and volunteers who have been trained and equipped in the theological and financial bases of the department.

Presbyterian World Service & Development

The Presbyterian World Service & Development Committee shall be a standing committee of the Life and Mission Agency serving as the international development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. PWS&D is "to act as the agency within The Presbyterian Church in Canada for undertaking development activities, disaster relief and education of congregations to these world-wide needs." (A&P, 1981, p. 407)

PWS&D shall enable the church to respond generously and compassionately to human need around the world by:

- identifying and supporting development programs of partner agencies that contribute to long-term improvement in living conditions and transformation of society;
- building partnerships with churches and agencies with which we share development projects;
- providing emergency relief for people in disaster situations;
- working closely with other Life and Mission Agency departments such as International Ministries, Justice Ministries and Education for Mission to co-ordinate the wider mission of the church;

Communications

The Communications department will be the centre for all communication and evolving concepts of communication for the national office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The department will inspire the church in innovative communication techniques, bold methods for presenting the gospel to a 21st century audience and equip congregations to do the same. The department shall be responsible for:

- creating a vision for an innovative, multi-faceted communication strategy for The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
- communicating essential messages within The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
- communicating with Presbyterian churches and courts;
- communicating with the wider community about the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and its congregations;
- equipping congregations, presbyteries and synods to share their mission and ministry with the wider church;
- presenting bold concepts and images for other departments/offices, committees and agencies in communication and resources;
- providing an effective internal communication network to the respective bodies and courts of The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
- providing an effective external communication plan for the broader public (media, seekers and ecumenical bodies);
- assisting the General Assembly Office in implementing a communication strategy for the benefit of all commissioners and resource people at General Assembly.

International Ministries

The International Ministries department shall enable the church to participate in the worldwide mission of God through Jesus Christ in co-operation with partner churches and agencies throughout the world, by such means as:

- communicating regularly with the leaders of our partner churches and agencies through correspondence and partner visits;
- recruiting and sending personnel who will serve as living links of the bonds of friendship between our church and our mission partners around the world;
- providing funds to enable our partners to carry out aspects of their mission that they would not be able to carry out without outside assistance;
- enabling leadership development of key personnel, both lay and clergy, identified by our partners;
- participating in ecumenical organizations and coalitions that support our church's holistic understanding of the worldwide mission of God through Jesus Christ.

Justice Ministries

To collaborate with and assist congregations and courts of the church to respond obediently to the justice imperatives of the gospel by:

- supporting and facilitating initiatives on social justice in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This could involve: regional staff, congregations, social justice committees in presbyteries, the Atlantic Mission Society and the Women's Missionary Society and youth groups;
- encouraging theological reflection and action on social justice issues in The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
- animating workshops;
- responding to queries on church policies or social justice issues;
- co-coordinating research and writing position papers to assist The Presbyterian Church in Canada speak prophetically on social justice issues through engagement with elected officials and decision-makers;
- assisting Presbyterians and courts of the church in bringing about healing and reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and in building a new, strong and healthy relationship;
- collaborating with ecumenical partners including the Canadian Council of Churches, the Church Council on Justice and Corrections, KAIROS and Project Ploughshares and encouraging Presbyterians to become involved in these ecumenical agencies;
- ensuring representation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada on the Canadian Council of Churches' Commission on Justice and Peace; Churches Council on Justice and Corrections; KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives.

- working closely with these departments to provide resources that promote awareness and understanding throughout the church of the causes of poverty, conflict and suffering in the world and calling our constituency to obedient, generous involvement and response;
- administering the Refugee Sponsorship Agreement with the Canadian government and assisting congregations in sponsoring refugees to Canada;
- working actively with ecumenical and international agencies where possible to maximize our impact.

Stewardship

The Stewardship Department will help individuals, congregations, presbyteries and synods discover the ways that they can best use their resources to participate in God's mission in creation and redemption. The Stewardship Department will:

- foster an understanding of stewardship as a spiritual discipline and as a way to share in God's mission;
- use a variety of resources – print, electronic, workshops, consultation and communication – to help people understand mission and stewardship;
- encourage individuals, congregations, presbyteries and synods to use all the resources given by God to support mission locally, nationally and internationally;
- encourage and promote mission opportunities that help people learn about and experience mission first hand; for example, study tours, congregation/presbytery/synod mission trips, short-term volunteers;
- create attractive resources that help the church understand and support Presbyterians Sharing and keep it up-to-date on the income and accomplishments of the national budget;
- equip mission staff on furlough, visitors from partner churches abroad, mission volunteers and trip participants and others to speak about PCC mission and stewardship.

Sub-committees, Advisory Committees, Task Forces

The Agency Committee may establish sub-committees within the guidelines set forth in the Committee Structure in order to ensure that all areas of work are covered adequately.

In addition, Associate Secretaries and General Secretaries may request the appointment of advisory committees, within guidelines set forth in the Committee Structure. The role of advisory committees is to advise the staff person on matters related to her/his area of work. They do not have decision-making authority, but may make suggestions to staff and sub-committees.

The Agency Committee may appoint task forces to work on specific tasks within a designated time frame.

A task force or advisory committee may be centered in whatever part of the country will facilitate its task.

Relationship with other Committees and Agencies

The Life and Mission Agency Committee will relate especially to the following committees and agencies for purposes of co-operation on tasks of mutual concern and sharing of information:

- Support Services
- Assembly Office
- Women's Missionary Society
- Atlantic Mission Society
- Committee on International Affairs
- Committee on Church Doctrine
- Committee on Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations
- Committee on History
- Committee to Advise with the Moderator
- Presbyterian Record Committee

MINISTRY AND CHURCH VOCATIONS COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND RECEPTION

(Revised A&P 2011, p. 392-94, 42)

The Committee on Education and Reception recommends programs of study for mature students entering the ministries of this church, for diaconal ministers of this church seeking ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments, and for students who attend theological colleges other than those of The Presbyterian Church in

Canada. It is also the committee's responsibility to review the applications of ministers from other denominations who wish to work within this branch of the church.

CURRENT GUIDELINES

Graduates of "Other" Theological Colleges

1. All certified candidates for ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada must complete the entire candidacy process of preparation and discernment before ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments or designation to the Order of Diaconal Ministries. This process assigns significant roles in listening to the direction of God's calling of the candidate to the following: the session of the home congregation, the certifying presbytery, the college of The Presbyterian Church in Canada where the candidate studies, and eventually, the calling congregation and its presbytery.
2. The purpose of the guidelines for graduates of "other" theological colleges is two-fold:
 - a) to provide the church and the candidate with sufficient time and development of relationships to discern the candidate's readiness to serve in the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
 - b) to ensure that candidates are equipped with the knowledge, understanding and experience necessary to serve in the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

3. Membership Requirements

Candidates for the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are members of a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for at least one year before certification by a presbytery. Although this initial time span is short, the candidate's three years (or more) of study in a Presbyterian Church in Canada college normally extend this period considerably.

In the case of certified candidates for ministry who apply for a course of study as graduates of "other" theological colleges, they must have completed a minimum of two years of membership in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in the period immediately preceding their application. Such candidates, with the guidance of their presbytery and in consultation with their session, are directed to seek active participation and leadership, as appropriate to their interests and abilities and the needs of the church.

Presbyteries are required to ensure that the candidate's application, which comes before the Committee on Education and Reception only with the endorsement of the presbytery, details fully the nature and extent of the candidate's experience in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

4. Educational Requirements

Candidates for the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are normally required to earn a B.A. degree, or equivalent, from an accredited university, plus an M.Div. degree, and diploma, or equivalent, from a theological college of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

- 4.1 Candidates for ministry who are graduates of "other" theological colleges are assigned additional theological studies in a college of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The goals of these courses of study include the following:
 - a) to build upon the candidate's previous theological education,
 - b) to provide competent instruction on the Reformed view of scripture that enables students to develop sound principles of biblical interpretation,
 - c) to ensure strong emphasis on the preaching of the Word in Reformed practice,
 - d) to provide clear instruction on Reformed theology, sacramental theology and worship,
 - e) to provide instruction on Presbyterian Church in Canada history and polity, recognizing that understanding this denomination's history and the Canadian context is essential for ministerial service in The Presbyterian Church in Canada,
 - f) to ensure knowledge and understanding of the theology and practice of The Presbyterian Church in Canada,
 - g) to facilitate strengthening and sharpening of skills for ministry in the context of congregational practice in The Presbyterian Church in Canada,
 - h) to facilitate the development of significant friendships and relationships among those who will be colleagues in ministry.
- 4.2 Graduates of theological colleges not affiliated with The Presbyterian Church in Canada will be required to be formally examined under the auspices of the Committee on Education and Reception as to their readiness for ministry in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and to determine the length of

additional study required at one of our theological colleges. All applicants must have a B.A., or equivalent, from an accredited university, followed by an M.Div. degree from a Christian theological college accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (or equivalent, outside North America). No applicant will be considered without at least a B average, or its equivalent, in the M.Div. studies.

- a) Graduates of theological colleges not affiliated with member churches of the World Communion of Reformed Churches will normally be required to complete two semesters of theological study (10 semester courses) under the care of the governing board of one of the colleges of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This study will include supervised theological field education in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada throughout the assigned academic year.
- b) Graduates of theological colleges affiliated with member churches of the World Communion of Reformed Churches whose academic requirements are the equivalent of those of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, namely a B.A. degree, or equivalent, from an accredited university, plus an M.Div. degree, and diploma, or equivalent, will normally be required to complete 1 semester of theological study (5 semester courses) under the care of the governing board of one of the colleges of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The semester's study will be focused in such areas as: Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada polity (including policies), preaching and worship, sacraments and the doctrine of the church, and Reformed confessions.
- c) Colleges are expected to work with each candidate to map out a program of study that, to the fullest extent possible, avoids duplication of the candidate's previous studies. Colleges may use such means as comparison of detailed course outlines to determine areas of overlap.
- d) Significant length of time and breadth of leadership experience within The Presbyterian Church in Canada may be reflected in the educational requirements assigned to a particular candidate. Normally both factors – length and breadth – are required for an adjustment in the usual educational requirements. Length of time normally denotes continuous leadership experience in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Breadth of leadership experience normally denotes service outside the local congregation, such as presbytery representative elder; giving leadership in presbytery, synod or national programs; or serving on presbytery, synod or national committees.

Ministers and Those Certified for Examination for Ordination of Other Churches

All recommendations are made in terms of the ruling of the General Assembly (A&P 1977, p. 15) that:

All ministers from other denominations and Presbyterian Churches outside of Canada who desire to be received into the ministry of our Church, shall be required by the presbyteries in which they may labour to pass satisfactorily an examination on the history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and on the rules and forms of procedure: the examination to be taken any time between the time of application for reception and the time the applicant is received; results of such examination to be sent to the Committee on Education and Reception; the convener shall advise the Clerk of the General Assembly that all requirements have been met. The Clerk of Assembly may then inform the presbytery concerned that it may proceed to examine for certification for ordination, ordain or induct as the case may be.

Applicants for Special Courses

1. No application for a special General Assembly course may be recommended unless the applicant has attained at the time of first certification, the age of 35 years, and not attained the age of 60 years as of June 1st of the year in which the application is to be considered.
 - (a) Applicants for a special General Assembly course will be required to attend a guidance conference.
 - (b) Applicants are also required to have a psychological assessment.
 - (c) A synopsis of a candidate's responses to certification questions in Appendix J of the Book of Forms will be forwarded to the Committee on Education and Reception by presbytery as part of the candidate's application.
2. Requirements for special General Assembly programs shall be:
 - (a) Age 35–40. The equivalent of two full years of arts at the university level, three years intramural study in theology; one biblical language may be assigned at the discretion of the committee.
 - (b) Age 41–59. The equivalent of one full year of arts at the university level, three years intramural study in theology, with exemption from the biblical language requirement if desired by the applicant. These

- age guidelines shall come into effect at the time of application for a General Assembly course, or at the time a person begins the process of preparation for ministry, whichever is the earlier.
- (c) Prerequisite course work for any special course must achieve a B average or above. A program will not be recommended based on a lesser academic standard.
3. In January of the final year of study of an Assembly student, the appropriate presbytery is permitted to examine him/her for certification for ordination. Approval, however, must be subject to the certification by the college that prescribed studies have been satisfactorily completed and with affirmation, comparable to the college diploma, that the candidate has demonstrated fitness for ministry. The examining presbytery shall inform Ministry and Church Vocations of the Life and Mission Agency of its action.

General

1. In cases where the General Assembly does not approve a recommendation of the Committee on Education and Reception with regard to a particular candidate, the matter will be referred back to the Committee on Education and Reception for further consideration and report. (Book of Forms sections 302.1 and 302.2).
2. All candidates who have English as a second language and who are applying for a special course of studies in English, will be required to pass an English language examination under the supervision of the college the candidate proposes to attend.
3. The responsibility to examine candidates for reception in Canadian Presbyterian Church History and Government belongs to the presbyteries. Presbyteries are invited, nevertheless, to use the colleges of the church as resources to assist them in this responsibility.

Note: A reading course has been developed by the Presbytery of East Toronto in consultation with the faculty of Knox College. The Committee on Education and Reception is prepared to make this course available to presbyteries upon request.
4. Travel Costs: The policy of the committee is that applicants are responsible for any travel costs involved in appearing before the committee, except in those cases for which the committee accepts financial responsibility because of special circumstances.
5. All recommendations to the General Assembly are conditional upon receipt of a satisfactory medical certificate when requested.
6. All recommendations of eligibility for reception are valid for three years but may be renewed upon application.
7. Applications to the Committee on Education and Reception for a special General Assembly course, for permission to be examined for certification for ordination, and for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada should be in the hands of the committee one full month before the next scheduled meeting of the committee.
8. (a) In the case of persons who apply for permission to be examined for certification for ordination, the committee will send a circular letter to all the presbyteries of the church, which will be given three months to lodge any competent objection with the Secretary of the Committee. (Book of Forms section 205.2).
(b) In the case of applicants for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the committee will send a circular letter to all the presbyteries of the church which will be given two months to lodge any competent objection with the secretary of the committee. (Book of Forms section 248.3).
9. All recommendations for permission to be examined for certification for ordination and for reception are subject to no valid objections being received from the presbyteries in response to circular letters.
10. The committee has adopted a policy to not receive applications for exemption from the study of a biblical language from persons who have a B.A. degree or equivalent.
11. The assignment of a course of study does not guarantee admission to one of the colleges of the church. Each college sets its own admission criteria.
12. The financial obligations for travel and an assigned course of study are the responsibility of the candidate and his/her presbytery of care.

Guidelines for Reception into The Order of Diaconal Ministries

1. Each application should be received on its own merits.
2. Transcripts will be forwarded to the Committee on Education and Reception which will arrange to have them evaluated, paying attention to the degree of similarity of training to that of other members of the Order.
3. For graduates of colleges of other Reformed Churches or ATS accredited colleges, the applicants shall normally be required to pass an examination on The Presbyterian Church in Canada (its history, doctrine and polity) and on Christian Education in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
4. Graduates of non-affiliated colleges shall normally be required to complete satisfactorily not less than 1 year of study at one of our colleges, which year shall include those areas of study listed in guideline 3.
5. In cases where the General Assembly does not approve a recommendation of the Committee on Education and Reception with regard to a particular candidate, the matter will be referred back to the Committee on Education and Reception for further consideration and report.
6. All candidates who have English as a second language, and who are applying for a special course of studies given in English will be required to pass an English language examination under the supervision of the college the candidate proposed to attend.
7. The financial obligations for travel and an assigned course of study are the responsibility of the candidate and his/her presbytery of care.
8. All recommendations to the General Assembly concerning candidates are conditional upon receipt of a satisfactory medical certificate, if requested.

MACLEAN ESTATE COMMITTEE

(A&P 2005, p. 524-525)

The Maclean Estate Committee is appointed each year by the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Members are appointed for three years.

PURPOSE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Maclean Estate Committee's Statement of Purpose states: "We are called to glorify God by building Christian community and fostering spiritual growth and leadership skills among Presbyterians and the larger Christian church. We also seek to offer all people 'a place apart' to learn, grow, and enjoy God's creation. We strive to do this within an atmosphere of unity, love, service, and openness to God's redemptive purpose."

The Maclean Estate Committee is accountable to the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To oversee the income from the Maclean Estate Endowment Fund by:
 - a. budgeting expenses and income and maintaining adequate books and financial records
 - b. providing a grant to augment the stipend of the minister at Knox Presbyterian Church, Crieff (per Colonel Maclean's will).
 - c. providing bursaries to promising students in the Crieff region who attend the University of Guelph or the University of Western Ontario as full time students (per Colonel Maclean's will).
 - d. raising funds for the development of our property.
2. To administer the property at Crieff Hills by:
 - a. maintaining and developing the property and keeping the buildings, roads, fencing, and recreation facilities in good repair, insured and taxes paid.
 - b. ensuring that the land is utilized in a way that is productive, as well as aesthetically pleasing, useful for recreation connected to our programs, and as a wildlife habitat.
 - c. ensuring, as far as possible, that the uses of the surrounding properties are not incompatible with programs and atmosphere of Crieff Hills Community as a retreat and conference centre.

3. To provide competent staff, relevant programs, adequate facilities and equipment to ensure that Crieff Hills Community is enabled to serve the needs of the congregations and persons within them by offering programs in the following areas:
 - a. the experience of Christian community in a ‘setting apart’.
 - b. the encouragement of personal spiritual growth.
 - c. the equipping for service within congregations, committees and the World.
 - d. the development of leadership skills.
 - e. the fostering of an appreciation for creation in praise of the creator.
4. To support as much as possible the programs and policies of The Presbyterian Church in Canada by reflecting them in the programs and policies of Crieff Hills Community .
5. To study and develop ways and means by which Crieff Hills Community may be of service to The Presbyterian Church in Canada on a nation-wide basis as a retreat and conference centre.
6. To publicize the programs and facilities of Crieff Hills Community throughout The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in other churches and groups.
7. To subsidize when possible, programming costs for deserving individual or church groups where other funds are not available.
8. To subsidize greater than normal travelling costs of participants in Crieff Hills Community programs when possible and when funds become available.
9. To provide facilities and hospitality for other church groups.
10. To provide facilities and hospitality for non-church groups in non-peak periods or when available.
11. To report annually to the General Assembly on the operation and programs of Crieff Hills Community and other related matters.

MEMBERSHIP

- 12 General Assembly appointments, one of whom will be the convener
- 1 ex-officio, non-voting member: Managing Director of Crieff Hills Community

COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE STANDING COMMITTEES (A&P 2010, p. 361-62; A&P 2012, p. 451-52; A&P 2015, p. 447)

PURPOSE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Committee to Nominate Standing Committees serves the General Assembly by presenting a slate of names for membership on each of its standing committees. It will co-ordinate the call for and reception of nominations, and assist the church in finding members who can serve at the national level on committees and boards where their gifts and skills are most needed and can best be used.

The Committee to Nominate Standing Committees reports to the General Assembly and is accountable to the Assembly for its work.

The Committee to Nominate Standing Committees is appointed by the General Assembly on nomination by the various synods as per Book of Forms section 288.1 and described below.

RESPONSIBILITIES

In all matters, the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees will carry out its duties with discretion, fairness and balance, seeking to build up the church, to reflect the ethnic diversity of the denomination and challenge members to service.

The Committee will:

- Keep records of the names and addresses of all members of standing committees, together with their date of appointment and duration of term.
- Communicate to the church the various opportunities for service on standing committees, and the skills, gifts and time commitment required for each position.

- Annually correspond with each standing committee and board in order to call for nominations and seek to ascertain the skills particularly needed over the next term of office.
- Annually correspond with presbyteries to call for nominations to the various standing committees.
- Maintain data on the racial and ethnic diversity of the standing committees of the church and make that data available to the church as appropriate.
- Meet at least twice per year, no more than once in person, to carry out its work.

The Assembly Office will provide administrative support to the committee.

MEMBERSHIP

The Committee to Nominate Standing Committees consists of nine members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada appointed for a three-year non-renewable term, nominated by the eight synods from within their bounds, with one synod, every three years in rotation, nominating two members to make up the full complement of nine. Each synod will alternate between clergy and non-clergy each time its term comes in the rotation (see Book of Forms section 288.1).

One third of the members shall retire each year. The initial rotation will be established by the Clerks of Assembly.

The convener is to be named from among the membership.

GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES AND NOMINATION PROCESS

The General Assembly in 2012 approved changes to the structure and workings of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees with the adoption of Book of Forms section 288.1 and the Terms of Reference (A&P 2010, p. 361-62, 41).

The Committee to Nominate proposes nominations for membership on each of the General Assembly's standing committees. It co-ordinates the call for and reception of nominations and assists the church in finding members who can serve at the national level on committees where their gifts and skills are most needed and can best be used.

Membership and Terms on Standing Committees

Any professing member of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (member, ruling elder, diaconal minister, minister of Word and Sacrament) may be nominated by or apply with the endorsement of a session, presbytery, synod or standing committee.

Members on the standing committees of the General Assembly serve for a three-year term with the option of serving a second three-year term. A six-year limit on membership applies to all individuals unless the General Assembly makes an exception. A member's term will be indicated by the year commencing and completing the appointment (for example, 2012-2015). A person can serve only on one committee at a time. Members by correspondence are treated in the same manner. Ex-officio members are not included in the six-year rule and are designated as voting or non-voting on the membership list.

Membership will be based on a rotation with 1/3 of membership retiring annually.

When a vacancy on a committee occurs during the year for any reason, that committee may appoint someone to complete the term, but that person must be confirmed by the next General Assembly through the report of the Committee to Nominate.

The committee is to ensure that there is a balance between ministers and laity; regional representation, gender, and will strive to include the cultural diversity of our church.

Nomination Process

In the fall, the committee will communicate with the church to encourage members of the church to consider serving on a standing committee of the General Assembly.

1. Specific correspondence calling for nominations will be sent to sessions, presbyteries, synods and committees. This information will also be on the church's website inviting nominations. This correspondence includes: submission date for nominations; terms of reference for the various standing

- committees, size, and requirements of members; nomination forms; and any information particular to that year's nomination process and/or needs.
2. Nominations are to be accompanied with full address and contact information, biographical information and reasons explaining why the person is recommended (a nomination form will be provided).
 3. The committee is encouraged to contact individuals to consider serving on a standing committee. These nominations will be considered along with those submitted by sessions, presbyteries, synods and committees.
 4. All nominations must be submitted by the date indicated in the correspondence.
 5. The committee, at its March meeting, prepares the slate of names for nomination. Following this meeting it will inform those individuals being nominated.
 6. The slate of nominations will be a recommendation in the committee's report to the General Assembly circulated to commissioners in the Book of Reports (initial mailing). The committee may submit a supplementary report for the registration package distributed at the General Assembly.
 7. Recommendations/Amendments to the slate of nominations at General Assembly:
 - 7.1 The report with its recommendations is presented at an early sederunt.
 - 7.2 Once the report has been received, only new nominations and nominations for the second three-year term are subject to amendment.
 - 7.3 Amendments must be given in writing, over the signature of two commissioners, to the convener of the committee by the time noted. The amendment must be in the form of a name replacing the proposed nomination or a name filling a vacancy in the report along with reasons for the amendment. (Amendment forms will be available.)
 - 7.4 The committee will meet during the Assembly, if necessary, by telephone conference at an appointed time to deal with amendments and prepare a supplementary report.
 - 7.5 Upon presenting a supplementary report, only those suggested changes to the slate of nominations previously made in writing by commissioners may be introduced by amendment.
 8. Following the General Assembly, the General Assembly Office will inform those individuals appointed to standing committees, along with initial information about the specific committee to which they have been appointed. A thank you letter will be sent to those persons whose term has concluded.

PENSION AND BENEFITS BOARD

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board is appointed by and accountable to the General Assembly for the administration of the Pension Plan according to its Constitution (A&P 2001, p. 502-521).

The Board is responsible to the General Assembly for the administration of the other Benefit Plans as approved by General Assembly.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Overseeing the Pension and Benefits Administration.
- Monitoring the solvency of the Pension Fund.
- Recommending changes to the Constitution, including contribution rates, to the General Assembly.
- Reporting to and filing required documents with the Pension regulatory authorities.
- Selecting Actuarial and other consultants as required.

MEETINGS

The Board normally meets in October and February and at other times if required.

MEMBERSHIP

The Board consists of nine people appointed by the General Assembly and the ex-officio (voting) members. One third of the appointed members are appointed each year to three year terms of office, subject to Assembly's own rules for re-election and maximum years of service.

The ex-officio members are:

- The Moderator of the General Assembly
- The Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
- The Convener of the Trustee Board

The Board requires members who are active plan members, retired members and others with experience in those disciplines relevant to the work of the board, for example; actuarial, accounting insurance benefits and pension administrations and labour relations.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

PURPOSE

The principal objects of the Corporation are to provide guarantees to the Royal Bank of Canada for loans for church building projects and to assist with housing for retired servants of the church.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The General Manager has the general management and direction of the Corporation's business and affairs, subject to the authority of the Directors and the supervision of the Chairman. The Directors present a report to the annual meeting of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As treasurer of the Corporation, the General Manager is responsible for the care and custody of all funds and securities and for keeping full and accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements. As secretary of the Corporation, the General Manager attends and records the proceedings of all meetings and maintains the corporate status. The four Directors who form the Audit Committee are responsible to all the Directors for the annual audited financial statements of the Corporation. The Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and five Directors, who form the Executive Committee, are responsible to all of the Directors for the conduct of the ordinary business of the Corporation.

MEMBERSHIP

The members of the Corporation are the Directors. Directors are elected annually by the General Assembly for a four year term from nominees provided by the Corporation's Board of Directors and one quarter retire in rotation each year.

PRESBYTERIAN RECORD

PURPOSE

The Presbyterian Record is operated by an independent federally incorporated company to publish issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of current and timely news analyses and opinions of interest or importance to Presbyterians across Canada.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The editor and publisher has general supervision of both the journalistic content of the magazine as well as the management of the corporation subject to the authority of the board of directors and the supervision of the convener. The directors present a report to the annual meeting of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The board of directors has overall responsibility for the corporation. The editor/publisher and the board develop policies that are carried out by the editor. As chief executive officer and secretary of the corporation, the editor is responsible for ensuring that the corporation complies with all appropriate governing federal and provincial legislation. The corporation is audited annually by an outside auditors firm.

MEMBERSHIP

The members of the corporation elect and are the directors. Members are approved annually by the General Assembly for a three-year term from nominees provided by the corporation's board of directors and one third retire in rotation each year.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES

Presbyterian College, Montreal, Knox College, Toronto and St. Andrew's Hall, Vancouver, each have boards of governors appointed by the General Assembly. These three, along with Vancouver School of Theology, the college with which St. Andrew's Hall is associated, report directly to the General Assembly.

TRUSTEE BOARD

PURPOSE

Under authority of the Parliament of Canada and the Legislatures of all 10 Provinces, the Trustee Board has responsibility to administer the Acts of the Federal Government in each of 10 Provinces and manage the assets and sign contracts for the Church.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Trustee Board, subject to its statutory duties, is accountable to the General Assembly and when not in session to its Assembly Council.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Administer the Acts in force:
 - Canada 3 George VI, 1939, Chapter 64 (as amended in 1962 and 1966)
 - Alberta 7 George VI, 1943, Chapter 44
 - British Columbia 7 George VI, 1943, Chapter 73
 - Manitoba 7 George VI, 1943, Chapter 73 (Re-stated 1990 as Chapter 197)
 - New Brunswick 7 George VI, 1943, Chapter 73
 - Newfoundland 1956, Chapter 30
 - Nova Scotia 7 George VI, 1943, Chapter 63
 - Ontario 3 George VI, 1939, Chapter 69
 - Prince Edward Island 11 George VI, 1947, Chapter 58
 - Quebec 10 George VI, 1946, Chapter 95
 - Saskatchewan 7 George VI, 1943, Chapter 75
2. Acquire and manage properties.
3. Enter into contracts.
4. Investment of funds.
5. Issue annuities.
6. Establish pension plans.
7. Execute documents.

PROCEDURE

1. Meetings will be held at the call of the convener.
2. Normally, three meetings of the Trustee Board will be held each year, in fall, late winter and spring.
3. Minutes are kept by the Secretary.
4. Business arising at any meeting will be decided by a majority of the members (including the convener) in attendance or connected by telephone.
5. A quorum of any meeting will be three members.

MEMBERSHIP

- Shall consist of not less than 7 and not more than 15 and shall consist of the convener of the Assembly Council, the Treasurer and such other persons as appointed by the General Assembly. Presently there are the convener of Assembly Council, 2 staff persons appointed and 9 members at large. 9 members at large are appointed for one six year term (1/3 of whose terms expire each year). The convener of Assembly Council while holding that capacity. The Principal Clerk and the Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer while holding their offices.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

The Women's' Missionary Society is a society of Presbyterians whose main objective is to support the mission of the church. The statement of purpose reads as follows:

The WMS is a community of Christians whose purpose, in response to the love of God in Jesus Christ, is to encourage one another and all the people of the church to be involved in local and world mission through prayer, study, service and fellowship.

We are a national organization covering the country from Quebec to British Columbia. We are divided into seven regions from which we draw representation in membership, stewardship and service.

The organization is structured to run parallel to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. That is, we have local groups within congregations, presbyterials within the bounds of presbyteries, and synodicals within the bounds of synods. Our Council would be parallel to the General Assembly of the Church.

The Society functions autonomously within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, but it reports to the General Assembly and is under its jurisdiction.

Currently, there are over 7000 members from Quebec to British Columbia.

OVERTURES / MEMORIAL FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

Below are overtures and one memorial to which responses or interim study reports are in the report section of the Book of Reports.

OVERTURES

Overture No. 3, 2015 re budgeting for General Assembly costs

(Referred to Assembly Council: A&P 2015, p. 573, see Book of Reports, p. 2.1.26)

WHEREAS, the Presbytery of Westminster was asked to host the 141st General Assembly (2015) at fairly short notice; and

WHEREAS, the Presbytery of Westminster was informed that it needed to have a significant budget for the Local Arrangements Committee to host the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, this budget is to include basic and necessary costs such as: ground transportation, worship, banquets and hospitality; and

WHEREAS, the Presbytery of Westminster notes that there are presbyteries in Ontario that bear the cost of hosting the General Assembly fairly frequently; and

WHEREAS, the Presbytery of Westminster believes the costs of the national church should be borne by the church as a whole;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Westminster humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly, to direct the Assembly Council to budget all necessary costs for General Assembly in the General Assembly budget, beginning with the General Assembly subsequent to the 141st General Assembly in 2015, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 4, 2015 re full inclusion in the church of all person regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity

(Referred to Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 573–75; see Book of Reports, p. 12.1.39)

WHEREAS, there is one true God whom to know is life eternal, and whom to serve is joy and peace (Living Faith 1.1) and the mystery of human existence is that we belong to God and have been made in the divine image (Living Faith 2.2.1); and

WHEREAS, the teachings of Jesus challenged the people of his time, and us today, to think critically about the exclusion of those previously considered unacceptable such as women (under certain conditions), lepers, eunuchs (a form of gender variance in Jesus' time, see Matthew 19:11), Gentiles and Samaritans; and

WHEREAS, we commit to seek to read the scriptures under the continual illumination and correction of the Holy Spirit; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada historically has been on the forefront of advocating for the decriminalization of same sex relationships and for full justice for all, out of our gospel conviction of equality for all (Galatians 3:28); and

WHEREAS, recent biblical scholarship within the Reformed tradition such as the work of Jack Rogers (*Jesus, the Bible and Homosexuality*), Beverly Harrison (*Making the Connections*), James Brownson (*Bible, Gender, Sexuality*) and Chris Glaser (*Uncommon Calling*) has concluded that there are faithful ways of reading scripture that affirm Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT)* people in committed relationships; and

WHEREAS, many LGBT people within The Presbyterian Church in Canada struggle with the ambiguity of their position within the church where an unresolved tension and inconsistency exists between who they experience themselves to be but, at the same time, being considered barred from living who they are, and required to be celibate not as a matter of choice but of rule; and

WHEREAS, the imposition of permanent involuntary celibacy even in ordained ministry was rejected during the Reformation; and

WHEREAS, ecumenical partners of The Presbyterian Church in Canada such as The Presbyterian Church (USA), the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the United Church of Canada and the Church of Scotland have developed nuanced and affirming theological positions on matters of human sexuality and committed relationships in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the assessment of the scientific and medical communities as well as the recognition of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's statement on human sexuality is that sexual orientation and gender identity are not only a matter of choice or lifestyle, but also factors in place prior to birth; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada recognizes that homosexual orientation is not a sin (Social Action Handbook, p. 35), and

WHEREAS, it is 20 years (1994) since The Presbyterian Church in Canada adopted a statement on human sexuality, and twelve years (2003) since the reception and adoption of the report of the Special Committee re Sexual Orientation (A&P 2003, p. 526ff); and

WHEREAS, LGBT people are fully included in our Canadian society and discrimination based on real or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited throughout Canada in private and public sector employment, marriage, housing, services provided to the public and publicity, in part due to the historic justice advocacy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, more and more congregations and presbyteries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada recognize and celebrate the diversity of their membership with the inclusion of LGBT people in full participation in congregational activities and leadership and discern the fruit of the Spirit and a call from God in them and their relationships; and

WHEREAS, those who are living in, or who may live in a committed same sex relationship, feel called by God and show gifts for ministry to serve in ordained and diaconal ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada consists of a diversity of people and perspectives that may vary on biblical interpretation and Christian praxis while maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3);

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of East Toronto humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly,

- to cease ecclesial discipline in the courts of the church against ordained ministers of Word and Sacraments, diaconal ministers, and elders where such discipline is based on such ministers and elders being in committed, faithful relationships with people of the same sex, and
 - to prepare through the Life and Mission Agency of the General Assembly, in consultation with Justice Ministries a declaratory statement for the General Assembly that affirms that The Presbyterian Church in Canada is fully inclusive of every person regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity in all aspects of church life, including calling, designation, ordination, and marriage equality as a matter of justice and hospitality,
- or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

(*The term 'LGBT' is an acronym currently used to refer to people whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual and/or whose gender identity does not conform either to binary male/female categories or the 'assigned' gender at birth. While variations of the acronym exist to emphasize the spectrum that exists with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity, LGBT will be used for the purpose of this overture.)

Overture Nos. 5, 24, 30 and 35, 2015 re full inclusion regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity

(Referred to Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries) and Church Doctrine Committee: A&P 2015, p. 575-76; see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10-14, 12.1.39)

WHEREAS, it is 20 years since The Presbyterian Church in Canada adopted a statement on human sexuality in 1994 (A&P 1994, p. 251ff); and

WHEREAS, it has been twelve years since the 2003 reception and adoption of the report of the Special Committee re Sexual Orientation (A&P 2003, p. 526ff); and

WHEREAS, the Special Committee on Sexual Orientation's recommendation that the Life and Mission Agency and the colleges of the church continue to study questions of human sexuality was adopted in 2003; and

WHEREAS, knowledge and the study of issues of human sexuality, both scripturally and scientifically, has changed significantly over the last 20 years; and

WHEREAS, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered (LGBT) people are fully included in our Canadian society and discrimination based on real or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity is prohibited throughout Canada in private and public sector employment, marriage, housing, services provided to the public and publicity; and

WHEREAS, ecumenical partners of The Presbyterian Church in Canada such as the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, the United Church of Canada and the Church of Scotland have developed nuanced and affirming theological positions on matters of human sexuality over this period; and

WHEREAS, more and more congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada recognize and celebrate the diversity of their membership with the inclusion of LGBT people in full participation in congregational activities and leadership; and

WHEREAS, many LGBT people within The Presbyterian Church in Canada struggle with the ambiguity of their position within the church and the lack of pastoral affirmation and hospitality they experience in light of the 1994 Report on Human Sexuality and its interpretation; and

WHEREAS, those who are living in, or who may live in a committed same sex relationship, feel called by God to serve as ordained ministers of The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, Christian organizations that used to seek to change people's sexual orientation such as Exodus International and New Direction Ministries have recognized and apologized for deep spiritual harm and psychological damage done to LGBT people by not affirming their innate sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity; and

WHEREAS, in the residential school apology we confessed the "sin of trying to change someone's fundamental nature"; and

WHEREAS, the assessment of the scientific and medical communities is that largely sexual orientation and gender identity is not a matter of choice or lifestyle, but a factor in place prior to birth; and

WHEREAS, our Leading with Care Policy ensures that congregations, groups and organizations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada will ensure "a safe place for all"; and

WHEREAS, the anti-LGBT stance of the Christian church in its many worldwide forms has resulted in approval of, or collaboration in, the persecution of LGBT persons, leading to verbal, psychological and physical assaults and killings; and

WHEREAS, the teachings of Jesus require that acceptance and inclusiveness of oppressed or persecuted minorities is central to the gospel message;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to affirm that The Presbyterian Church in Canada is fully inclusive of every person regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity in all aspects of church life, calling and relationship as a matter of justice and hospitality; or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture Nos. 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 26 and 31, 2015 re affirming the Statement on Human Sexuality (1994)

(Referred to Church Doctrine Committee and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 576–81, 582–87, 601–02, 605–06; see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10–14, 12.1.39)

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has spoken thoughtfully, faithfully and pastorally on matters of human sexuality in its 1994 Statement on Human Sexuality, (A&P 1994, p. 30, 48, 56–63, 251–74); and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada adopted Living Faith as a subordinate standard in 1998, which defines marriage as a "union in Christ" between "a man and a woman" (in continuity with the Westminster Confession of Faith, adopted in 1875 and 1889 and in confirmation of the Statement on Human Sexuality [A&P 1998, p. 42, 471; WCF XXIV.1 and Living Faith 8.2.3]); and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly in 2002 passed a recommendation "that, through the Clerks of Assembly, it be communicated to the Government of Canada and the provincial governments of Canada that The Presbyterian Church in Canada holds to the position that marriage is between one man and one woman and that this position is clearly stated in our church's doctrinal standards" (A&P 2002, p. 21, 237); and

WHEREAS, the General Assemblies of 2003 and 2009 expressed their reservations about going in a direction affirmative of same-sex intimacy by (a) declining to commend the resource: "Listening..." to congregations and sessions for study (2003) and (b) declining to receive Overture No. 16, 2009 which sought to redefine marriage with respect to love and faithfulness rather than specifying its participants as "a man and a woman" (A&P 2003, p. 43, 545 and A&P 2009, p. 21, 526–67); and

WHEREAS, what has not changed in the past 20 years is the validity of the arguments advanced in the Statement on Human Sexuality, for example (a) the theological significance of gender complementarity, (b) the hermeneutical significance of the Bible's consistent negativity toward same-gender intimacy (despite ancient awareness of the complex origins of homosexual identity, the diverse kinds of homosexual relationships, and the gospel's mandate to include various previously excluded sin-neutral groups: Gentiles, women, slaves, etc), and (c) the pastoral significance of the testimonies to liberation and abundant life discovered through disciplined sexual faithfulness and participation in Christian community; and

WHEREAS, each of these trajectories of argument anticipated by the Statement on Human Sexuality have been helpfully developed in the intervening 20 years, by, for example (a) Christopher Roberts on the theology of gender complementary, answering the proposals of Eugene Rogers and James Brownson, (b) Robert Gagnon, William Webb and Bernadette Brooten on exegesis and hermeneutics of the relevant biblical texts, answering the proposals of Jack Rogers and William Stacy Johnson, and (c) Richard Hays, Wesley Hill and Rosaria Butterfield, answering the proposals of Chris Glaser and Jeffrey John; and

WHEREAS, what has changed in the past 20 years is the intensification of cultural and political pressure to regard same-sex intimacy (and other diverse forms of sexual identity and expression) as part of a normalized diversity; and

WHEREAS, what has also changed is the move by a particular kind of church/denomination (ie. northern hemisphere, wealthy, mainline, declining) toward acceptance of homosexual practice/relationships in regard to ordination and/or marriage; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit (tethered to the Word, in Reformed theology) rarely corresponds with the Zeitgeist (the spirit of the age) but most often empowers the church to be truly prophetic in a counter-cultural mode; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of unity and is most surely grieved by such division as has occurred in the Anglican communion, the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and other denominations following the decision to extend ordination and marriage to practicing same sex partners, which has only weakened the church in its witness and mission; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit creates a particular kind of multi-ethnic community which we cherish in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and which the present drive to normalize, and even to celebrate same sex relationships, risks destroying, since many Ghanaian, Korean, Cameroonian, Arabic, Taiwanese Presbyterians etc., find such discussion alien to their interests, exclusive of their voices, and a scandal to their understanding of the faith; and

WHEREAS, the pneumatology of the Statement on Human Sexuality with respect to the above-mentioned matters of discernment, prophetic speaking and ecclesiastical unity is not particularly robust; and

WHEREAS, language of “inclusion” and “justice” is often incendiary, offensive and aggressively divisive in its suggestion that those who affirm the church’s teaching on human sexuality are somehow unjust, inhospitable and ultimately complicit in “deep spiritual harm” or “persecution” or “oppression” or “...killings” (see, for example, Overture No. 5. 2015 sent to this Assembly from the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington (p. 575–76) and the open letter posted at pccforinclusion.org), when such a spirit is the furthest thing from the heart of most non-affirming congregations and pastors in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and from the welcome experienced by homosexual persons worshipping in these congregations; and

WHEREAS, we admittedly have some ways to go in realizing the vision of the Statement on Human Sexuality for a church which repents of past antipathy to homosexuals, and offers an environment where unmarried persons (wherever they identify themselves on the straight to LGBTQ spectrum) may be transparent about their desires, and speak openly to the challenge of living sexually faithful lives in a generation where sexual gratification is idolatrously pursued as if it were the holy grail; and

WHEREAS, any change in the doctrine and practice of our church around the ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals (as a political/justice issue simply), without close study of questions of exegesis, theology, polity and possible practical and pastoral fallout, would be a grave disservice to the church, and an unwarranted usurpation of the role of the committees of General Assembly under whose aegis these matters naturally fall; and

WHEREAS, any change in the doctrine and practice of our church around the ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals, which would deem presbyteries competent to adjudicate in the matter, and lead to a diversity of practice across The Presbyterian Church in Canada, would fail to recognize the role of a General Assembly in “declaring truth” on an issue which relates directly to our understanding of the authority of scripture in the life of the church, and our understanding of the very God, who in scripture is revealed as both architect of this created order and powerful redeemer of those ensnared in all manner of sin; and

WHEREAS, any change in the doctrine and practice of our church around the ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals by way of a declaratory act of one General Assembly is contrary to the law and practice of the church (which requires church-wide consultation through the Barrier Act), and would be a violation of the democratic impulse and virtue of balance enshrined in our Presbyterian polity;

THEREFORE, the Session of Kortright Church, Guelph, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to prepare, through the Committee on Church Doctrine, an appendix to the Statement on Human Sexuality (1994) which affirms the original content/intent of that report, and which addresses current literature on the subject of same-sex intimacy and relationships, with particular attention to (a) what it means to be faithful to the Word, the Holy Spirit and the church’s prophetic vocation, in this particular cultural moment, (b) what it means concretely to form gospel communities which are truth-telling and love-embodying, and where women and men, of whatever orientation or sex-history, may find that “fullness of life” which is promised as much to the unmarried, as to the married (Living Faith 8.2.2), and (c) what it means for a Presbyterian polity to navigate disunity in ways that are responsible to scripture, as our supreme standard, and to our vows at ordination; or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture Nos. 13, 22 and 36, 2015 re establishing a native ministries endowment fund

(Referred to Assembly Council and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 587–88, 597–98, 610; see Book of Reports, p. 2.1.26–27, 12.1.3)

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in the Confession of 1994, has acknowledged and accepted the call to the Holy Spirit to “seek opportunities to walk with Aboriginal peoples to find healing and wholeness together as God’s people”; and

WHEREAS, the National Native Ministry Council of The Presbyterian Church in Canada consisting of representation from all the Native ministries supported by the denomination coordinates and supports this journey into healing and reconciliation on the front lines and at the grass roots of this calling; and

WHEREAS, the need for and appreciation of the healing programs that the seven ministries in the council are offering and want to offer is constantly growing; and

WHEREAS, the existing sources that have funded this mandated work, from church, government, and individuals, are increasingly unstable and shrinking; and

WHEREAS, the demands of energy, time, and money that are needed to raise funds for the work, at both the national and local level, drain resources away from the healing and reconciliation work itself;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to:

1. establish a Native Ministry Endowment Fund to be invested with the consolidated fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada,
 2. delegate the administration of the income realized from that fund annually to the National Native Ministry Council of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for support of its ministries in healing and reconciliation,
 3. direct that a tithe (10%) of all undesignated bequests to The Presbyterian Church in Canada be deposited into the Native Ministry Endowment Fund,
 4. direct that a tithe (10%) of the money realized by the national church from the disposal of property within The Presbyterian Church in Canada be deposited into the Native Ministry Endowment Fund,
 5. direct the Planned Giving office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to assist the National Native Ministry Council in preparing materials and promoting the Native Ministry Endowment Fund as a good place to leave a legacy,
- or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture Nos. 14, 18, 19 and 21, 2015 re study paper on human sexuality affirming the Statement on Human Sexuality (1994)

(Referred to Church Doctrine and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 588–90, 591–95, 595–97; see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10–14, 12.1.39)

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has spoken thoughtfully, faithfully and pastorally on matters of human sexuality in its 1994 Statement on Human Sexuality, (A&P 1994, p. 30, 48, 56–63, 251–74); and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada adopted Living Faith as a subordinate standard in 1998, which defines marriage as a “union in Christ” between “a man and a woman” (in continuity with the Westminster Confession of Faith, adopted in 1875 and 1889 and in confirmation of the Statement on human sexuality [A&P 1998, p. 42, 471; WCF XXIV.1 and Living Faith 8.2.3]); and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly in 2002 passed a recommendation “that, through the Clerks of Assembly, it be communicated to the Government of Canada and the provincial governments of Canada that The Presbyterian Church in Canada holds to the position that marriage is between one man and one woman and that this position is clearly stated in our church’s doctrinal standards” (A&P 2002, p. 21, 237); and

WHEREAS, the General Assemblies of 2003 and 2009 expressed their reservations about going in a direction affirmative of same-sex intimacy by (a) declining to commend the resource: “Listening...” to congregations and sessions for study (2003) and (b) declining to receive Overture No. 16, 2009 which sought to redefine marriage with respect to love and faithfulness rather than specifying its participants as “a man and a woman” (A&P 2003, p. 43, 545 and A&P 2009, p. 21, 526–67); and

WHEREAS, what has not changed in the past 20 years is the validity of the arguments advanced in the Statement on Human Sexuality, for example (a) the theological significance of gender complementarity, (b) the hermeneutical significance of the Bible’s consistent negativity toward same-gender intimacy (despite ancient awareness of the complex origins of homosexual identity, the diverse kinds of homosexual relationships, and the gospel’s mandate to include various previously excluded sin-neutral groups: Gentiles, women, slaves, etc) and (c) the pastoral significance of the testimonies to liberation and abundant life discovered through disciplined sexual faithfulness and participation in Christian community; and

WHEREAS, each of these trajectories of argument anticipated by the Statement on Human Sexuality have been helpfully developed in the intervening 20 years, by, for example (a) Christopher Roberts on the theology of gender complementary, answering the proposals of Eugene Rogers and James Brownson, (b) Robert Gagnon, William Webb and Bernadette Brooten on exegesis and hermeneutics of the relevant biblical texts, answering the proposals of Jack Rogers and William Stacy Johnson, and (c) Richard Hays, Wesley Hill and Rosaria Butterfield, answering the proposals of Chris Glaser and Jeffrey John; and

WHEREAS, what has changed in the past 20 years is the intensification of cultural and political pressure to regard same-sex intimacy (and other diverse forms of sexual identity and expression) as part of a normalized diversity; and

WHEREAS, what has also changed is the move by a particular kind of church/denomination (ie. northern hemisphere, wealthy, mainline, declining) toward acceptance of homosexual practice/relationships in regard to ordination and/or marriage; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit (tethered to the Word, in Reformed theology) rarely corresponds with the Zeitgeist (the spirit of the age) but most often empowers the church to be truly prophetic in a counter-cultural mode; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of unity and is most surely grieved by such division as has occurred in the Anglican communion, the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church (USA), and other denominations following the decision to extend ordination and marriage to practicing same sex partners, which has only weakened the church in its witness and mission; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit creates a particular kind of multi-ethnic community which we cherish in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and which the present drive to normalize, and even to celebrate same sex relationships, risks destroying, since many Ghanaian, Korean, Cameroonian, Arabic, Taiwanese Presbyterians etc, find such discussion alien to their interests, exclusive of their voices, and a scandal to their understanding of the faith; and

WHEREAS, the teaching about the Holy Spirit in the Statement of Human Sexuality with respect to the above-mentioned matters of discernment, prophetic speaking and ecclesiastical unity is not particularly strong; and

WHEREAS, language of “inclusion” and “justice” is often incendiary, offensive and aggressively divisive in its suggestion that those who affirm the church’s teaching on human sexuality are somehow unjust, inhospitable and ultimately complicit in “deep spiritual harm” or “persecution” or “oppression” or “...killings” (see, for example, Overture No. 5. 2015 sent to this Assembly from the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington (p. 575–76) and the open letter posted at pccforinclusion.org), when such a spirit is the furthest thing from the heart of most non-affirming congregations and pastors in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and from the welcome experienced by homosexual persons worshipping in these congregations; and

WHEREAS, we admittedly have yet to realize the vision of the Statement of Human Sexuality for a church which repents of past antipathy to homosexuals, and offers an environment where all persons married or unmarried (wherever they identify themselves on the straight to LGBTQ spectrum) may be transparent about their desires, and speak openly to the challenge of living sexually faithful lives in a generation where sexual gratification is idolatrously pursued as if it were the holy grail; and

WHEREAS, any change in the doctrine and practice of our church around the ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals (as a political/justice issue simply), without close study of questions of exegesis, theology, polity and possible practical and pastoral fallout, would be a grave disservice to the church, and an unwarranted usurpation of the role of the committees of General Assembly under whose aegis these matters naturally fall; and

WHEREAS, any change in the doctrine and practice of our church around the ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals, which would deem presbyteries competent to adjudicate in the matter, and lead to a diversity of practice across The Presbyterian Church in Canada, would fail to recognize the role of a General Assembly in “declaring truth” on an issue which relates directly to our understanding of the authority of scripture in the life of the church, and our understanding of the very God, who in scripture is revealed as both architect of this created order and powerful redeemer of those ensnared in all manner of sin; and

WHEREAS, any change in the doctrine and practice of our church around the ordination and marriage of practicing homosexuals by way of a declaratory act of one General Assembly is contrary to the spirit, law and practice of the church (which requires church-wide consultation through the Barrier Act), and would be a violation of the democratic impulse and virtue of balance enshrined in our Presbyterian polity;

THEREFORE, the Session of Innerkip Church, Innerkip, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly, to prepare, through the Committee on Church Doctrine, in consultation with the Justice portfolio of the Life and Mission Agency, a reflective study paper for the use of the whole denomination to come to a deeper understanding of the issues raised in this and other related overtures, memorials and petitions, an appendix to the Statement on Human Sexuality (1994) which affirms the original

content/intent of that report, and which addresses current literature on the subject of same-sex intimacy and relationships, with particular attention to (a) what it means to be faithful to the Word, the Holy Spirit and the church's prophetic vocation, in this particular cultural moment, (b) what it means concretely to form gospel communities which are truth-telling and love-embodiment, and where women and men, of whatever orientation or sex-history, may find that "fullness of life" which is promised as much to the unmarried, as to the married (Living Faith 8.2.2), and (c) what it means for a Presbyterian polity to navigate disunity in ways that are responsible to scripture, as our supreme standard, and to our vows at ordination; or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 15, 2015 re calling the church to listen regarding human sexuality

(Referred to Life and Mission Agency Committee and Church Doctrine Committee: A&P 2015, p. 590, see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10-14, 12.1.39)

WHEREAS, the church is called to point others to God revealed in Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, issues of human sexuality continue to be prominent in both the public sphere and a very real concern in the lives of the many individuals and congregations who, together, make up The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, in the struggle to respond, the church, in obedience to scripture, is compelled to give voice to the biblical call to both do justice and love righteousness; and

WHEREAS, the way to sound both those notes continues to be a matter over which there is a wide difference of opinion within the church; and

WHEREAS, past efforts of our denomination to respond to issues of human sexuality have themselves issued a clear call for "listening" and have expressed the opinion that, should there be a "winner" in this continued conversation the only loser will be the church; and

WHEREAS, an insistence on any one way of understanding and approaching these issues cannot help but be divisive, as evidenced the painful experience of numerous sister denominations in recent years; and

WHEREAS, one of the strengths of our denomination has been our ability to accommodate a breadth of understanding and opinion as we wrestle together with what the Holy Spirit is saying to us in scripture; and

WHEREAS, groups doing ministry in LGBTQ communities (e.g. New Directions) have shown a similar ability to accommodate a breadth of understanding on sexuality and gender identity as they fulfill our shared calling to point others to God revealed in Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, the church can ill afford to see its resources divided and its unity fractured at such a time as this, when both the Assembly and our collective experience have told us that congregational health and vitality must be our primary concern; and

WHEREAS, such a fracturing of the church would seem to be a denial of our Lord who calls us to speak the truth to one another in love and who prays that all his own might be one;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Pickering humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to engage the church in a fresh round of "listening" through (a) developing an intentional strategy within the church's congregations and courts where we can share stories and explore the scriptures, and (b) creating a safe space for this sharing by removing any possibility of church discipline for those who come forward with their stories, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 16, 2015 re encouraging dialogue on marriage and sexuality

(Referred to Church Doctrine Committee: A&P 2015, p. 590-91, see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10-14)

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in accordance with its duty, "adopts such measures as may tend...to preserve the unity of the church" (Book of Forms section 292); and

WHEREAS, the issues of homosexuality and same-sex marriage are particularly controversial in both church and society; and

WHEREAS, denominations have been divided and damaged by adopting new policies on these issues, prior to establishing a strong consensus and common bond of understanding among their members; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has the responsibility and opportunity to pursue a better course by working toward unity; and

WHEREAS, many within our denomination are currently unfamiliar with each other's views and the official stance of The Presbyterian Church in Canada;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Oak Ridges humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to pursue unity and consensus within the church by encouraging presbyteries to familiarize their congregations with relevant scriptures and the official documents of The Presbyterian Church in Canada pertaining to marriage and sexuality, and to create opportunities for respectful theological dialogue with

emphasis placed on points of agreement, or to do otherwise, as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 17, 2015 re holding General Assembly in a central location

(Referred to Assembly Council: A&P 2015, p. 591; see Book of Reports, p. 2.1.27–28)

WHEREAS, concern has been expressed in recent years about the cost of holding the General Assembly; and
WHEREAS, the cost of travel is a significant part of the cost of holding the Assembly; and
WHEREAS, a large number of the people in our denomination live in southern Ontario; and
WHEREAS, the staff of our national office are located in southern Ontario; and
WHEREAS, the cost of meeting might be reduced if an arrangement were made with one institution for a number of consecutive years;
THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Halifax and Lunenburg humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to consider eliminating the practice of meeting outside central or southern Ontario every five years and to consider holding the Assembly in one location in central or southern Ontario for a number of consecutive years, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 23, 2015 re gay and lesbian candidates for ministry and same-sex marriages

(Referred to Church Doctrine Committee and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 598; see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10–14, 12.1.39)

WHEREAS, the Reformed tradition confesses salvation by grace alone through Christ alone, accepted by faith alone and not by any claim of human action or identity which makes some more acceptable to God than others; and
WHEREAS, we all hear God's call to live out our faith in God by following Jesus' commandment to love God with heart, mind, strength and soul and our neighbours as ourselves; and
WHEREAS, no one among us can ever live out Jesus' commandment perfectly and so we all stand together in need of God's mercy and forgiveness, whatever our sexual orientation; and
WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has sought to offer to all welcoming, respectful and safe communities in its congregations through the leadership and decisions of the General Assembly (i.e. the report of the Special Committee on Sexual Orientation [A&P, 2003, p. 526–47] and the Leading with Care Policy); and
WHEREAS, this intention is betrayed by the lack of welcome offered to at least some gay and lesbian members of our church through the resistance to recognize God's call to those who have gifts for the ministry of Word and Sacraments and through the inability to bless or marry same sex couples in committed relationships; and
WHEREAS, the General Assembly has allowed presbyteries and sessions the ability to discern calls to ministry, assessing the gifts and faith of candidates within their pastoral jurisdiction, and has also given sessions the responsibility to determine who appropriately is to be married with each congregation or pastoral charge; and
WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada falls short of its calling to be a means of grace and to live out the love of God and neighbour we profess when it continues to deny gay and lesbian members of our church the right and responsibility to participate fully in its ministries and also to withhold from them God's blessing and support in their relationships;
THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Calgary-MacLeod humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to prepare declaratory legislation which enables presbyteries and sessions to consider for certification gay and lesbian candidates for ministry and which enables sessions to give permission for the celebration of marriage for gay or lesbian couples who come under their pastoral care, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 25, 2015 re revising and reforming the diaconate

(Referred to Life and Mission Agency Committee (Ministry and Church Vocations) and Order of Diaconal Ministries: A&P 2015, p. 599–601; see Book of Reports, p. 12.1.47–48)

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada currently has two models of the diaconate in place: an older reformed model of congregational deacons that sit on a deacons' court to oversee the financial fabric of the church, and a newer model of the Order of Diaconal Ministries that historically evolved from the deaconess movement in the turn of the 20th century; and
WHEREAS, there has not been any candidate for diaconal ministry since 1997, and there are currently five persons across Canada serving in this role in The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and
WHEREAS, both offices are fading away in The Presbyterian Church in Canada and this will soon mark the end of a historical, biblical office in The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

- WHEREAS, the Book of Forms section 135 states that “The office of deacon is an ordinary and perpetual function in the church (2 Bk. of Dis. VIII, 2), to which office it belongs ‘to take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor.’ (Form of Presbyterian Church Government)” and *Together in Ministry* (2004) states, “One way by which the session may delegate some of their pastoral duties is through the office of congregational deacon. The congregational deacon is ordained to this office whose responsibility it is to administer charity and works of mercy in the community, to visit the sick and generally to administer the love of Christ in a hurting world” and this reflects a changing definition that includes social and pastoral ministry in the world; and
- WHEREAS, diaconal ministers are designated to train and specialize in the areas of (1) pastoral care, (2) social ministry and (3) Christian education, and this reflects an overlap between these two offices; and
- WHEREAS, this overlap and lack of distinction can be seen as a lack of support for diaconal ministers who are required to train and specialize in these areas of ministry; and
- WHEREAS, other denominations in the wider Christian church require theological training and specialized training for their deacons who work in these areas of ministry; and
- WHEREAS, the term “deacon” is the more common term used in the wider church for persons ordained and appointed by a higher court, and The Presbyterian Church in Canada reserves this term for those serving in the congregational role; and
- WHEREAS, there are only two other denominations – the United Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada – that use the term “diaconal minister”, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada has now given permission for their diaconal ministers to use the term “deacon”; and
- WHEREAS, ministers of Word and Sacrament (pastoral ministers) are referred to as “pastors”, and it would be consistent for diaconal ministers to be referred to as “deacons”; and
- WHEREAS, congregational deacons, ruling elders, and ministers of Word and Sacrament are ordained, diaconal ministers are not ordained and this reflects displacement and exclusion in ministry; and
- WHEREAS, the definition of ordination in The Presbyterian Church in Canada is “the act of setting an individual in an order by authority of the presbytery, signifies the church’s confirmation of the individual’s call... Ordination always involves a laying on of hands,” as outlined by our *Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament* document; and
- WHEREAS, an order of ministry refers to an office of the church that extends back to the apostolic community and is biblically founded, and the lack of ordination for diaconal ministers – setting them in an order – reflects a failure to connect this ministry with the deacons of the early church; and
- WHEREAS, there is a difference between a religious order and an order of ministry, and diaconal ministers belong to a religious order; and
- WHEREAS, a religious order is a community or body endorsed by the denomination and was originally established to support and oversee the work that women were doing in mission in the community and overseas who were not permitted to hold any ordained offices in the church; and
- WHEREAS, diaconal ministers, in 1991, were recognized as part of a distinct office of the church with full voice and vote in the courts, and no attempt was made to critically evaluate the purpose or function of a religious order for a modern-day, Reformed church; and
- WHEREAS, the hallmarks of a religious order include spiritual formation and a rule of life and the order in The Presbyterian Church in Canada does not include such practices; and
- WHEREAS, there is a shared vision in the wider Christian church of deacons serving primarily as bridges between the church and the world, who help connect the church to the most needy, marginalized and vulnerable peoples; and
- WHEREAS, diaconal ministry in The Presbyterian Church in Canada has become almost exclusively associated with Christian education and this is a severe departure from its own history within The Presbyterian Church in Canada as a missional function of the church and a departure from a shared ecumenical vision; and
- WHEREAS, deacons in the wider church tend to work within churches, church-related institutions and secular organization that help the most needy, marginalized and vulnerable persons, and in The Presbyterian Church in Canada there are no guidelines or criterion for those wishing to pursue a call outside of the church; and
- WHEREAS, there is no clear vision for how this bridging ministry plays out between the church and the world in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, either for those placed in the church or for those placed outside of the church; and
- WHEREAS, other denominations require specialized training for their deacons along with a core component of theological education, and The Presbyterian Church in Canada requests and M.Div.; and

WHEREAS, an M.Div. does not adequately prepare persons for employment in their chosen field or competency to work in the church in highly specialized ministry, especially in vocations that require certification and registration to practice (i.e. chaplaincy, social work, counselling, etc.); and

WHEREAS, the Church of Scotland allows for the designation after their deacons' name (DCS) to signify their ordination;

THEREFORE, the Session of Knox's Galt Church, Cambridge, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to:

- a) critically evaluate the function of both diaconal offices in the church and evaluate if there should be a convergence into one diaconal office overseen by presbytery, thereby fully transitioning to the newer diaconal model established by the deaconesses of our church, that encompasses ministry that extends far beyond financial oversight in the church, and
- b) allow diaconal ministers to use the term "deacon" in their public ministry, thereby allowing them to identify with a biblical office and a shared ecumenical term, and
- c) ordain diaconal ministers; that is, set them in an order of ministry that extends back to the deacons of the early church, so that they may share in ordination with elders, minister of Word and Sacrament and congregational deacons, and
- d) critically evaluate the purpose and function of a religious order of a modern-day, Reformed church and consider implementing spiritual formation and an invited rule of life as core spiritual practices that better distinguish it as a religious order, and
- e) establish clear guidelines and criteria for persons who wish to pursue a call outside of the church, and
- f) re-establish this office as a missional office of the church that focuses on caring for the most needy, marginalized and vulnerable persons, and create a vision for how this bridging ministry plays out between the church and the world, both for those who are placed in the church and for those placed outside of the church, and
- g) re-evaluate the educational requirements and consider allowing persons to enter into professional offices that fully equip and certify them for ministry in areas of healing, justice, and discipleship, with one year of core theological training at seminary, and
- h) to consider allowing a designation after one's name as a credential other than M.Div., or do otherwise, as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 27, 2015 Re Health and Dental Plan membership options

(Referred to Pension and Benefits Board: A&P 2015, p. 602-603; see Book of Reports, p. 16.1.2-3)

WHEREAS, churches in various parts of Canada find it most difficult and expensive to provide benefits plans for individual or small numbers of their staff; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada offers medical, dental and long term disability benefits to the following groups: clergy; staff at the national office; staff at Presbyterian churches across Canada who work 20 hours per week or more, and to retired clergy, diaconal ministers and former national staff; and

WHEREAS, all congregational employees working 20 hours per week must be on the plan or none can be on the plan; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada national benefits plan currently available for congregational staff is restrictive in its application, not permitting an opting out for staff already covered by other benefits plans; through other employment or through their spouse's plan; and

WHEREAS, if staff are covered by other benefits plans, congregations cannot enroll employees that do not have other benefit plans in The Presbyterian Church in Canada plan; and

WHEREAS, the problem primarily impacts those in lower paying positions; and

WHEREAS, the staff in churches are predominately women, thus the non opting out clause interpretation, limits those staff with no other benefits to being able to access the national Presbyterian Church in Canada benefits plan; and

WHEREAS, the annual cost of The Presbyterian Church in Canada package is expensive reflecting the costs for a relatively small population currently using the benefits plan; and

WHEREAS, the larger the pool of participants the lower the unit cost is, a sound cost/benefit; and

WHEREAS, the current restrictive nature of the interpretation of the 1998 overture discourages churches from using the national Presbyterian Church in Canada benefits plan thus reducing the pool of covered benefit participants and reducing the likelihood of the benefits plan premiums to be reduced closer to the industry norm;

THEREFORE, the Session of Glenview Church, Toronto, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to permit opting out for church workers who are already members of another benefits plan while permitting access to The Presbyterian Church in Canada benefits plan for any other eligible staff

in a congregation, or other agency related to The Presbyterian Church in Canada, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 29, 2015 re review biblical texts that speak to homosexual relationships

(Referred to Church Doctrine Committee and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 603; see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10–14, 12.1.39

WHEREAS, we honour Jesus Christ as Lord of our church, and want to witness to his lordship in every area of life; and

WHEREAS, one significant area of life relates to our sexuality; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in the report of the Church Doctrine Committee adopted by the 118th General Assembly concluded that, “The church, in faithfulness to God speaking in the scriptures, will...call homosexual brothers and sisters in Christ to abstain from homosexual genital activity”; and

WHEREAS, some members of our denomination who are attracted to the same sex find such an ethical conclusion a hard but helpful discipline for their lives, while others of our denomination who are attracted to the same sex find such an ethical conclusion creates tension between their self-identity and desire for intimacy on the one hand, and their desire to be faithful Christian believers on the other; and

WHEREAS, our church acknowledges that our interpretation of scripture is fallible and thus in constant need of revision; and

WHEREAS, as Christians we want to be both true to scripture and to care for those who suffer for whatever reasons, including homosexual ones; and

WHEREAS, the weight of the objection to homosexual genital relationships in the 1992 Church Doctrine Committee report lay in the exegesis of the biblical texts that speak negatively of homosexuality; and

WHEREAS, the possibility of reversing the church’s teaching on this highly sensitive issue needs to be thoroughly examined;

THEREFORE, the Session of Knox Church, St. Catharines, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to direct the Church Doctrine Committee to review how The Presbyterian Church in Canada has formerly addressed the issue of homosexual relationships, and in particular to study the traditional exegesis of the biblical texts that speak to this issue, alongside the various revisionist readings of those texts that have been suggested in recent decades, so to prepare a report that will guide the church on this contentious issue, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 32, 2015 re upholding marriage as between one man and one woman

(Referred to Church Doctrine Committee and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 606) – Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10–14, 12.1.39

WHEREAS, all mankind is born with a sinful nature in which we all struggle throughout our lives (Romans 6–7); and

WHEREAS, our loving Heavenly Father, in his purpose to redeem creation unto himself, sent his son Jesus Christ to die for all sinners (1 Peter 3:18, Romans 6:10–11) and so to save us by his grace alone (Ephesians 2:8–9), because his love for us is too great to leave us in our sins (Romans 6:1–14); and

WHEREAS, we are commanded to repent of our sins (Matthew 4:17, 2 Peter 3:9) and that our Lord himself grants us the ability to repent (Acts 11:18, 2 Timothy 2:25); and

WHEREAS, as Christians we are called by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to influence society by being the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (Matthew 5:13–16); and

WHEREAS, God’s good plan for marriage between one man and one woman, as well as experiencing sexual intimacy, is clearly defined in his word (Genesis 2:24) and is repeated and reinforced in the New Testament by our Lord Jesus Christ (Mark 10:6–9, Matthew 19:4–5) and the apostolic writings (Ephesians 5:31), as are sexual sins, including homosexuality, (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13, Romans 1:26–27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Timothy 1:10) and the consequences of sexual sin (1 Corinthians 6:18); and

WHEREAS, to willingly continue in behaviour from which our Lord has commanded us to abstain can only be seen as unrepentant sin and as such can only have damaging consequences to us as individuals, to society and to the church; and

WHEREAS, all ordained elders and ministers of the Word in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, as well as candidates for these offices, must uphold and be “bound only to Jesus Christ the church’s king and head; the scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the written Word of God” and are “to follow no divisive course, but to seek the peace and unity of Christ among his people”;

THEREFORE, the Session of Grace Church, West Hill, Toronto, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to:

- continue, as a unified voice, to uphold our historic and biblical stance that marriage is designed by God as a holy covenant between one man and one woman exclusively, and
- encourage the faithful to lovingly care for all persons and, if any unrepentant sin is found within the Church, with all gentleness, humility and prayer correct that brother or sister until repentance is attained, for such is our calling from God,

or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 33, 2015 re issues of human sexuality

(Referred to Church Doctrine Committee and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 607–08; see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.10–14, 12.1.39)

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has wisely provided the means by which concerns may be presented to its courts; and

WHEREAS, there is intent by some members and presbyteries to request the church's official affirmation of same sex intimacy, the ordination of practicing homosexuals, and the marriage of same sex couples; and

WHEREAS, such inclusive affirmation would be a flagrant denial of the church's historical position that scripture is the only infallible rule of faith and manners; and

WHEREAS, this historical position is supported by the principal subordinate standard, the Westminster Confession of Faith (Chapter XXIV), and also by Living Faith (8.2.3); and

WHEREAS, all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (1 Timothy 3:16–17); and

WHEREAS, scripture clearly and repeatedly states that sexuality is a gift from God, and all sexual relations are to be confined to the marriage of a man and a woman – (all others being considered unnatural and immoral); and

WHEREAS, the eternal God of truth has declared that his word will stand forever (Isaiah 40:8), and no one is to add or subtract from it and reject its eternal relevance; and

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit has been provided to the church so its members can be taught God's will and enabled to apply it in their daily living; and

WHEREAS, it is the Holy Spirit who unites believers to live harmoniously in accordance with the revealed will of God for the church, and this unity is based on truth not compromise; and

WHEREAS, all people are born with a sinful disposition, regardless of sexual orientation, and require the transforming power of God to bring abundant life, and power over temptations and weaknesses of many kinds; and

WHEREAS, anger, disrespect, and animosity within the church, aimed at those who hold opposing views, grieves a holy God, and ought not to be; and

WHEREAS, tolerance of others' beliefs and lifestyles, as promoted by human opinions and cultural norms – must never be the goal within the church, rather, compassion and justice must be based on principles in scripture; and

WHEREAS, as John Stott stated, "without the wholesome positive teaching of the Bible on sex and marriage, our perspective on the homosexual question is bound to be skewed" (*Decisive Issues Facing Christians Today*, p. 344); and

WHEREAS, scripture urges believers not to allow the world to squeeze them into its mould (Romans 12:1–2) by following the culture's standards and practices, but to regard their bodies as gifts to be used in God-honouring ways, in dependence on his power to live in single purity and married faithfulness; and

WHEREAS, challenging the authority of God and being proud of such defiance resulted in Satan's downfall, yet, as the father of lies (John 8:44) he continues to promote sin as a pleasure and a right, and to suggest God could not possibly say unreasonable things (Genesis 3); and

WHEREAS, the numerous and notable talents and resources of homosexuals in the church may be regarded as needed and useful, scripture declares "obedience is better than offerings" (1 Samuel 15:22), and it is the Holy Spirit who works through obedient servants; and

WHEREAS, the apostle Paul rejoiced to announce that former practicing homosexuals in the church in Corinth had renounced their immoral lifestyle and been transformed by the grace and power of God (1 Corinthians 6:9–11), thus proving the possibility and reality of change not necessarily of orientation, but of obedience to God through his power in an individual; and

WHEREAS, the cost of discipleship may be very high and may involve pain, loneliness, ridicule, misunderstanding, etc., it is what God may allow therefore, the believer must be prepared to obey God and leave the consequences with him; and

WHEREAS, the church must strive to support members who do not practice in spite of their homosexual orientation, to do otherwise would only increase the hurt and exclusion caused by insensitive believers who judge the weaknesses of others while ignoring their own obvious or hidden faults; and

WHEREAS, God values each individual and does not have favourites, only intimates, nor does he categorize sins as humans tend to do, therefore the church needs prayerfully to focus on a holy God who condemns all sin and offers forgiveness and cleansing to all who truly repent; and

WHEREAS, a vital relationship with Christ is essential to deal with life's many challenges, and especially with the strong and emotional sexual issues regardless of one's orientation; and

WHEREAS, regular fervent prayer, and diligent study of scripture applied to daily living, and reliance on the Holy Spirit to instruct and empower, are the means by which believers can grow in grace to spiritual maturity and usefulness in the church; and

WHEREAS, society has rejected absolutes in favour of moral relativism and the church is in danger of doing likewise, thus creating a difficult and complex dilemma; and

WHEREAS, the Book of Forms section 292 states that the General Assembly "in general, adopts such measures as may tend to promote true godliness, to repress error and immorality, to preserve the unity of the church, and to advance the kingdom of Christ throughout the world";

THEREFORE, the Session of Bridlewood Church, Toronto, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to call for strong support of biblical standards for faith and practice; repentance for sins against God and fellow believers; and prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit in all the discussions and decisions relating to this critical issue; or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Overture No. 37, 2015 re request for process for a congregation leaving the denomination

(Referred to Clerks of Assembly in consultation with Trustee Board, Assembly Council, and Pension and Benefits Board: A&P 2015, p. 610-11, see Book of Reports, p. 7.1.2-6)

WHEREAS, it is understood that the trustees of a local congregation hold the real property of a congregation in trust for that congregation; and

WHEREAS, the local congregation is the body which pays the mortgage, monthly bills, does the maintenance of the building and property, and over time invests all the time and energy into the maintenance of its witness in the community; and

WHEREAS, according to the current law and practice of the church upon dissolution of a congregation the real property and assets vest in the Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, there is no present provision whereby a congregation dissenting from a majority decision within The Presbyterian Church in Canada can withdraw from The Presbyterian Church in Canada and expect to keep its property; and

WHEREAS, the potential for legal battles over property is likely to be lengthy, costly and a poor witness to the world; and

WHEREAS, other Reformed bodies including the Presbyterian Church (USA) have made allowance for "gracious dismissal" of dissenting congregations whereby the withdrawing congregations are able to retain the title to their property and assets; and

WHEREAS, the development of a gracious process to divide, dismiss, or dissolve churches in consultation with their members which exercises consistency, pastoral responsibility, transparency, and gracious witness should be our desire:

THEREFORE, the Session of Grace Church, Orleans, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly to consider establishing a means for "gracious dismissal" of congregations which might in good conscience be unable to accept changes in doctrine or discipline which depart from the historic confessional standards of the church, or do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Commissioner's Overture re public prayer

(Referred to Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee: A&P 2015, p. 23; see) Book of Reports, p. 8.1.1-6

WHEREAS, Presbyterians acknowledge the importance of the legal freedom to publicly pray; and

WHEREAS, the Supreme of Court of Canada on April 15, 2015, unanimously ruled that public prayers be banned in the city council of Saguenay, Quebec; and

WHEREAS, the implications of such a ruling has had a ripple effect of causing many other city councils to discontinue prayer in the public; and

WHEREAS, other levels of government are also weighing the implications of banning public prayer in such public meetings; and

WHEREAS, chaplains and others are asking what the implications are for their ministries and services in public; and
WHEREAS, public prayer is not solely a Christian practice, but is part of many other religious traditions, including First Nations traditional practice; and

WHEREAS, we who pray regularly in public should always take note when public prayer is outlawed;

THEREFORE we, J. Dent and P.G. Bush, humbly overture the 141st General Assembly to look into the effects of this Supreme Court decision as it impacts our city councils, our governments at all levels and our own public prayers, and to enter into conversation with religious leaders of other religious traditions who share our belief that public prayer adds to civil society and the well being of communities or to do otherwise as it deems best.

MEMORIALS

Memorial No. 1, 2015 re process re changes to church's teaching on human sexuality

(Referred to Clerks of Assembly re Declaratory Act and Church Doctrine Committee and the Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries): A&P 2015, p. 611–12; see Book of Reports, p. 6.1.27–28, 7.1.5–6)

WHEREAS, the past several months have seen informal debate, within some circles of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, on the church's teaching on human sexuality and the narrower question of how lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons should be welcomed within the life of the church; and

WHEREAS, some within the denomination wish to see a change in the church's long-held teaching on human sexuality as this is outlined within the 1994 Report on Human Sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the denomination's historic belief and teaching concerning human sexuality is encapsulated in the statement of Living Faith (a subordinate standard adopted in 1998) that "Christian marriage is a union in Christ whereby a man and a woman become one in the sight of God"; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada is divided on the important question of precisely how lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons should be welcomed within the life of the church; and

WHEREAS, at least two presbyteries have forwarded overtures to the 141st General Assembly asking for a change in the church's teaching and/or discipline in this area of church law and practice (which overtures were subsequently made public, on social media platforms, by various members of those presbyteries); and

WHEREAS, these overtures request that the 141st General Assembly simply declare (by way of a declaratory act) a change in the church's teaching and/or discipline in this area of church law and practice; and

WHEREAS, a declaratory act is a means by which a General Assembly may affirm "what it understands to be the law of the church regarding any particular matter," (Book of Forms section 293), and is not a means by which a General Assembly may change any such law; and

WHEREAS, "no prepared law or rule relative to matters of doctrine, discipline, government or worship" may be established by a declaratory act (Book of Forms section 293.1); and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly may make a change to the doctrine, discipline, government, or worship of the church only by way of the Barrier Act process which requires approval by a majority of presbyteries and by two General Assemblies; and

WHEREAS, the Barrier Act gives expression to deeply democratic impulses within Presbyterianism, and exists to prevent any minority within the church from enacting substantial changes to church law and discipline without wide discussion, consultation, and agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Barrier Act is intended to prevent the adoption of novel laws, practices, or standards without due and careful consideration; and

WHEREAS, any change in the areas of doctrine and discipline, on questions of human sexuality, without full consideration of related exegetical, theological and polity matters would be a grave disservice to the church and an unwarranted usurpation of the role of the committees of the General Assembly;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Montreal humbly memorializes the Venerable, the 141st General Assembly,

1. that the law and traditions of the church prevent it from establishing any change in the church's doctrine or discipline, on the questions of human sexuality referenced above, by way of a declaratory act,
 2. that any request for such a change by way of a declaratory act is contrary both to the spirit and the letter of the church's law, and
 3. that any such request for a change in the church's teaching and practice in the area of human sexuality are, if appropriately brought before the General Assembly, rightly referred to the Assembly's Committee on Church Doctrine (in consultation with other appropriate bodies);
- or, may interpret the law and traditions of the church otherwise, as the General Assembly may deem best.

A SERVICE FOR COMMISSIONERS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The commissioners to the General Assembly will stand before the Moderator who will say:

Christ continues his ministry
in and through the church.
All Christians are called
to participate in the ministry of Christ.
As his body on earth
we all have gifts to use
in the church and in the world
to the glory of Christ, our King and Head

Living Faith 7.2.1

As the commissioners to this General Assembly, you have been sent by your presbyteries to build up the body of Christ as you seek to discern the mind of Christ for the church today.

As you prepare to take on the responsibility of this commission;

Do you accept this task willingly, as a calling from God?

We do.

Do you commit yourself with enthusiasm and dedication to the fulfillment of this calling?

We do.

Do you acknowledge your dependence on God's strength and guidance?

We do.

Do you claim your vocation as servants of Christ who is the living Word?

We do.

Will you rely upon the wisdom and inspiration of the Holy Spirit?

We will.

Will you be faithful stewards of the mysteries of God?

We will.

May God bless and strengthen us together as we seek to do as we have promised.

Let us pray:

O Lord, our God,
how great is your name in all the earth!

In your gracious mercy,
you have come to us and redeemed us through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

By your Spirit,
you have baptized us into one holy, catholic, and apostolic church to be sisters and brothers in Christ.

Help us, gracious God,
to love one another,
to forgive one another,
to serve one another,
and to listen to one another,
so that in all we say and do,
we may have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus,
and proclaim him to the world,
to your glory.

As we seek your face,
give us
wisdom in discernment
courage of spirit,
integrity of purpose,
clarity of speech,
kindness in our interactions,
and openness to your mysterious grace.

We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, belongs all honour and glory, now and forever. Amen.

First-Time Commissioner Orientation Breakfast



**Saturday, June 4, 2016
7:00 am**

**Location:
TBA**

Agenda

- 7:00 am First-time commissioners gather and enjoy breakfast
- 7:20 – 8:10 am General Assembly orientation, questions and answers
The Rev. Don Muir - General Assembly Deputy Clerk
Ms. Terrie-Lee Hamilton - Assembly Office Senior Administrator
- 8:30 am General Assembly Worship begins

This is an optional event. Regular breakfast will also be served.

But if you want to attend...

- **Contact Frances Hogg in the General Assembly Office by Friday, May 20**

416-441-1111 ext. 224
1-800-619-7301 ext. 224
fhogg@presbyterian.ca

because we need to know how many meals to order.

- **Let Frances know if you have dietary restrictions**



- **Orientation Breakfast passes will be issued during registration** at the General Assembly. There is no additional cost for this event. Due to limited seating, please bring your pass to the breakfast for admission.

We hope to see you there!

THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE INVITES

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE COLLEGE TO SHARE LUNCH TOGETHER

WHEN? SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 12:30

WHERE? THE OLGA CIRAK ROOM IN STONG

WHAT? BREAK BREAD TOGETHER WITH COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS
SHARE STORIES AND MEMORIES OF PC
HEAR FROM THE PRINCIPAL ABOUT WHAT'S NEW AT THE COLLEGE
TELL US HOW WE CAN BETTER SERVE YOU

This is a great opportunity to meet friends old and new, to learn about some of the innovative programs at the College, to hear about the new agreement with McGill and the opportunities it offers to Presbyterian College, and to make your suggestions for events or programs that will be of help to you in your ministry.

Even if you are not a graduate of PC but would like to learn more of what is happening there, feel free to join us.

We'd love to see you there.

Knox College Principal Dorcas Gordon and the
Knox-Ewart Graduates Association (KEGA)
cordially invite alumnae and alumni of
Knox and Ewart Colleges to a

RECEPTION
Saturday, June 4, 2016
8:30-9:30 p.m.

(immediately following the fourth Sederunt
of the 142nd General Assembly of the PCC)

Join us in the **Life Science Building** (Room 107)
to connect over refreshments.

Questions? **Visit us at the Knox booth.**



KNOX COLLEGE

The 2016 Dr. E. H. Johnson Award Recipient



Dr. Bernard Sabella



Executive Secretary of the
Department of Service to
Palestinian Refugees (DSPR)
in Jerusalem

Address and Award Presentation

at the 142nd General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Saturday, June 4, 2016

at 2 p.m. (Third Sederunt)

in the Gym, Tait McKenzie Centre, York University,
Toronto, Ontario

Evening Reception

Time: 8:45 p.m.

Location: Life Sciences Building, Room 101

Cost: Five dollars suggested donation; cash bar

Offering envelopes in support of The Dr. E. H. Johnson Memorial Fund will also be available. The Fund supports the annual Award “recognizing the cutting edge of mission”, exchanges between The Presbyterian Church in Canada and international partner churches, and educational events related to emerging issues in mission.



Sponsored by The Dr. E. H. Johnson Memorial Fund Committee

For more information, call 1-800-619-7301



***To All Commissioners
An Invitation to Dine
With the Pension and Benefits Board***

The Pension and Benefits Board of the Church would like to hear from commissioners (ordained and diaconal ministers, elders and congregational treasurers) about their expectations and concerns regarding the Pension Plan, Group Benefits Plan and other benefits covered by the Board's work.

As part of that listening, we are taking the opportunity to invite all General Assembly commissioners to join us for **dinner on Saturday, June 4th** at General Assembly. We invite you to join the board for an informal question and answer period.

We will be meeting in the Olga Cirack room, just down the hall from the Stong dining hall.

To join the conversation: **get your food in the cafeteria lines and then join us as we eat together and talk.**

If you have questions, but are unable to join us for dinner, please feel free to contact Judy Haas, Senior Administrator (jhaas@presbyterian.ca)

Please join us. We look forward to meeting with you!

REPORTS TO ASSEMBLY

Advise with the Moderator, Committee to	1.1.1
Assembly Council:	
Report	2.1.1
Financial Statements	2.2.1
Atlantic Mission Society	3.1.1
Bills and Overtures, Committee on	4.1.1
Business Committee	5.1.1
Church Doctrine, Committee on	6.1.1
Clerks of Assembly	7.1.1
Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee	8.1.1
Ecumenical, Interfaith and International Guests	9.1.1
History, Committee on	10.1.1
International Affairs, Committee on	11.1.1
Life and Mission Agency, Committee of:	
Program Support and Administration	12.1.1
Canadian Ministries	12.1.5
Communications	12.1.18
International Ministries	12.1.20
Justice Ministries	12.1.27
Ministry and Church Vocations	12.1.40
Presbyterian World Service and Development	12.1.51
Stewardship and Planned Giving	12.1.77
Maclean Estate Committee	13.1.1
Nominate, Committee to	14.1.1
Amendment form for nominations	14.2.1
Nominations for:	
Moderator, 142nd General Assembly.....	15.1.1
Associate Secretary, Canadian Ministries	15.1.1
Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer	15.1.1
Director, Presbyterian World Service and Development	15.1.1
Pension and Benefits Board:	
Report	16.1.1
Financial Statements	2.2.22
Presbyterian Church Building Corporation:	
Report	17.1.1
Financial Statements	17.2.1
Presbyterian Record Inc.:	
Report	18.1.1
Financial Statements	18.2.1
Remits	19.1.1
Special Commission re Appeal No. 1, 2015	20.1.1
Special Committee re Pension Solvency Funding	21.1.1
Theological Colleges:	
The Presbyterian College, Governing Board of	22.1.1
Knox College, Governing Board of	23.1.1
St. Andrew's Hall, Board of	24.1.1
Vancouver School of Theology, Principal of	25.1.1
Trustee Board	26.1.1
Women's Missionary Society	27.1.1
Overtures:	
Referred	28.1.1
Unreferred	29.1.1
Place names on the Constituent Roll	(none)
Petitions	(none)
Appeals	(none)
Memorials	(none)

COMMITTEE TO ADVISE WITH THE MODERATOR

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 1

That the appreciation of the Assembly be extended to the Rev. Karen R. Horst for her enthusiasm, compassion for others, passion for justice and her creative leadership as Moderator of the 141st General Assembly. (see p. 1.1.2)

Recommendation No. 2

That the gratitude of the Assembly be expressed to the congregation of St. Andrew's, Orillia for their ongoing prayers and encouragement for the Rev. Karen R. Horst, as well as appreciation to the Rev. Dr. James Sitler for his worship and pastoral leadership during her moderatorial term. (see p. 1.1.2)

Recommendation No. 3

That the thanks of the Assembly be extended to the congregations, individuals, presbyteries, organizations, and international and ecumenical partners who warmly welcomed and graciously offered hospitality to the Rev. Karen R. Horst. (see p. 1.1.2)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Rev. Karen Horst is an engaging, joyful and passionate ambassador of the church and the gospel of Jesus Christ. Her passion for justice, her desire for a courageous and renewed church, her compassion and energy were clearly evident as she embraced a full moderatorial schedule as well as continuing to connect with her congregation and community in Orillia.

As moderator, Karen responded to as many requests as possible; nationally and internationally. Following the General Assembly, Karen began her year with a special visit with the staff of the United Church of Canada to celebrate their 90th anniversary and later in the fall, she hosted a gathering with the Right Rev. Jordan Cantwell, the Moderator of the United Church of Canada.

Karen, and her husband, Rick, represented the church internationally with a trip to Ukraine, Hungary and Romania. On the very day they were in Hungary, the border was closed to further refugees. Therefore, they traveled to the border where they were able to meet with and listen to stories of the migrants trapped on the Serbian side, to witness the hospitality of the Hungarians, and to experience first-hand the complex issues related to this humanitarian crisis. She also visited and recognized the ministry of the Reformed Churches in these countries and the dedicated work of our mission staff.

In January, Karen further represented our church internationally at a World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) conference on "Gender Justice" in Matanzas, Cuba. Karen described the experience as "exceptional and honest" as these church leaders addressed many justice concerns and how global economics affect equality and wholeness. For her, the conference was a great illustration of north/south and south/south denominational cooperation on shared concerns.

In Canada, events related to Truth and Reconciliation continued to be significant. These included the closing ceremonies of the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report, a celebration of "Imagine a Different Canada" event at Rideau Hall, and a press conference focusing on the response to one of the 94 Calls to Action and its relationship to the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples. These were moving and hope-filled experiences where various denominations, including ours, promised a new day in partnership with indigenous peoples here in Canada. Karen visited a number of our Aboriginal ministries and programs within our church that focus on healing and reconciliation throughout the year.

As moderator, Karen's priority was to seek out new and creative forms of ministry as she visited many churches all across Canada from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland. She witnessed the courage and compassion of many churches seeking to reach out to refugees, Indigenous people and their local communities. Karen also witnessed the

current realities of decline, challenging trends and long-held prejudices still present in our churches and our denomination. Overall, gatherings with small groups inspired Karen as she listened to people's stories and journeys of faith. Wherever she went: to congregational gatherings, a Camp Gala, church courts or Discovery Days, those whom she met genuinely appreciated her presence and her message. Further, her pastoral letters to congregations, her seasonal messages, as well as correspondence to individual members celebrating special moments, were genuinely appreciated. She was also nominated as Woman of the Year in the city of Orillia.

The Committee to Advise with the Moderator met three times during this year to establish the itinerary for Karen and offer her support. At the final meeting, to count the ballots for the next nominee for Moderator, Karen shared the key highlights and concerns from her many travels, visits and activities throughout the year. She expressed gratitude to each member for their faithfulness in prayer and encouragement. The Committee to Advise with the Moderator is very thankful to Karen Horst for her ministry this year as Moderator. Many have said, "She was the right person at the right time." As an ambassador for the denomination, she was both a 'quiet advocate' and an 'energetic supporter' and for this we are truly blessed.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the appreciation of the Assembly be extended to the Rev. Karen R. Horst for her enthusiasm, compassion for others, passion for justice and her creative leadership as Moderator of the 141st General Assembly.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the gratitude of the Assembly be expressed to the congregation of St. Andrew's, Orillia for their ongoing prayers and encouragement for the Rev. Karen R. Horst, as well as appreciation to the Rev. Dr. James Sitler for his worship and pastoral leadership during her moderatorial term.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the thanks of the Assembly be extended to the congregations, individuals, presbyteries, organizations, and international and ecumenical partners who warmly welcomed and graciously offered hospitality to the Rev. Karen R. Horst.

REGULATION RE VOTING

The General Assembly in 1969, 1973 and 1979 dealt with the matter of the election of moderators. In 1973, these procedures were established. The method was changed from "vote for one and count to see who has the most votes" to "The counting shall proceed until one nominee receives an overall majority, with the low nominee being dropped and his (sic) votes distributed according to the preference indicated." (A&P 1973, p. 407)

Nomination for Moderator

In accordance with the procedure determined by the General Assembly, the Committee to Advise with the Moderator nominates the Rev. Douglas H. Rollwage as Moderator of the 142nd General Assembly.

John-Peter Smit
Convener

Terrie-Lee Hamilton
Secretary

ASSEMBLY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

That Recommendation Nos. 4, 5, 6, 15, 16, 17, 21 and 23 (identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

Recommendation No. 1

That the above minute of appreciation for Mr. Stephen Roche be adopted. (see p. 2.1.4)

Recommendation No. 2

That Mr. Oliver Ng, CMA, CPA, be appointed as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, effective July 31, 2016. (see p. 2.1.6)

Recommendation No. 3

That Book of Forms Appendix G as presented above be approved. (see p. 2.1.10)

► Recommendation No. 4

That the financial statements for The Presbyterian Church in Canada at December 31, 2015 be received for information. (see p. 2.1.10)

► Recommendation No. 5

That the financial statements for The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund at December 31, 2015 be received for information. (see p. 2.1.10)

► Recommendation No. 6

That the terms of reference for the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education be revised by removing the following term:

4. 10 percent of the annual interest on the Endowment shall be capitalized and the balance be available for disbursement. (see p. 2.1.14)

Recommendation No. 7

That the 2017 Budget be approved. (see p. 2.1.18)

Recommendation No. 8

That the 2018 to 2020 forecast be received for information. (see p. 2.1.18)

Recommendation No. 9

That the Strategic Plan be approved for guiding the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (see p. 2.1.20)

Recommendation No. 10

That the Assembly Council monitor/oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan. (see p. 2.1.20)

Recommendation No. 11

That in their reports to General Assembly, all standing committees, college boards and agencies state how their work is implementing the Strategic Plan. (see p. 2.1.21)

Recommendation No. 12

That presbyteries and congregations be encouraged to implement the Strategic Plan within their locales providing feedback as needed, and be prepared to share their experiences with the Assembly Council in three years. (see p. 2.1.21)

Recommendation No. 13

That the above revised terms of reference for the Assembly Council be approved. (see p. 2.1.23)

Recommendation No. 14

That the new membership composition of Assembly Council be phased in starting in 2017 in a manner that allows current members to complete their terms. (see p. 2.1.23)

► **Recommendation No. 15**

That Book of Forms Appendix A–29 re guarantee of stipend terms be amended to read: “and agree to adjust the stipend and allowances annually in view of any changes in the cost of living and the needs of our minister”. (see p. 2.1.26)

► **Recommendation No. 16**

That the above be the response to Overture No. 3, 2015 re budgeting for General Assembly costs. (see p. 2.1.26)

► **Recommendation No. 17**

That permission be granted to report to the 2017 General Assembly on Overture Nos. 13, 22 and 36, 2015. (see p. 2.1.27)

Recommendation No. 18

That the General Assembly normally be held within the geographical region of Hamilton, the Greater Toronto Area and Waterloo. (see p. 2.1.27)

Recommendation No. 19

That the requirement for the General Assembly to meet in the east/west every five years be discontinued. (see p. 2.1.27)

Recommendation No. 20

That the above report be the answer to Overture No. 17, 2015 re holding General Assembly in a central location. (see p. 2.1.28)

► **Recommendation No. 21**

That the above be the response to Overture No. 1, 2016 re revising appointment protocols for associate secretaries. (see p. 2.1.29)

Recommendation No. 22

That the above be the response to Overture No. 2, 2016 re timeline for human sexuality overtures. (see p. 2.1.31)

► **Recommendation No. 23**

That the above be the response to Overture No. 8, 2016 re standing committees secretaries. (see p. 2.1.31)

Recommendation No 24

That the adjustment of the current formula of allocating capital from dissolved congregations to the Pension Fund be from 25% to 100% effective June 8, 2016 until December 31, 2018. (see p. 2.1.33)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Assembly Council serves to coordinate and give oversight to the implementing of the work of the General Assembly. It carries on the work of the church in between Assemblies and serves in a leadership and prophetic capacity. Through its Executive and many committees, the members seek faithfully to see this work move forward.

In the background of all the Council's work is the continuing challenge of declining attendance in the church and the resulting constraints on finances for the General Assembly in its work. While Presbyterians continue to be generous in support of *Presbyterians Sharing*, in its planning the Council seeks to bring forward realistic and responsible budgets which still enable to church to fulfil its work. The financial forecasts point to a particularly challenging year for the church in 2018, and in addition to its ongoing oversight of the church's finances, the Council has been part of the discussions that have been taking place to prepare the church for what faces it in the longer term through its 2018 Budget Working Group. With persistent low interest rates, the church has a continuing potential windup (but not ongoing) solvency deficit in its pension funds, and the Council has been working with the Pension and Benefits Board in guiding the church through these challenging times.

During this year Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its report on the sad history of Indian residential schools in our country. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has played an important part in that process, and the Council hopes to continue to play a role as the church responds to the relevant recommendations from the

TRC. The Council spent much of the time at its November meeting focusing on these issues. Members participated in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, received a report from Justice Ministries on the progress of this work in the church, and discussed the TRC's Calls to Action. In response to overtures to the General Assembly the Council has been working together with the Life and Mission Agency on establishing a Native Ministries Endowment Fund. This is consistent with some of the Calls to Action, and that work continues.

One piece of work which has occupied the Council for two years has been the direction of the General Assembly to develop a strategic plan that might guide the national office and the larger church in its focus on inspiring and equipping congregations across the country. The Strategic Planning Committee consulted broadly across the country in its first year, and in the second year conducted country-wide conference calls to gain more insight on how the work was being received. The Council is confident that the proposed plan will be a living document that will help to guide and equip congregations in their mission and witness in the world. The Council acknowledges with thanks the participation of Kathy MacKay and Jeremy Bellsmith who continued on the committee beyond the term of their service on the Council to see that project to its completion.

As a result of the review of national committees, the Council brought to last year's Assembly a plan to reduce its size and makeup. The input of the church was sought regarding that plan, and we bring a revised proposal with a smaller reduction to this year's Assembly. The process has brought us through a helpful discernment of what would be the most effective size of the Council for the work it has to do, and how best to have the needed skills and a good representation of the church around its table.

Sadly, the Council said farewell to Stephen Roche who is retiring after thirteen years of service as Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We give thanks for his wisdom and insight in the leadership he provided the church in financial matters, and in helping it to be a good steward of those resources. We include a minute of appreciation for Steve, and wish him well in his retirement. A search committee has been active in seeking a new Treasurer/CFO and the Council is happy to be making a recommendation as a result of that search.

Behind the work of the Assembly Council is the hard work, faithfulness and dedication of its members, drawn from across the church to engage in this work, both at the two full meetings of the Council and in the conference calls that move forward the work of its many committees. The Council also pays tribute to the hard work and dedication of the staff in the General Assembly Office, whose wisdom, guidance and administrative support make the work of the Council possible.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Smith
Convener

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION

Mr. Stephen Roche, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

The General Assembly and Assembly Council are grateful to God for the dedicated service of Mr. Stephen Roche as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, on the occasion of his retirement.

Mr. Roche was appointed to this position by the 2003 General Assembly. His 13 years of service have been marked by careful attention to the important details in the realm of finance, a clear vision for the wellbeing of the church and proactive action as we seek to be faithful stewards of God's resources in changing times.

In 2003, when the Assembly Council brought forward the recommendation that Mr. Roche be appointed by the Assembly, he was promoted as a man with 'progressive qualifications, able to work well with peers and subordinates, with a pleasing personality a friendly sense of humour and a keen inquisitiveness'.

All these positive attributes, and more, have been borne out during Mr. Roche's tenure with the national church. His gregarious nature made him a welcome presence for a quick conversation with staff, or a concerned call with a member of the church who needed help. His penchant for good customer service was often heard at staff meetings where he would encourage everyone to respond quickly and competently whenever a member of the Presbyterian Church constituency contacts the national office.

Steve Roche has a flair for teaching and becomes animated in front of the whiteboard in his office as he engages with colleagues explaining a concept or working out a problem. At the Assembly Council, while one would think it natural to fall asleep during an after lunch Finance Committee report, Steve had a way of engaging the group with

humour all the while being able to communicate clearly the state of the church's finances and important concepts that Council members needed to understand in order to make competent fiduciary decisions. Steve worked with members of the Financial Services department, in particular Barbara Nawratil and Diana Kellington, to prepare and offer many treasurers' workshops. These have been appreciated as useful and informative. He also authored the Treasurer's Handbook that has been a practical and helpful resource for congregational treasurers.

Steve was always well prepared for Finance and Audit Committees, preparing clear management discussion papers on a regular basis, coupled with understandable spreadsheets tailoring the detail appropriately to the group making the decisions.

One elected member of the Finance Committee described Mr. Roche as having "consistently provided open, clear and decisive financial leadership for our church". He paid tribute to his "ability to make the complex understandable and to instill in our members a confidence in our ability to manage well. He has been patient, flexible and accommodating with integrity to the variety of personalities he has helped serve in representative and leadership roles."

As treasurer of Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D), Mr. Roche ensured the organization maintained a high level of accountability and thereby earn the trust of the constituency and of the Government of Canada. Steve will particularly be remembered for helping to establish the biblically inspired Loaves and Fishes Fund that allows donations to grow over time and also be used within seven years, providing a solid foundation for PWS&D. Notably, several staff of PWS&D have moved on to work for Financial Services during Steve's time as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer.

Mr. Roche will be missed as a trusted colleague on the Management Team. No issue was considered too unimportant to deal with carefully and passionately. The team enjoyed his utmost respect at all times.

During Mr. Roche's tenure, the church has faced serious issues. He has led work on budgets that have needed to be adjusted to both fulfill the mission and ministry of the denomination while at the same time be well aware of fiscal realities. He has also been instrumental in assisting the Pension and Benefits Board in understanding and acting on regulatory and solvency requirement issues. This work, well established by Mr. Roche, will continue after his retirement.

Steve Roche brought not only a passion for good financial management to his office but a passion for his faith and church as well. Along with his wife Fiona, daughter Esther, son Matthew, daughter-in-law Gia and new grandson Max, Steve has been nurtured by the community of faith at Trinity York Mills for many years, and has served actively there.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has much to be thankful for in the ministry of Stephen Roche, and we wish him and his family God's blessing in what we know will be an active retirement.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above minute of appreciation for Mr. Stephen Roche be adopted.

SEARCH COMMITTEE RE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER AND TREASURER

Following the acceptance of the request to retire of Stephen Roche by the 2015 General Assembly, the Executive of Assembly Council reviewed and posted on the website the job description for the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, and recommended to the November 2015 Council meeting the appointment of a search committee. In addition to circularizing presbyteries for nominations, individual applications were invited. The Search Committee for the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, made up of David Sutherland and George Smith, co-conveners, Esther Inglis, Patricia Main, Susan McLellan and Phil Gaiser, was appointed by the Assembly Council in November 2015 and reported in April 2016 that they were unanimous in their recommendation of the next Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer for The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

- On March 13 a significantly large list of candidates was identified with the help of consulting firm Optimus/SBR.
- On March 15 the committee identified a short list of four candidates for interviews.
- On March 22 the committee met at the offices of Optimus/SBR for interviews.
- On March 29 the final candidate was invited for a second interview at 50 Wynford Drive to meet with two members of our committee and the Principal Clerk of Assembly and the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency.

APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER AND TREASURER – OLIVER NG, CPA, CMA

- A highly self-motivated management accountant with extensive and progressive accounting, finance and IT experience.
- Proven ability to manage financial resources and improve the well being of the organization.
- Demonstrated success in managing projects and implementing business solutions.
- Recognized for superior leadership, analytical abilities, organizational and communication skills.

Education and Professional Development

Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA)

Certified Management Accountant (CMA)

Bachelor of Commerce, University of Toronto

Courses: Life Insurance Accounting Course; LOMA; Canadian Securities Course

Career History

The Scott Mission 2004–December 2015

Director of Finance

Managed the financial activities of the Scott Mission including, payroll, accounts payables and receivables, cash management, investment activities, pension services, and information system.

- As a member of the Senior Management team and reported to the Executive Director.
- Presented financial reports and analysis at Board meetings, Investment and Pension committee, Finance and Audit committee. Provided strategic and operational guidance across the Mission.
- Evaluated and selected cost effective service providers for group insurance, pension consultant and other services, saving the Mission over \$100,000 per year.
- Provided leadership on all financial matters. Managed a department of up to seven staff.
- Prepared monthly financial statements and reporting packages. Developed and implemented financial policies and procedures.
- Ensured organization-wide adherence to Canada Revenue Agency regulations, including issue tax receipts, financial reporting and disbursement of designed funds. Ensured proper internal controls were in place.
- Worked collaboratively with other departments to set the annual budget and daily financial activities. Established the budget and reported to the government for funding and subsidies.
- External contact with auditors, insurance companies, banks and three levels of government.
- Reviewed bequest files and liaised with lawyers, executors and other organizations.
- Chairman of the Joint Health and Safety Committee for over six years.

Canadian Diabetes Association 2003–2004

Business Analyst

Provided financial planning and analysis to support the decision making process and to improve the financial efficiency of the delivery of programs and services.

- Analyzed financial results in comparison to the budget. Provided financial commentary to the monthly financial statements.
- Reviewed financial aspects of business models during the investigation stages of business proposals.
- Successfully implemented new system initiatives across the Association.

Manulife Financial

Director, Due Diligence (Investments Division, 2001 – 2002)

Manager, Regulatory Reporting (Investments Division, 1997 – 2001)

- Reported worldwide financial and operational results to external parties for Manulife Financial including writing the MD&A section of the Annual Report, OSFI, OSC, Statistics Canada and Rating Agencies.
- Provided key financial information to senior management including benchmarking analysis, information on the industry and investment market place.

- Led the project to integrate \$900 million of invested assets for the acquisition of Zurich Canada. Managed a team of twelve representing all areas of the Investments Division.
Senior Control Officer (Investments Division, 1990 – 1997)
- Investigated accounting issues and provided advice for issues relating to cash management, securities, mortgages and real estate.
- Coordinated the annual budgeting process and participated in financial forecasts. Trained, coached and supervised two accounting staff. Control Specialist (US Savings & Retirement Services, 1989 – 1990)
- Designed accounting models for new systems. Ensured accounting standards and control procedures were in place.

The Assembly Council is pleased therefore to present the following recommendation:

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Mr. Oliver Ng, CMA, CPA, be appointed as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, effective July 31, 2016.

Subject to the approval of the above recommendation the search committee will facilitate the transition from the retiring CFO/Treasurer to new CFO/Treasurer.

COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

The Executive of the Assembly Council meets between the meetings of the Assembly Council to assist in setting agendas, and to deal with matters referred to it by the Assembly Council. This year, the Executive appointed and monitored a number of working groups established to respond to overtures and referrals to the Assembly Council. At the request of the Life and Mission Agency, the Executive also reviewed and approved the revised position description for the Associate Secretary for Canadian Ministries and granted permission to call for nominations and proceed to a search. (See Life and Mission Agency Committee, p. 12.1.3–4)

The General Assembly, in 2014, referred the ongoing consideration of a possible relocation of the national offices to the Assembly Council. The United Church of Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada are considering moves within the greater Toronto area and are eager to explore the possibility of sharing certain aspects of a facility. Currently, the property at 50 Wynford Drive is likely being underutilized. The closing of the BookRoom and the reduction in the numbers of national staff are the primary reasons for this. An assessment of future needs is warranted. Additionally, there could be value in sharing various back-office services with others. Many congregations are facing questions about how to be good stewards of their property and it seems appropriate that these questions be asked at the national level as well. At this point, no formal discussions have been held, but with the agreement of the Assembly Council, the Executive recommended to the Assembly Council that we engage more fully in these current discussions and mandated the Management Team to explore and report to the Assembly Council on the possibility of selling the 50 Wynford Drive property and moving within the next five years into other suitable facilities.

ARCHIVES AND RECORDS COMMITTEE

Regular work in the Archives and Records Centre involves: ongoing cataloguing, creating detailed finding aid inventories for records collections, assisting church/general public researchers via email and in-house, preservation management of the records collections, records management advice for national office staff and other church courts, completing more involved research requests and invoices, creating educational resources re church records, updating website, and managing The Presbyterian Church in Canada national office Records Centre.

Committee Membership

We welcomed back the Rev. Geoffrey Ross (Brampton) who had served previously on this committee and has an ongoing interest in archives and records management. Dr. Marjorie Ross (Toronto) and Ms. Darleen Springstein (Edmonton) completed their membership terms. The Rev. Dr. Teresa Charlton (Vernon, British Columbia) was appointed in April.

Young Canada Works (YCW)

Mr. Chris Benitez, a graduate archives student, in the summer 2015, catalogued and scanned an additional 3,000 images in the graphics collection. He created two new exhibits for the Archives website. Both exhibits celebrate anniversaries – one on the history of the Knox College building and the other on the history of the Presbyterian College. On April 1, 2016 the government grant application for the summer of 2016 was approved. The student will again work on our photo collection backlog and design a web exhibit on the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We are grateful that, for thirty years, the Canadian Council on Archives YCW government grant money has facilitated special cataloguing/web based projects.

Volunteers

We extend our sincere thanks to the Rev. Bob Anderson and to Mrs. Betty Arnold for their faithful dedication to their volunteer projects. Betty Arnold has decided to retire after volunteering in the Archives since 1986. This announcement came as sad news to Archives staff as well as to others in the office who saw her weekly. We give thanks to God for the extensive contribution Betty made here – most especially in researching the genealogical requests and making positive connections with so many Archives patrons residing around the world. Her cheerful manner and dedication will be very much missed, and we sincerely hope she benefits from this well earned retirement.

Digital records

Efforts by the staff to learn more about the best means of managing and preserving digital records into the future are ongoing. To this end, they will pursue educational opportunities as they become evident.

Revision to Appendix G

In discussion with Stephen Kendall it was decided that a full revision of Appendix G was much needed. A draft was presented to the Assembly Council in April. The purpose of these changes was to correct inaccuracies and re-align various sections to make the information more streamlined and user-friendly. (see p. 2.1.8–10)

Archives Capacity Study

In 1998 the Archives facility was designed for approximately 15 years of average use. Thus, it was timely that a review of our physical space take place. A quantitative study of how our stack space has been used to this point was conducted by the Assistant Archivist. The staff then identified a number of options to implement and increase and/or maximize storage space. The good news projection is that we should be able to function within this space for another 10–15 years. That said, ordering an additional (final) unit of mobile stack shelving for the stack area should be planned for the near future.

Records Management

The archivists provided a seminar to national office staff in March. This session will be followed up by casual round table discussions in order to specifically address staff records management concerns and questions. In May, the Records Centre will be purged of certain records using the Shred-It company. This annual event ensures that records no longer needed (about 7 years old and not deemed archival) are securely disposed of, thus making room for the ongoing records production in the office. Only the records of highest informational and historical value are transferred into the Archives.

Trip to India re mission papers

The Assistant Archivist Bob Anger, travelled to Jobat, India (January 23–February 12) in order to appraise the records of the Canadian Presbyterian mission that were there for many years in the Treasurer's Office in the Buchanan bungalow in Amkhut. These, and other records, were brought to Pauline Brown's house, where he reviewed them and identified the ones with archival significance. Three suitcases full of records, many dating from the 1920s and 1930s, were brought back to Canada along with roughly 3,000 scanned images and over 300 slides and photographs. As a precaution the records will be cleaned by Strone Ltd. prior to accessioning into the Archives. This expedition was co-funded by the Archives and International Ministries.

Architectural plans

Jessica Wever, a Faculty of Information Studies practicum student, this past school term completed the cataloguing, arranging and re-packaging of all our architectural plans and drawings. As well, she entered all of the metadata about the collection in Excel that ultimately will be transferred into the Archives database. We are indebted to her

for working beyond her designated time to see this project through to a successful end. The archives purchased additional specialized shelving for this project.

Archives website

Our current website remains active, however, it is in the process of being converted over to The Presbyterian Church in Canada's main domain through the Communications staff. The existing content will be continued but it is being re-designed using modern software. The hope is that there will be more display features that will enable further promotion of our record holdings and educate/engage all who access the site.

Microfilming

Records microfilmed this year include: Presbytery of Ottawa; St. John's Church, Grimsby; Knox's Galt, Cambridge; Avonton Church, Avonton; Fellowship Church, Toronto; Memorial Church, Rocky Mountain House; Bethel Church, Ilderton; St. Andrew's Church, Kars; St. Andrew's Church, Fort Colonge; St. Matthew's Church, Elmsdale; St. Andrew's Church, Kitchener; Burn's Church, Mosa; St. Andrew's Church, North River-North Shore, Cape Breton; Gale Church, Elmira; and the Presbytery of Barrie. Congregations are advised that they may have their records digitized at the time of microfilming for a relatively modest additional cost.

Step Into Your Archives newsletter

We aim to produce two topical newsletters each year. The January 2016 issue appeared in the winter PCPak featuring an update on the residential schools records provision to the TRC, the official opening of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) in Winnipeg, additional information relating to church records management, and an update about the Archives website.

Residential Schools committee work

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission records have been transferred to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) in Winnipeg. The archivists are members of the NCTR Working Group. Largely comprised of archivists, this group provides advice on issues of access to the records and also on managing the general provision of information to future researchers. Their website is nctr.ca

APPENDIX G

ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT

G-1 Purpose of the Archives

1. The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives ("Archives") is the designated records repository for the denomination. The Archives is located at the national office, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario. The policies of the Archives are approved by the Assembly Council and the day to day operations of the Archives are the responsibility of the Principal Clerk through the Archives staff.
 1. The Archives maintains the corporate memory (activities and decisions) of The Presbyterian Church in Canada by acquiring, arranging, describing and preserving the archival records of the denomination, ie. those records, regardless of media, that have significant and enduring administrative, financial, legal and historical value.
 2. Records held in the Archives are accessible to church staff, and the church-at-large, to assist with the ongoing work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and to the general public as an important historical research collection.
 3. The Archives also provides a direct records management service for the national office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and records management advice and resources for the church-at-large.
 4. The Archives will oversee the archival needs, both physical and operational, of the church and to recommend such measures as may be deemed advisable to advance the preservation and use of records of enduring value including advice on approved digital formats.

G-2 Archives Collection Mandate

1. The Archives will consider the following for deposit and retention:
 1. Records of the General Assembly, its boards and committees, and all other national office departments.

2. Records of presbyteries
 3. Records of synods
 4. Records of dissolved congregations
 5. Records of active congregations – in microfilm or approved digital format
 6. Records of persons significant to the history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (ie. personal papers)
 7. Records of colleges of The Presbyterian Church in Canada
 8. Records of special media, including: photographic materials, audio-visual materials, architectural plans and drawings.
2. The Archives reserves the right to accept or decline records transferred to it. Material that is not considered suitable for the Archives will be returned or destroyed at the option of the donor.

G–3 Ownership of Records

1. Records generated by all courts of The Presbyterian Church in Canada remain the property in perpetuity of the said courts, or their legal successors. Records are not the property of individual church officials.
2. When congregations, presbyteries and synods are amalgamated, the records of such bodies become the property of the amalgamated body.
3. When a congregation is dissolved, the presbytery clerk shall assume responsibility for collection of the records and transfer the appropriate records to the Archives for deposit (contact the Archives for a list of these records). The presbytery has the option of depositing these records in an alternate repository (see G–3.4).
4. If church court records are deposited in an alternate repository, a formal deposit agreement must be signed by both parties, with a copy of the agreement sent to The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives (a sample Deposit Agreement form can be obtained from the Archives). This deposit agreement must ensure that certain conditions are met, including ownership of the records remaining with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A microfilm or approved digital copy of the records must also be made and sent to The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives. In the case of congregational records (including records of dissolved congregations) only the session minutes and church registers are required to be copied.
5. For personal papers to be deposited, a Deed of Gift form must be signed by the donor. This form includes the transfer of ownership of records to The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
6. It is the responsibility of the clerk of the court to make recommendation to the proper court for the safekeeping of all the records of that court. This includes making regular back-ups of digital records to ensure their safety and security.

G–4 Deposit of Records in the Archives

1. The Archives will accept material that complies with its Collection Mandate (see G–2.1). The Archives retains the right to cull material, normally in consultation with the donor in order that only records with archival value are deposited in the Archives.
2. All congregations should arrange for the microfilming and/or digitizing of their session minutes and church registers. The microfilm and/or approved digital copy is deposited in the Archives for preservation and reference purposes as needed, and the originals are returned to the congregation. Additional congregational records may also be copied. The Archivist can provide advice on the preparation of approved digital copies.
3. Presbyteries and synods are encouraged to deposit their minutes (in original, microfilm and/or approved digital format), reports and commission records with the Archives. As well, presbyteries should regularly send their copy minutes to the Archives.
4. A “no mould” policy is in effect in the Archives. This policy addresses records where there is physical evidence of either mould or mildew. In such cases, it is necessary to arrange with Archives staff to have records professionally cleaned at the relevant court’s expense prior to deposit in the Archives. It is imperative that records are consistently well maintained and kept in a secure, stable environment by all respective courts.
5. No records deposited in the Archives from whatever source may be loaned or removed from the premises for any reason without the express permission of the Archivist/Records Administrator.

G-5 Access and Restrictions for Records in the Archives

1. Records deposited in the Archives are normally on open access. For privacy concerns, specific records have access restrictions:
 1. Session minutes less than 50 years old are restricted and cannot be viewed without a letter of permission from the session. Session minutes more than 50 years old are on open access.
 2. Personnel/personal information files are restricted for the most recent 75 years.
 3. Records of special commissions and committees are not restricted unless otherwise specified by the depositing court.
 4. Baptismal records less than 100 years old are restricted. An individual may request a copy of their own baptismal record, as can a parent of the individual if they are noted on the record. Next of kin, ie. spouse, common-law partner, parent, child or sibling, may request a copy of a deceased person's baptismal record. An authorized representative, ie. an estate trustee, an executor or administrator, a person with power of attorney, or a legal guardian, may also request a copy. Copies will be provided by Archives' staff in the form of a transcript, or as a photocopy if appropriate. Baptismal records more than 100 years old are on open access.
 5. Marriage records less than 75 years old are restricted. Either bride or groom may request a copy of their marriage record. If either the bride or groom is deceased, then a parent, child or sibling of either the bride or groom may request a copy. An authorized representative, ie. an estate trustee, an executor or administrator, a person with power of attorney, or a legal guardian, may also request a copy. Copies will be provided by Archives' staff in the form of a transcript, or as a photocopy if appropriate. Marriage records more than 75 years old are on open access.
 6. Death/Burial records less than 75 years old are restricted. Next of kin, ie. spouse, common-law-partner, parent, child or sibling, may request a copy of an individual's death/burial record. An authorized representative, ie. an estate trustee, an executor or administrator, a person with power of attorney, or a legal guardian, may also request a copy. Copies will be provided by Archives' staff in the form of a transcript, or as a photocopy if appropriate. Death/burial records more than 75 years old are on open access.
 7. The Archivist/Records Administrator retains the right to refuse access to specific material on the authority of the Principal Clerk.
2. In the event that documents are required from any agency of the General Assembly by police or other governmental agencies, the Principal Clerk has final granting authority.

Contact the Archives at presbyterian.ca/archives for further information and assistance regarding your church records.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended
That Book of Forms Appendix G as presented above be approved.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Audit Committee met twice, once in December 2015 and again in March 2016. The December meeting is for planning whereby PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) reviews with the committee their plan and approach for the interim and year-end audit. At this meeting materiality, the makeup of the audit team and perceived areas of risk are discussed. At the March meeting this year the draft Financial Statements for The Presbyterian Church in Canada and The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Plan were presented along with a detailed Audit Committee report submitted by PwC. This year the Finance Committee was invited to attend the meeting as guests. PwC has noted that subject to getting final confirmations and legal letters they will be giving an unqualified opinion.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended
That the financial statements for The Presbyterian Church in Canada at December 31, 2015 be received for information.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended
That the financial statements for The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund at December 31, 2015 be received for information.

BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE

The Benevolence Committee oversees the administration of the benevolent funds and bursary funds that have been entrusted to the Assembly Council. In addition, the committee acts as the appointers of the Fund for Ministerial Assistance. The committee meets twice a year to monitor and administer the funds entrusted to its care.

Benevolent Funds

There are eleven benevolent funds with a total capital of \$6,110,871. 2015 brought a 10.2% increase in the value of the funds partly from market gains, but primarily from a general bequest from the Bremner family. From the income of these funds, approximately 17 persons received monthly support in 2015 totaling about \$99,470. Starting in 2014, for two years at the request of the Pension and Benefits Board, the benevolent funds have been supporting 10 retired missionaries and three widows of retirees with a pension supplement. This temporary shift from the Pension and Benefits Board comes with the support of the Assembly Council. Other emergency grants were made on a confidential basis to seven persons totaling some \$24,800.

Retired servants of the church and surviving spouses who are experiencing financial need are encouraged to contact the Principal Clerk in the Assembly Office to discuss whether they might qualify for a monthly income supplement. An application form is available from him. Additionally, there are times when a servant of the church experiences a one-time financial need. These cases may also be brought to the Principal Clerk on a confidential basis.

The Benevolence Committee also distributes the income from the Bremner Memorial Fund, established in 2009 through the generosity of Ronald and Muriel Bremner, in memory of Ron's parents, longtime faithful Presbyterians J. Murray and Catharine Bremner. The 2015 income from the Bremner Memorial Fund (\$15,408) was distributed to the Fund for Ministerial Assistance.

Bursary Funds

There are 31 bursary funds with a total capital of \$2,239,014. This is 1.2% higher than the total available capital from the previous year. Approximately \$80,000 of income from these funds was awarded to some 40 candidates for the ministries of the church. For the 2015–2016 academic year, up to \$80,000 in student bursaries have again been approved. The secretary calls for applications from the colleges at the start of each term. The colleges compile the applications and forward them to the Assembly Office, where the applications are dealt with and grants made according to the specific terms of the various funds. In addition to the regular student bursaries, \$24,500 was disbursed to three doctoral candidates from the Cameron Doctoral Bursary Fund.

The committee invites your prayers, concerns and gifts for needy servants of the church. A number of congregations and individuals make gifts to these funds each year. Many letters of deep gratitude are received from recipients each year saying how much it has meant not only to receive much needed financial support, but also to know that the church is caring and concerned for their needs. The gifts disbursed from the various funds approximate the income available, and so any additional donations to the funds will be well used.

At the March 2014 meeting of the Assembly Council, it was agreed to combine the responsibilities of the Cameron Doctoral Bursary Fund Committee and the Fund for Ministerial Assistance (FMA) with the Benevolence Committee. The terms of reference for each committee were reviewed along with the indenture that established the Fund for Ministerial Assistance to ensure that all functions and responsibilities are honoured. The Fund for Ministerial Assistance will continue to report to the General Assembly, and the minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Ottawa shall be a member of the Benevolence Committee to conform to the original terms of the FMA. This move came as part of the work the Assembly Council has been undertaking to review the size and number of all national church committees (A&P 2013, p. 224).

The Fund for Ministerial Assistance

The Fund for Ministerial Assistance was established by an anonymous gift of one million dollars in 1951. Following the death of the donor, the fund was renamed The Honourable Norman M. Paterson Fund for Ministerial Assistance. Senator Paterson and his wife, Eleanor, maintained a life-long interest in the ministers of the church and their families and they hoped that their gesture might encourage others to respond with generosity.

The decisions of the appointers are governed by the strict terms of the original indenture; it has authority over their decisions similar to that of the provisions of a will. Any changes which may seem desirable because of changes within the church and its ministry require that careful legal steps be taken to ensure that such changes are within the

authority of the indenture and, where necessary, within applicable legislation. No such variations have been needed in the last year.

The indenture by which this fund was established stated that gifts were to be made to eligible married ministers. Since then, eligibility has been extended to include ministers who are separated or divorced and have custody of, or financial responsibility for, their children. To be eligible for benefits from the fund, the income of the family – not just of the minister – must be less than \$10,000 above minimum stipend (including applicable increments).

During the past year, all eligible ministers received foundational gifts of \$750 per annum, and all eligible children received foundational gifts of \$750 per annum. Additional Christmas gifts were distributed to eligible ministers and their eligible children. The numbers fluctuate; however during the final quarter, 44 ministers received gifts with additional gifts distributed for the support of 95 children. In addition, nine ministers on long-term disability received Christmas gifts. The first priority has been to maintain the ability to provide the foundational annual gifts that are distributed quarterly; any remaining funds are distributed as additional Christmas gifts. Only through the generosity of donors, it was possible to give a Christmas gift in 2015.

The appointers are always glad to receive letters of thanks, which are in turn forwarded to Mr. Paterson's descendants. The correspondence we receive confirms that the families of many ministers on lower stipends bear significant financial burdens, which the gifts partly alleviate. It is our privilege to be stewards of Senator Paterson's generosity, and that of those individuals and congregations who, over the years, have added to the fund.

In accord with Senator Paterson's hope that the generosity of others would be sparked by his gift, we continue to appeal to members of our congregations for additional gifts to the capital of the fund, so that ministers and their children who are most in need may continue to receive help.

We gratefully acknowledge contributions made to the fund by congregations and individuals; their generosity makes it possible to continue the work initiated by Mr. Paterson.

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE

The Committee on Church Architecture serves The Presbyterian Church in Canada by reviewing plans for new buildings and additions, or major renovations, to existing structures. The committee offers impartial comments on the drawings and communicates them with those undertaking the construction. Once satisfied with the work to be done, the committee conveys its approval to the pastoral charge or other body engaged in the project as well as to the overseeing presbytery. If grants are involved, a report will go to Canadian Ministries. If loans are involved, a report will go to the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation and the Lending Fund Committee.

The committee of 11 members is made up of seven architects, one layperson and three ex officio national office staff.

One of the very interesting submissions received by the committee in the last year came from the Wellspring pastoral charge. Wellspring is an amalgamation of four congregations serving Christ on Prince Edward Island. The submission outlined how the four original church buildings and a manse would be sold and a new building constructed on land donated for this purpose. The committee was pleased to make suggestions to assist in the construction of this symbol of new hope.

The church is strongly encouraged to make use of this free opportunity to consult. The committee has often received expressions of gratitude for its observations suggestions.

COMMISSION ON ASSETS OF DISSOLVED AND AMALGAMATED CONGREGATIONS

The Commission on Assets of Dissolved and Amalgamated Congregations, consisting of the Secretary of the Assembly Council, the Convener of the Trustee Board and the Chief Financial Officer, acts on behalf of the Assembly Council and the Trustee Board in dealing with matters of property held by the national church.

Presbyteries are reminded that in the case of amalgamations of congregations, guidelines regarding the disposition of assets are found at section 200.11 in the Book of Forms. In the case of the dissolution (closure) of a congregation, the assets vest with the Trustee Board and until 2018, the first 25% of the net proceeds go the Pension Plan Solvency Fund; 52.5% is returned to the presbytery for mission work in their midst and beyond, at their suggestion. The remaining 22.5% is normally transferred to the New Church Capital Fund (A&P 2000, p. 207–209). After 2018 the

proceeds will again be divided 70% to the presbytery and 30% to new church capital. The Assembly Council received a report from the Special Committee re Pension Solvency Funding, and is bringing a recommendation to this Assembly that until December 31, 2018 100% of the proceeds of dissolved congregations go to assist the pension solvency. (see p. 2.1.32–33)

EWART ENDOWMENT FOR THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The Ewart Endowment for Theological Education Sub-Committee’s primary purpose is to consider grant applications and present recommendations to the Assembly Council.

2015 Grants

The Assembly Council approved grants in November for the 2015 granting period because there were no new grant applications for consideration by the March 2015 Council meeting. Therefore, there was a invitation to submit proposals by September 30, 2015. The following grants proposals were presented at the November 2015 Council meeting:

- Knox, Woodstock, Ontario for Kids Camp in the amount of \$5,000
- Presbyterian College for Web Learning Management \$25,000 (\$15,000 for 2015 and \$10,000 for 2016)
- Presbytery of Winnipeg for Arabic Ministries Gathering: \$9,520
- Presbytery of Winnipeg for Congregations and Future Resource: \$3,260
- St. Mark’s, Toronto for Footprints Camp – LIT program: \$50,000 (\$10,000 per year 2016–2020)
- Varsity Acres, Calgary for Stephen Ministry: \$4,500

2016 Grants

New grant proposals approved for 2016 are:

- Innerkip Church, Innerkip, Ontario for Kids Kamp: \$6,000
- Knox College for the MacKay Resource Centre: \$60,000
 - Curriculum collection resources – \$30,000 (\$6,000 per year; 2016-2021)
 - Curriculum collection cataloguing – \$15,000 (\$3,000 per year; 2016-2021)
 - Historical curriculum collection cataloguer – \$7,000 (2016)
 - Scanner for collection – \$8,000 (2016)
- Knox, Woodstock, Ontario for Kids Camp: \$25,000 (\$5,000 per year; 2016-2021)
- Life and Mission Agency for CY2016: \$50,000
- Order of Diaconal Ministries for DOVE (Diakonia Overcoming Violence Experience) Conference: \$2,000
- Presbytery of Kamloops for Travelling Vacation Bible School: \$10,000
- St. Andrew’s (Humber Heights), Toronto for Vision United 2016: \$12,000
- WMS for Women’s Gathering 2017 for \$30,000 (\$15,000 per year, 2016 and 2017)

The Ewart Endowment for Theological Education continues to support the following multi-year grants, previously approved by the Council. The amounts for 2016 are:

History Committee re 5 Solas (500th Anniversary of Reformation)	\$3,000
Knox College re Professor of Christian Education and Youth Ministry	\$91,628
Order of Diaconal Ministries re Bursaries for Theological Students	\$5,000
Presbyterian College re Lay Theological Education Program	\$12,000
Presbyterian College re Mentoring New Graduates	\$12,000
Presbyterian College for Web Learning Management	\$10,000
St. Mark’s, Toronto re Footprints Camp – LIT	\$10,000

Applicants seeking grants for the year 2017 are to submit proposals by November 30, 2016.

The capital of the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education is \$5,914,277 as of December 31, 2015.

Terms of Reference

The Assembly Council asked the committee to review the terms of reference for the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education about returning 10% of the annual interest to the capital fund.

After certain expenditures were covered from the sale of Ewart College, the remaining amount was set aside for the establishment of the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education along with its terms of reference that were adopted by the General Assembly in 1992. In 1995, a special committee of the Assembly reported further on the use of the monies along with the administration of the fund, which resulted in the Committee on Theological Education establishing guidelines. (A&P 1992: p. 215–16, 68–69; 1995: 390–93, 43; 1996: p. 455–56) Since that time, the committee has reported the grants approved and the amount in the capital fund annually to the Assembly (originally through the Committee on Theological Education and now through the Assembly Council).

When the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education and its terms of reference were established by the General Assembly the practice was to capitalize 10% (return to the capital) to ensure that the capital would have a good base in the future. Over the years there has been good growth of the capital. In 1996 the capital was \$2,648,716 and as of December 2016, it is \$5,974, 277. According to S. Roche, the inflation increase to the original amount would be about \$3.8 million, therefore, the purchasing power of the fund has been well maintained. It is prudent to use all of the interest earned annually to support the administration and funds for theological education grant applications.

The terms of reference for the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education are as follows:

Terms of Reference
(A&P 1992, p. 215, 68–69)

The 1992 General Assembly established the following terms of reference for the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education:

1. The first call on the net proceeds shall be an amount sufficient to repay the borrowings from the Ewart Resource Fund, with interest.
2. The balance from the net proceeds shall be used to establish an endowment for theological education to be named the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education, in recognition of the long history of Ewart College and its contribution to The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
3. The capital of the Ewart Endowment shall be invested as part of the Consolidated Portfolio of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
4. 10 percent of the annual interest on the Endowment shall be capitalized and the balance be available for disbursement.
5. The interest income available from the Ewart Endowment shall be administered by the Committee on Theological Education;
6. The first call on the available income shall be to support diaconal education programs leading to a recognized degree at an accredited theological institution; and
7. Awards or grants in the name of the Ewart Endowment shall not displace or diminish the institutional grants to the Theological Colleges.

The Council, in light of the above information, is recommending that the requirement of the 10% capitalization (point No. 4) be removed from the terms of reference.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the terms of reference for the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education be revised by removing the following term:

4. 10 percent of the annual interest on the Endowment shall be capitalized and the balance be available for disbursement.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Assembly Council continues to give thanks for the generous contributions to *Presbyterians Sharing* from across the church that provide for the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in Canada and beyond. In addition to the operating budget, the Finance Committee of Assembly Council oversees the stewardship of the various funds of the church.

FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR 2015

The year just ended, 2015, has seen huge shifts in energy prices, global growth and a continued steep decline in the Canadian dollar. Long term interest rates which impact savings for many of our older members continue to be at historic lows. Combined with the foregoing economic conditions are the continued demographic changes in our denomination. In spite of all these challenges Presbyterians are still supporting the mission and programs that the denomination carries on across Canada and overseas as they are able. This generosity of spirit and of their earnings and savings must be acknowledged.

BEQUESTS

\$519,207 was received in the year. \$17,422 of which was undesignated bequests. The ongoing transfer of wealth to the baby boomers and related charities may have reached and passed its zenith.

BALANCE SHEET**Cash – \$8.1 million (2014 – \$14.4 million)**

Over 40% of cash comes into The Presbyterian Church in Canada and PWS&D from the congregations in the last 8 weeks of the year. We earn prime, 2.7% less 1.85% interest on our cash balances. A portion of this cash \$1.6 million is part of the cash in the investment portfolio.

Executive Mortgage – \$14 million (2014 -- \$14 million)

The only remaining executive mortgage was paid off in January 2016.

Fixed Assets – \$1.7 million (2014 – \$1.9 million)

There was \$26,000 of additions to the purchase and implementation of Raiser's Edge, which is our new Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) system. This system replaces Gift Traq our 13 year old database system that is no longer supported by SAGE.

Properties – \$2.4 million (2014 – \$2.4 million)

There was one property in Calgary with an offer and acceptance for \$1.1 million. The deal closed in early 2016 and we have now received the funds. (Book value of the property is \$502,000.)

Investments – \$89.2 million (2014 – \$80.4 million)

The Consolidated Portfolio (CP) had a total gross return in 2015 of 5.5% beating its conservative benchmark of 3.4% by 2.1%. Total administration expenses including management fees is about 40 basis points.

This is a good result for a conservatively invested fund, bearing in mind that the S&P/TSX composite index was down by 8.3%. In addition to the funds of the church, there are now 79 participants, two colleges, three presbyteries, PCBC, one synod and 71 congregations that have invested their funds in the CP with a total fair market value of \$77.3 million.

Gift Annuities – \$2.4 million (2014 – \$2.6 million)

We now have a 144 individual annuity contracts with Presbyterians across Canada. In 2015 there were 6 new annuity contracts with a value of \$140,000 and 6 annuitants who passed away leaving a total gift remainder of \$52,000.

Fund Balances – \$100.1 million (2014 – \$97.4million)

There are three funds that make up the balance: the operating fund of \$.6 million; restricted fund of \$58.1 million and the endowment fund of \$41.4 million.

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES FOR OPERATING FUND**Operating Fund**

At the end of December the operating fund had a positive balance of \$581,000. This was a decrease of \$245,700 from last year's balance and close to our budgeted amount of \$525,700.

Revenue

The total revenue for 2015 was down \$1.3 million from last year (\$7.7 million vs \$9.0 million for 2014). The two key differences were a drop in *Presbyterians Sharing* of \$400,000, WMS no longer provided a \$200,000 grant for regional staffing and the large gift of \$425,000 to *Presbyterians Sharing* from the Barry estate in 2014 not matched in 2015.

Expenditures

Overall expenditures of \$8,918,400 were \$569,114 lower than budget.

Presbyterians Sharing

In 2015, Presbyterians across Canada gave over \$10.2 million to support the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Congregations and individuals gave \$6,929,304 to *Presbyterians Sharing* to support the church’s mission and ministry in Canada and around the world, \$2,937,695 to Presbyterian World Service and Development for international development and relief programs, and \$204,642 to special projects of International Ministries and Canadian Ministries. In addition, over \$1,160,000 in gifts of securities were given to The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s ministries including \$1,021,087.26 to support congregational ministry.

Presbyterians Sharing 2015

The largest portion of funds for the General Assembly approved operating budget comes from gifts congregations and individuals make to *Presbyterians Sharing*. In 2015 congregations from across Canada donated \$6,929,304 for *Presbyterians Sharing*, (budget was set for \$7,300,000) and individuals gave \$144,794 (budget was set for \$200,000).

This was the second year of the new *Presbyterians Sharing* allocation based on 10% of a congregation’s dollar base. The analysis of this new formula of 10% of a congregation’s dollar base is found in the report of the Life and Mission Agency – Stewardship (see p. 12.1.80–82).

Comparing 2015 gifts from congregations to 2014:

- 283 congregations (31.5%) gave MORE, for a gain of \$351,575 (58 were already giving over 10%)
- 220 congregations (24.5%) gave the SAME.
- 371 congregations (41.4%) gave LESS, for a total loss of \$606,823 (70 were giving above 10%)
- 23 congregations gave nothing in 2014 and 2015 (2.6%)

INTERFUND TRANSFERS

Under proper accounting for the restricted fund method we need to show the transfer between funds. A key part of our financial health is based on sustainable transfers from the restricted fund to the operating fund. A net amount of \$987,095 was transferred into the operating fund.

	\$
To restricted fund – Deferred Bequests	(17,235)
Transfer from NDF capital account	445,000
From Bequest Stabilization Fund	250,000
From New Congregation Fund	200,000
Net Transfers to Operating Fund	109,330
Net Total Transfers to Operating Fund	987,095

NDF = National Development Fund

PENSION FUND 2015

The Pension Fund as per the March 31, 2014 valuation shows a solvency deficit of \$37.5 million and a transfer ratio of 85.2% (85% is the desired goal). This leaves a shortfall in contributions amounting to \$75,000 per month (\$.9 million per annum). This shortfall cannot come from the Pension Fund and must come from The Presbyterian Church in Canada which is responsible for the pension plan. This leaves us with two choices, one is to take the funds from the congregations or other employers of the plan, in other words a special levy on all congregations, or to find the funds from funds currently held by the national church. In 2015 we managed to find sufficient funds to cover the shortfall.

The General Assembly set up the Special Committee re Pension Solvency Funding in 2015 to look at a possibly large unfunded solvency deficit for our anticipated actuarial filing in March 2017. This committee has met twice and

is exploring a number of options to deal with this worst case scenario. (see p. 21.1.1) Prolonged government policy to suppress long term interest rates is the cause of the solvency deficit not the returns on our assets that we are achieving. In 2015 the Pension Fund had a gross return of 7.7% and beat its benchmark of 5.6% by 2.1%.

BUDGET 2017

In preparing the 2017 draft budget the Finance Committee reviewed a statement by Stephen S. Poloz – Governor of the Bank of Canada, given in Ottawa, Ontario, on January 20, 2016

We are hopeful that *Presbyterians Sharing* will be around or stay near \$6.9 million. There are of course a number of risks to reaching our revenue budget. The continuing membership decline in our denomination and the number of congregations just scraping by (those who bring \$50,000 or less in total receipts stands at over 200).

The Pension Plan solvency deficit caused by prolonged low long term interest rates has required us to increase the pension assessment to congregations to 5%. This puts further pressure on existing congregations’ obligations and expenditures. Our reliance on undesignated bequests still exists, however, when bequests come in and how much comes in cannot be predicted. However, from the multi-year data on undesignated bequests we now are seeing a five year rolling average as at 2015 of \$119,000.

The Management Team will make every effort in 2016 and 2017 to carry on the programs of the church while spending scarce dollars prudently.

Receipts	2015 Actual \$	2016 Revised \$	2017 Budget \$	
<i>Presbyterians Sharing</i>	6,929,304	6,900,000	6,900,000	1
Budget – Individual <i>Presbyterians Sharing</i>	144,109	175,000	175,000	2
Income from Investments	359,773	380,000	380,000	3
Income from Estates	11,345	10,000	10,000	
WMS Contributions	150,000	100,000	50,000	4
AMS Contributions	61,920	60,000	60,000	
Income from Other Sources	(21,128)	50,000	50,000	5
Bequest Revenue	17,422	125,000	125,000	6
Gifts General Revenue	32,867	1,000	1,000	
Total Receipts	7,685,612	7,801,000	7,751,000	

- Notes:
1. The original 2016 budget showed \$7.3 million, in light of 2015 \$6.9 million is a more realistic goal. Concern about continued decreases in the *Presbyterians Sharing* number is warranted. We will need to make extra efforts and dedicate resources in order to contact presbyteries and congregations about their commitment to the programs and missions of the denomination in order for us to achieve our budget of \$6.9 million.
 2. We will need to do more in promoting this area if we are to achieve the full budget amount.
 3. Interest rates will continue to be low over the next two years.
 4. The WMS grant will level off at \$50,000 per annum.
 5. Resource sales and precise ordering of bulletins will help us achieve the budget. We also get rent from the Record of \$20,000.
 6. As noted above, the five year rolling average is \$119,000.

Expenditures

	2015 Actual \$	2016 Revised \$	2017 Budget \$
General Assembly / Assembly Council	1,082,068	1,020,196	1,014,000
Life and Mission Agency	5,483,642	6,027,214	5,930,751
Support Services	1,502,690	1,511,000	1,492,500
Colleges	850,000	850,000	807,000
Total Expenditures	8,918,400	9,408,410	9,244,251

In 2017 all salary areas have absorbed a cost of living adjustment in the salary line of 1.5% (\$41,000). In a number of cases the costs of COLA have been offset by cuts and savings in other areas. The 2017 budget compared to the

2016 reflects a decrease of \$164,000. Part of this decrease is because of the merging of Stewardship and Planned Giving. There is also a decrease of \$43,000 in the grant to colleges.

Missionary Residence – 27 Brentcliffe Avenue, Toronto

Five years ago the Life and Mission Agency recommended this building be sold and look at other alternatives to dealing with missionary furloughs or other reasons for missionaries having to return to Canada for periods of up to a year. Five years ago the Assembly Council voted to hold onto the missionary residence.

Subsequent to that decision a new LRT transport system is being built along Eglinton Ave. and the residence is right at a key intersection in Leaside. We have received an unsolicited offer for \$1.8 million. The fair market value if we actively tried to sell the building would, we suspect, be much higher. More than half the building is rented out to non missionaries and the cost and staff time to take care of this building are not in proportion to the perceived benefit. Last year the Assembly Council asked the Life and Mission Agency to review their original decision (which was to sell the building) and report back to the Assembly Council.

Interfund Transfers

	2015	2016	2017
	Actual	Revised	Budget
	\$	\$	\$
Breakdown of Transfers Restricted to Operating			
from 2010/2011 College Bequest			
Transfer from Restricted Fund	554,330	595,000	1,080,000
Transfer from Stabilization Fund	250,000	250,000	200,000
Transfer from New Congregation Fund	200,000	200,000	200,000
Deferred Bequests transfer to Restricted Funds	(17,235)		
	987,095	1,045,000	1,480,000

Deferred Bequests 2015

As per the current bequest policy the funds would be distributed as follows:

Deferred Bequests 2015	2015
Portion to Pension Plan	\$ 2,585
Transfer to Stabilization Fund	\$14,650
	<u>\$17,235</u>

Note that the above complies with the approved policy set out by the Assembly Council.

Recommendation No. 7 **Adopted/Defeated/Amended**
 That the 2017 budget be approved.

THREE YEAR FORECAST 2018–2020

The following is one possible ‘future’ scenario. It is not meant to suggest that this will be the recommended ‘future’ put forward by the 2018 Budget Working Group (2018 BWG) to the Assembly Council. The 2018 BWG will report back to Assembly Council and the Finance Committee with their specific suggestions and recommended actions in November 2016 and March 2017. What the following does purport to show is that the revenues lined up with a level of expenditures and transfers from restricted funds that are sustainable over a three to five year period. (see p. 2.2.2)

Recommendation No. 8 **Adopted/Defeated/Amended**
 That the 2018 to 2020 forecast be received for information.

2018 Budget Working Group

As reported to the 2015 General Assembly, the 2018 Budget Working Group was named with the following members: the Rev. Dr. David Sutherland, convener; the Rev. Harold Kouwenberg and the Rev. Corrie Stewart representing the Assembly Council; the Rev. Tom Billard and the Rev. Doug Schonberg representing the Life and Mission Agency; and Ms. Heather Crisp and the Rev. Rick Horst representing the church at large. The Management Team also supports the work of the committee. The responsibility of the committee is to propose a 2018 budget that provides for a realistic matching of expenditures with revenue and sustainable fund transfers. They have begun meeting and will continue to meet to carry out this work in time for the Assembly Council to consider it in March 2017.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Management Team is made up of the three general secretaries (Principal Clerk, General Secretary of Life and Mission Agency and Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer). They are charged with managing and co-ordinating the work of the church offices. In addition, they are asked to prepare initial drafts of budgets for the Finance Committee and to carry out other tasks as requested by the Assembly Council. They report regularly to the Assembly Council. One of the main items being dealt with this past year has been the implementation of a new database for the national office to replace one that is many years old and no longer supported. Raiser's Edge provides excellent contact management including highly customizable reporting and communication options such as targeted mail merge letters. This model of working together brings a strong sense of unity to the work of the national church within 50 Wynford Drive. The Management Team is grateful for the dedication of the staff at the national offices, and grateful to be working together as a team. This year the Management Team bid farewell to retiring General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency Rick Fee, and welcomed Ian Ross-McDonald. The coming year sees the retirement of Steve Roche as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer and welcoming his successor.

REFERRALS FROM GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The 2014 General Assembly asked the Assembly Council to present a strategic plan at the 2015 General Assembly (A&P 2014, p. 31). The strategic plan is to guide the national church in its mission to encourage, support and strengthen congregations. A committee of the Assembly Council was established immediately that began the work of consulting with the church on a strategic plan. This work was not complete by the 2015 General Assembly, which granted permission to report to this year's Assembly. (A&P 2015, p. 213)

The draft plan was posted on The Presbyterian Church in Canada website. Through emails and the website, an invitation to comment on the draft plan was extended to all. The Strategic Planning Committee also held a series of teleconferences with more than 50 participants from across Canada. During each teleconference, the highlights of the draft plan were introduced and participants were invited to respond to two questions: 1) Which ideas resonate most with you, and 2) how do you envision these ideas could be implemented in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The ideas raised in these conversations were noted. Participants were also able to provide written comments on the draft plan.

Guiding the work of the committee were the vision and mission statements of our church, that were reaffirmed by the General Assembly in 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 201, 37). In a number of places in the strategic plan the term 'missional' is used. The Assembly Council finds helpful the definition Darrell Guder gives in his book *The Missional Church*: "The essential vocation of the church is to be God's call and sent people in the world trusting that rather than the church having a mission God's mission has a church."

Vision

Who are we?

Disciples of Christ
Empowered by the Spirit
Glorifying God and
Rejoicing in Service!

Mission

What do we do?

Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit,
we proclaim the love and good news of Jesus Christ through our words and actions.

As a Reformed church,
we rely on the truth and inspiration of Scriptures for God's guidance into the future
– a future that we approach with wonder and anticipation, knowing God is with us.

As worshipping communities joyfully celebrating the sacraments, we are supported, strengthened and equipped to share the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ.

The Presbyterian Church In Canada – Strategic Plan

Goals

As worshipping communities of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, we proclaim the love and good news of Jesus Christ through our words and actions by working together as a national church to provide:

Visionary leadership

Empowering resources that are relevant, contextual and missional

Relational connections that incarnate Christ's mission at the local and international level

Objectives

With God's help, we will accomplish these goals by prayerfully continuing, creating and improving ways to equip congregations, specialized ministries, church courts and the church as a whole to:

- Engage in biblical and theological reflection and education that deepens understanding of and commitment to God, the church, and its place in Christ's ministry and mission
- Pursue spiritual renewal and faith formation as the basis for transformation within our congregations
- Engage in evangelism, outreach and discipleship
- Embrace a missional culture that nurtures initiative and risk taking at local, national and international levels
- Discern through grassroots consultation and research the challenges ministers and congregations face and connect them to tools to overcome them
- Articulate and live out the rich traditions of Reformed theology
- Discern, prepare and support leaders – lay, youth and young adults and clergy – for faithful and vibrant ministry
- Create, encourage and support new communities of faith
- Explore buildings as tools that set congregations and presbyteries free to pursue faithful ministry
- Live out the justice imperatives of the gospel and sow seeds of hope through our words and actions in the public sphere
- Engage in healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples
- Nurture ecumenical relationships and collaborate with ecumenical partners to achieve common goals
- Fulfil leadership mandates with the help of caring, competent and, when necessary, confidential support
- Celebrate, support and encourage cultural and linguistic diversity

Methods

We will utilize the following as tools to accomplish the above goals and objectives as we:

- Provide congregations with resource people and tools to encourage/enhance ministry
- Use technologies to facilitate achievement of goals and objectives
- Use coaching and mentoring networks that can share best practices to equip congregations and leaders in renewal
- Create, seek and make easily available print, video, electronic resources to equip congregations and individuals for ministry
- Encourage one innovative worshipping community in each presbytery to foster evangelism, hope and spiritual renewal
- Have denominational structures and programs that are accessible, mobile and responsive to regional needs
- Work with mission partners who enable congregations to participate in mission beyond the congregation
- Provide equipping conferences for leaders from congregations, presbytery, synods
- Provide PCC committees, congregations, specialized ministries, presbyteries and synods with website support and inspire and equip them in innovative communication techniques
- Provide grants strategically to further accomplish the goals and objectives of the strategic plan
- Collaborate with PCC theological colleges on common goals and objectives
- Conduct research, develop policy and study guides to equip the church for future ministry
- Provide opportunities for building relationships between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples

Recommendation No. 9

Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Strategic Plan be approved for guiding the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Recommendation No. 10

Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Assembly Council monitor/oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Recommendation No. 11 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That in their reports to General Assembly, all standing committees, college boards and agencies state how their work is implementing the Strategic Plan.

Recommendation No. 12 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That presbyteries and congregations be encouraged to implement the Strategic Plan within their locales providing feedback as needed, and be prepared to share their experiences with the Assembly Council in three years.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ASSEMBLY COUNCIL

The 2015 General Assembly considered a proposal to amend the Assembly Council's terms of reference. The amendment would reduce in the number of members and have all members appointed in a 'church-at-large' category. The Committee to Nominate Standing Committees would recommend a representative slate to the General Assembly. This would bring the Council in line with all other General Assembly standing committees and discontinue the presbytery and synod appointed categories. (A&P 2015, p. 208–211) The Assembly referred the proposal for study and report, and the Assembly Council was pleased to hear from 37 courts of the church.

Of the 17 sessions responding, support was indicated by 14. Two did not support the change and one had no opinion. The responses that were in favour tended to be quite strongly so, with comments such as it is a 'sensible way forward to improving the Assembly Council's ability to deal with the challenges it faces in today's world of rapid change and financial constraints' and 'this will streamline our processes'. The concerns that were raised were primarily around ensuring adequate representation from across the church. Only one raised concerns about reducing the size of the Assembly Council.

Of the 19 responses from presbyteries, nine were fully in favour of the proposals and four were opposed. The remaining six responses provided various comments and suggestions on the proposal. A minority of the concerns related to the reduction in size of Assembly Council. The original proposal suggests moving from 31 elected members (plus 5 ex-officio voting) to 18 elected members (plus 4 ex-officio voting). Several of those with concerns proposed a smaller reduction; one suggested 20 instead of 18. Three presbyteries clearly preferred the current system in which membership is based on presbytery, synod and at-large representation. One presbytery urged that an Indigenous voice be present on Assembly Council. One synod responded, suggesting a blended approach with a total of 27 members including representation from courts of the church.

There was some concern (in two responses) about the perceived centralization of representation or authority that the proposal might encourage. At the same time, there was the recognition in several responses that it is time for change in the structure that encourages fiscal responsibility and efficient decision making with a more focused, workable size.

Given the variety of responses, and in particular the concerns that the proposal may go too far in reducing the number of members and be at risk of reducing regional representation, it seems reasonable to restore to the proposal some of the representation that could be lost, and moderate the reduction of the number of members.

The Assembly Council proposes therefore, a reduction of Council membership to 25 instead of 22. Furthermore, instead of having all members appointed in a 'church-at-large' category, the presbytery category remains in place but be reduced from 15 to 12. This proposal ensures that there will always be regional representation and that the nominations of presbyteries will be central to the membership of the Assembly Council.

Proposed Terms of Reference for the Assembly Council**Purpose and Accountability**

The General Assembly itself establishes policy and the Assembly Council is responsible for the implementation of that policy.

In its role as both a coordinating body and a prophetic one, the Council will report to and be responsible to the General Assembly, and shall be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the work of the church is carried out efficiently and effectively within the policies established by the General Assembly.

The Assembly Council will be of central importance in the life of the church. It assumed all the legal powers vested in the Administrative Council on July 1, 1992.

Responsibilities

In all matters, the Council will carry out its business and communications in a manner that demonstrates faithfulness, openness and transparency to the membership of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and a commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the furtherance of his reconciling mission in the world.

In its coordinating role, the Assembly Council will:

- coordinate the work of the national bodies of the church, having direct links with national staff.
- recommend policy, submit short- and long-range plans, coordinate and recommend a realistic and balanced budget and generally present the current and future needs of the national agencies to the General Assembly.
- have final responsibility in matters financial under the authority of the General Assembly.
- ensure that the decisions of the General Assembly are carried out and communicated to the church.
- assist the General Assembly in making responsible decisions by ensuring that both the Council, and the Assembly, have before them all the information that is needed and that is pertinent to the matter in hand in order to make a wise decision.
- with its diverse representation from across the church, provide the broadest possible viewpoint on proposed changes in policy direction. Thus, agencies are required to inform the Council of any proposed new directions, including additional executive staff positions. The Council will advise the Assembly. In some cases, the advice of the Council will be contrary to the wishes of the Agency Committee. In such circumstances, the General Assembly, with all the information before it, will make the final decision.

In its prophetic role, the Assembly Council will:

- present a vision for the mission of a church that looks to God for continual renewal.
- dream about the future of the church and seek to be a leading edge of what the church might be in the future.
- affirm the work of the agencies of the church as they carry out a prophetic role for our denomination.
- call itself and the church to account when in need of critique.
- invite input, when helpful, from committees of the church that do not normally report through the Council, mindful of its servant role.

Membership

The Council consists of 25 individuals:

- nine persons appointed by the General Assembly from the church at large for a term of three years (renewable once).
- twelve persons appointed by the Assembly, each for a term of three years (renewable once), to fill presbytery slots of six years duration, with each slot rotating by geographical order of presbyteries and alternating between clergy and non-clergy each time a presbytery's six year term comes in the rotation.
- four persons, ex officio with vote, namely the President of the Atlantic Mission Society, the President of the Women's Missionary Society, Convener of the Life and Mission Agency and the Moderator of the General Assembly.

Staff support

The following individuals, by office, shall attend meetings of the Assembly Council as resource and support:

Principal Clerk who serves as Secretary of the Council
General Secretary Life and Mission Agency
Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer
One of the heads of Colleges

* Members are eligible to be re-appointed once with the concurrence of the member and the Assembly Council. It is understood that among the members, a balance will be maintained, in as far as possible, between clergy and non-clergy, men and women, and reflect the ethnic diversity of our denomination. All members of the Assembly Council must be professing members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Committees

To ensure that the Assembly Council can fulfil its terms of reference, the following committees will carry out much of the work of the Council and, as necessary, report through it, to the General Assembly:

1. Executive of the Assembly Council
2. Archives and Records Committee
3. Audit Committee
4. Benevolences Committee (Including the responsibilities of the Fund for Ministerial Assistance)
5. Church Architecture Committee
6. Commission on Assets of Dissolved and Amalgamated Congregations
7. Commission on Proxies
8. Ewart Endowment for Theological Education Committee
9. Finance Committee
10. Governance Committee
11. Management Team
12. Nominating Committee
13. Personnel Policy Committee

Ad Hoc Committees

The Assembly Council may appoint ad hoc committees as necessary.

Committees Related to the Council

1. Theological Education Liaison Group

Recommendation No. 13 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above revised terms of reference for the Assembly Council be approved.

Recommendation No. 14 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the new membership composition of Assembly Council be phased in starting in 2017 in a manner that allows current members to complete their terms.

IMPLEMENTING THE CALLS TO ACTION OF THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION OF CANADA

The Assembly Council, at both its meetings this year, spent time on the implementation of the Calls to Action. They were greatly assisted in this by Stephen Allen, who led the Council in the Blanket Exercise at the November meeting, and facilitated a conversation on the various Calls to Action related to the church.

The Council, after being briefed on the TRC Calls to Action (ref: Calls to Action, see p. 2.1.25 for website), participated in table group discussions focusing on how to implement the Calls to Action for our church.

The Calls to Action for our church fall broadly within these areas, with the particular Call to Action number in brackets:

1. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. (UNDRIP): using UNDRIP principles as a framework for reconciliation and report how we are doing so. (46 and 48)
2. Repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullus*: that have been used throughout history to justify sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples. (46 and 49)
3. Indigenous Spirituality: educate within the church to respect Indigenous Spirituality's own right, and as 'a valid form of worship equal to their own'. (48, 60, 61)
4. Ongoing Education: on the church's role in colonization and Indian Residential Schools. (59)
5. Covenant of Reconciliation: develop and sign a Covenant of Reconciliation with other parties to the Settlement Agreement. (46)
6. Permanent Funding: provide ongoing funding for projects that promote Indigenous healing and reconciliation, culture, language and spirituality. (61)
7. Cemeteries: with Aboriginal groups and the Federal Government, support initiatives to provide a registry of children buried at schools, notify families, and properly maintain cemeteries. (73, 74, 75)

The 2015 General Assembly asked that the Assembly Council develop a plan of the implementations of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and report to the 2016 General Assembly

on that plan. (A&P 2015, p. 25) Stephen Kendall (Principal Clerk) and Stephen Allen (Associate Secretary, Justice Ministries) have been consulting on the various ways our church is implementing the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada final report.

Currently, Call to Action No. 48, that calls for the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) as a framework for reconciliation is the primary focus, given the March 31, 2016 deadline for reporting publically on this. The Moderator will be attending an ecumenical news briefing in Ottawa on March 30, 2016, to announce collaborative efforts toward fulfilling this goal. Copies of the Declaration will be at the meeting for all members of Council.

Justice Ministries has prepared the following workplan regarding implementation:

The UNDRIP is intended to be a framework for reconciliation. Call to Action No. 48 invites church parties to the IRSSA and other faith groups, interfaith groups and social justice groups to make the following commitments (which does not preclude other commitments).

- i. Ensuring that their institutions, policies, programs and practices comply with the UNDRIP.
- ii. Respecting Indigenous people's right to self-determination in spiritual matters consistent with Article 12 of the UNDRIP.
- iii. Engaging in ongoing public dialogue and actions to support the UNDRIP.
- iv. Issuing a statement by March 31, 2016, of how church parties to the IRSSA and other faith groups, interfaith groups and social justice groups will implement UNDRIP.

Consultation

To consult with the National Native Ministries (NNM) at its spring 2016 meeting to discuss a process to involve NNM in developing a plan to live comply with UNDRIP. The process should include opportunities for Indigenous members NNM supports to advise the church.

Inform and Involve

In November 2015, both the Life and Mission Agency Committee and the Assembly Council discussed the UNDRIP. The UNDRIP will be distributed to members of the Life and Mission Agency Committee and the Assembly Council.

The UNDRIP will be made available to the commissioners attending the 2015 General Assembly. Commissioners will be invited to encourage their congregations to learn about UNDRIP. Involving Indigenous people in the community in discussions about UNDRIP will be encouraged and supported.

A children's resource on the UNDRIP has been developed by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society. What is needed are prayers to accompany the resource (more details on the resource).

Assess if the resource developed by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society could be used or adapted for use at CY2016 or synod camps.

Through the Healing and Reconciliation Program, encourage funding proposals from courts of the church wishing to learn more about the UNDRIP (cite congregation in Calgary that worked with an interfaith network).

In workshops Justice Ministries leads on healing and reconciliation, integrate the UNDRIP into the content. (How might the UNDRIP help your congregation contribute to reconciliation in your community?).

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is participating in ecumenical initiatives concerning the UNDRIP, as it did in 2011.

Promote Call to Action No. 48 on the Healing and Reconciliation's web site and include examples of initiatives by courts of the church and committees in the church.

Issues for discussion broadly within the church:

1. What does it mean for the PCC's institutions to comply with the UNDRIP?
2. Review what the PCC has said and done re Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

3. Need to refer to what the PCC is doing globally (Goldcorp's Marling Mine in Guatemala has had an impact on Mayan communities).
4. Are there policies and practices in the PCC that need to be reviewed in light of No. 48?

Congregations are also responding to the Calls to Action

The Session at First Church in Port Colborne, Ontario, created an ad hoc committee to inform the congregation, community and the Presbytery of Niagara about Presbyterian involvement in residential schools and to discern ways to promote healing.

Westwood Church Winnipeg, Manitoba, is cooperating with eight churches in their community to host four evening events in January to April 2016. The first three evenings will have speakers who will address themes that run through the Calls to Action. The final evening will be community discernment for ways the community can respond to the Calls to Action together.

First Church in Regina, Saskatchewan, is working ecumenically and with Indigenous organizations to advocate for the commemoration and maintenance of the cemetery of children who died at the Presbyterian-run Regina Indian Industrial School. The school closed in 1911 (Call to Action No. 75).

The Presbytery of Ottawa is developing liturgical resources for congregations to learn more about the legacy of residential schools and the TRC's Calls to Action.

Knox Church in Calgary, Alberta, is learning about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The congregation joined an interfaith planning team and organized a forum to discuss how peoples of faith can implement the values and principles enshrined in the Declaration.

The Rev. Susan Samuel planned a workshop in the spring, 2016 for members of the Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland to learn about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Both of these initiatives are faithful responses to Call to Action No. 48 which calls on churches to learn about and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Copies of the UN Declaration are available from Justice Ministries.

These are just some of the local initiatives that Presbyterians across Canada have been involved in since the release of the TRC's Calls to Action.

Justice Ministries is available to lead workshops on the Calls to Action.

The Calls to Action can be found at: trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF STIPEND (A&P 2015, p. 215–216, 24–25)

The 2015 General Assembly considered the Assembly Council's response to Overture No. 2, 2015 regarding the terms of the guarantee of stipend and referred an additional recommendation to the church for study and report.

Originally, the request of the overture was to stipulate that regardless of how high above the minimum stipend grid a minister's stipend was set at the beginning of a ministry, the Cost of Living Allowance set by the General Assembly be added annually. The Assembly Council recommended that the current wording of Book of Forms Appendix A–29 that mandates an annual review of the stipend in view of changes to the cost of living and needs of the minister was sufficient.

The Assembly, however, asked that the church consider changing Appendix A–29 to mandate not just an annual 'review' but an 'adjustment'. So the following proposal was sent for study:

That Book of Forms Appendix A–29 (re guarantee of stipend terms) be amended to read: "and agree to adjust the stipend and allowances annually in view of any changes in the cost of living and the needs of our minister" and that this be sent to sessions and presbyteries for study and report to the next General Assembly by January 31, 2016. (A&P 2015, p. 25)

Fourteen (14) sessions and 15 presbyteries responded to the proposal.

Of the sessions responding, nine were in favour of the change, three were opposed and two had no opinion. Those sessions that were in favour felt that the change was a fair and good practice to adopt. One session reported that this was their practice currently. Those opposed preferred to leave the matter to congregations to assess.

Of the presbyteries responding, 11 were in favour of the change, three were opposed and one asked that a future Assembly consider reverting to the original request to require that COLA be added to all stipends. Presbyteries that were opposed tended to be concerned about those congregations that might find it difficult to afford an adjustment. One presbytery pointed out that since we consider this a stipend, it might be conceivable that it should go down in the cases of a minister's needs going down. Presbyteries that were in favour considered the proposal reasonable and thought that it would be helpful in encouraging the conversation about cost of living and needs that is already stipulated in the Book of Forms.

Given that 20 of 29 courts were in favour, the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation No. 15 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Book of Forms Appendix A–29 re guarantee of stipend terms be amended to read: “and agree to adjust the stipend and allowances annually in view of any changes in the cost of living and the needs of our minister”.

OVERTURE NO. 3, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 573, 216, 14)

Re: Budgeting for General Assembly costs

Overture No. 3, 2015 asked the Assembly Council to consider including and directing all necessary General Assembly costs in the General Assembly budget. The committee noted that there were numerous advantages to including the majority of the costs of the yearly meeting of General Assembly into a central budget and thereby allowing for responsible stewardship of resources. It was also noted that while costs are certainly extremely important to keep in mind, they are not the only factor to consider while preparing for General Assembly. Instead there must be a balance between being cost effective and good stewards with the needs of the commissioners, the business of the Assembly and resource people.

While each General Assembly is held in a particular presbytery, it must be remembered that every Assembly belongs to the church as a whole, and therefore makes sense that the cost should be shared equally and not be a burden for any one presbytery. While recognizing this, each presbytery holding an Assembly is still encouraged to share their gifts and skills well for the hosting and planning of Assemblies. Over the past number of years, more of the costs have already been assumed by the General Assembly budget and formalising this arrangement makes sense as a means of continuity and direction for those planning Assemblies going forward. The committee recommends that the costs for General Assembly be assigned as follows: 1) the costs of the business of the Assembly, worship, and events relating to the Assembly be covered by the General Assembly Budget; and 2) the costs for hospitality and events relating to hospitality at the Assembly be covered by the Local Arrangements Committee.

Recommendation No. 16 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above be the response to Overture No. 3, 2015 re budgeting for General Assembly costs.

OVERTURE NOS. 13, 22 and 36, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 587–88, 597–98, 610)

Re Establishing A Native Ministries Endowment Fund

These overtures were referred to the Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency. A working group made up of Graham Kennedy and Mabel Litowski (representing the Assembly Council) and Ian Morrison and Anne Phillips (representing the Life and Mission Agency) was created to prepare a response.

The working group reviewed the overtures, various policies, the Confession, and other collected documents relating to finances and the church's history and relationship with Aboriginal peoples. Additionally, the members also consulted groups and individuals in the church throughout the process of preparing a response to the overture. In the autumn of 2015 the group reported to both the Life and Mission Agency and the Assembly Council and received further guidance about refining the report. In addition, it was agreed by the Assembly Council to name an Indigenous person as a member of the working group. However, before this came into effect, the members of the working group indicated that they felt that they had done all that was possible at this time.

Given the importance of these overtures and ensuring the participation of Indigenous voices, a new working group has been named to take the collected work of the working group as the basis for preparing a response to be presented to the 2017 General Assembly.

Recommendation No. 17 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to report to the 2017 General Assembly on Overture Nos. 13, 22 and 36, 2015.

OVERTURE NO. 17, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 591)

Re: Holding General Assembly in a Central Location

This overture asked the Assembly Council to consider holding the General Assembly in a central location for a period of time with the intent to be responsible stewards of both financial and human resources. The committee is in favour of the ideas in that there may be possible cost savings by: 1) cutting down on travel expenses; and 2) by committing to a particular site rental for a number of Assemblies. It is also in favour of the idea because the work of planning an Assembly could be carried over to subsequent Assemblies and it would save the local arrangement committees from having to “reinvent the wheel” each year. The committee is cognizant that there would be extra work and potential drain on local arrangement committees due to the increased number of times that Assemblies would be held in particular presbyteries and there would need to be planning to offset this fact. Another option would be the rotation of Assemblies through a number of preselected sites over a series of years within a central area such as rotating between three sites every three years. This would still allow for savings and perhaps lessen any burdens on the local arrangement committees.

While the committee supports the idea of a central location, it does not rule out that an Assembly may meet in another location for specific reasons and when funds are available. Holding an Assembly in the east or west can add over \$100,000 to the cost. The committee is recommending, however, that the requirement for the General Assembly to meet every five years in the east or west be discontinued.

One question that arose was how to define “central location”. For the purposes of responding to this overture the committee focused on the area between Toronto, Hamilton and Waterloo as its understanding of the intent of central location. The largest populated presbyteries are in this geographical area. This also allows for easy travel for most commissioners and resource people. As well, air travel is easier on the west side of metro Toronto with an international airport in this area and each of these cities having regional airports and. They also have public transportation through GO transit system and VIA rail. Currently, these three centres have university facilities that could hold an Assembly.

Recommendation No. 18 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly normally be held within the geographical region of Hamilton, the Greater Toronto Area and Waterloo.

Recommendation No. 19 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the requirement for the General Assembly to meet in the east/west every five years be discontinued.

Recommendation No. 20 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above report be the answer to Overture No. 17, 2015 re holding General Assembly in a central location.

The following three paragraphs are duplicated from above on this page.

~~Overture No. 17, 2015 asked the Assembly Council to consider holding the General Assembly in a central location for a period of time with the intent to be responsible stewards of both financial and human resources. The committee is in favour of the ideas in that there may be possible cost savings by: 1) cutting down on travel expenses; and 2) by committing to a particular site rental for a number of Assemblies. It is also in favour of the idea because the work of planning an Assembly could be carried over to subsequent Assemblies and it would save the local arrangement committees from having to “reinvent the wheel” each year. The committee is cognizant that there would be extra work and potential drain on local arrangement committees due to the increased number of times that Assemblies would be held in particular presbyteries and there would need to be planning to offset this fact. Another option would be the rotation of Assemblies through a number of preselected sites over a series of years within a central area such as rotating between three sites every three years. This would still allow for savings and perhaps lessen any burdens on the local arrangement committees.~~

REVISED

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The committee tasked with preparing the above response also proposed to Assembly Council the establishment of a Design Team for future Generals Assemblies. The approved terms of reference for this group are as follows:

General Assembly Design Team Terms of Reference

Purpose

The design team will assist the Assembly Council and the General Assembly Office to plan effective and efficient General Assemblies.

Accountability

The design team is accountable to the Assembly Council, noting that the Clerks of Assembly have responsibilities for the preparation of the business of the General Assembly.

Responsibilities

1. To provide overall direction for the planning of future Assemblies such as location, format and themes.
2. To provide an effective and efficient means to address the business of the General Assembly.
3. To appoint special working groups for worship and any special events, educational events or focus that may be identified for a specific General Assembly.
4. To support the General Assembly Office in its role to prepare for and execute the General Assemblies.
5. To support local arrangements committees in their local preparations for the General Assembly.

Membership

9 members, namely

6 members, noting

- the membership is to be inclusive of the whole church and come from across the denomination
- at least 1 member from the Assembly Council

Staff: Principal Clerk
Deputy Clerk
Senior Administrator, General Assembly Office

OVERTURE NOS. 37, 2015; 4, 5, AND 7, 2016 (A&P 2015, p. 610–11, Book of Reports, p. 28.1.2–3, 28.1.4)

Re: Request for process for a congregation leaving the denomination

These various overtures were referred to the Clerks of Assembly to consult with Assembly Council, the Trustee Board, the Pension and Benefits Board and the Assembly Council. Members of Assembly Council were appointed to be part of the consultation, which took place at the initiative of the Clerks this spring. Assembly Council reviewed the Clerk’s response and voted in favour of concurring with the response found on p. 7.1.2–5.

OVERTURE NO. 1, 2016 (p. 28.1.1)

Re: Revising appointment protocols for Associate Secretaries

The Assembly Council reviewed and reflected on the process for appointing associate secretaries and have confidence in the process and in the quality to the selections that have been made through it.

Rather than limiting the pool of candidates for general secretary in any way, and more particularly, to associate secretaries, our regulations encourage a large pool of nominees and applicants for these positions.

There is independence between the review and formation of the job descriptions and the search and selection process for the candidates. There is very broad participation from across the church in both these elements.

Presbyteries continue to be encouraged to participate in the process by prayerfully seeking out candidates whom they might nominate.

Recommendation No. 21 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above be the response to Overture No. 1, 2016 re revising appointment protocols for associate secretaries.

OVERTURE NO. 2, 2016 (p. 28.1.1)

Re: Timeline regarding overtures relating to human sexuality

The Assembly Council received Overture No. 2, 2016 at its November 2015 meeting and set aside time in committee of the whole to discuss its content and seek to address the concerns it raises. After this discussion, the following recommendations were adopted by the Council, and, through the website and various collaborations, carried them out.

- That the church be encouraged to use the study guide, *Body, Mind and Soul*, as a common resource to facilitate its broader discussion of human sexuality.
- That the Assembly Council affirm that the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries (Life and Mission Agency Committee) are the bodies that are still responding to the overtures, and request that the church be prayerful in their support of these groups as they carry out this work and for the peace and unity of the church.
- That congregations, presbyteries and others within the church be encouraged to consider February 15, 2016, as an initial date for feedback as the church continues this year of discernment; this is to assist the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries (Life and Mission Agency Committee) to work within their deadline of March 31, 2016.
- That the Moderator be requested to consider another pastoral letter to the church early in the New Year.
- That the Life and Mission Agency be requested to assist the church with educational resources and resource people on the use of the study guide.
- That in order to assist the Assembly Council in preparing a response to Overture No 2, 2016 re timelines, the Executive arrange for consultation with the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries on the timelines they envision.
- That the Clerks of Assembly be asked to prepare a summary of the usual process for dealing with and deciding major items.

The Council finds it very difficult to provide a clear timeline for decisions to be made by the church on this matter, because ultimately it is up to the General Assembly itself to determine what steps it will take and when to take them. In addition to this, by affirming that Justice Ministries (Life and Mission Agency) and the Committee on Church Doctrine are the two bodies to which the relevant overtures have been directed, the Assembly Council wants to make clear it is not the body that has been directed to respond to the overtures. The reports of the two committees will influence timelines. The Assembly Council does not wish to rush or hinder those bodies as they carry out their work. A conference call with them was held to ascertain what could be said about the timing of their own work and a possible timeline for decisions.

Both Justice Ministries and the Committee on Church Doctrine anticipated bringing reports to the 2016 General Assembly, but they were not in a position at the time of the conference call to provide details about recommendations. The Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency Committee were scheduled to meet in March. Final decisions on a report to Assembly must wait until then.

In order to assist those bodies in their work, the Assembly Council agreed to make a 'request' to the church to submit responses to the *Body Mind and Soul* study guide by February 15, 2016. This request was made with the full knowledge and respect for the fact that this may be an unrealistic timeframe for many groups and also that the General Assembly date for feedback is March 31, 2016. Many sessions, courts and groups did in fact provide

substantial material by the 15 February requested date and therefore the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries had a large number of responses to help guide their work before their reports were due. The Assembly Council is grateful to all those who made a special effort to meet this date.

The Clerks of Assembly provided information for the Sexuality portion on the website explaining what is happening with the overtures and what will happen in the future with them. In part, this document provided the following information:

What happens next?

If the 2016 Assembly follows the usual steps, a proposed response to the overtures will be put before the General Assembly by Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries. The Assembly may send the proposal to the church for study and further response. This would be an opportunity for voices across the church to be heard on a specific proposal. At the 2017 Assembly, the proposal, possibly amended because of the feedback, could be considered again and remitted to presbyteries for their approval or disapproval. The 2018 Assembly would tally these replies and make a decision that would become the law/doctrine of the church.

Alternatively, it is possible the 2016 Assembly will decide the responses received by February 15 provide sufficient feedback to allow a firm proposal to be sent to presbyteries without further study. In this case, the proposal would be remitted to presbyteries for their approval or disapproval, without further discussion. The 2017 Assembly would tally these replies and make a decision that would become the law/doctrine of the church.

Meanwhile, the church is encouraged to continue to pray, learn, think, talk and listen – trusting the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit to guide us.

One of the reasons why it is difficult to set a clear timeline for decisions is that we do not yet know a) what the two committees will bring to the Assembly, b) what parts of their reports might be voted on immediately, c) what might be sent for study and report and d) what might be destined for the process of the Barrier Act.

Generally speaking, the Clerks of Assembly advise that the usual process for considering substantial change within the church is as follows:

1. General Assembly 1 receives an overture and refers it to a committee to prepare a report.
2. That committee prepares a response for General Assembly 2 (the following year).
3. General Assembly 2 sends the response to the courts of the church for study and report – this can include proposed recommendations – so that the feedback of the whole church can be received and considered.
4. The committee receives feedback prepares a revised report and appropriate recommendations for General Assembly 3.
5. General Assembly 3 adopts recommendations, or if a change in doctrine or law is contemplated, sends down under Barrier Act.
6. Presbyteries alone respond yes or no to Barrier Act legislation or doctrine.
7. General Assembly 4 adopts new legislation or defeats the proposal.

In our current context, the 2016 Assembly could be considered General Assembly 2, being the first time a report on the overtures will be received.

Sometimes the process can take place more quickly. If an overture has been referred to a committee prior to February 1, that committee can bring a report to that first Assembly without it being referred to it again by the Assembly. That can save a year.

Sometimes an Assembly will agree to send an item of legislation down under the Barrier Act without a process of study and report. This might take place for straightforward items (e.g. a minor change to the Book of Forms). But the Assembly has the authority to send an item under the Barrier Act at any time. What an Assembly cannot do is adopt a significant new doctrine, or change the law of the church, without the step of the Barrier Act.

A Declaratory Act could also be adopted by the General Assembly regarding a subject before the church. This is intended as a way of clarifying the church’s understanding of an existing piece of legislation or doctrine. It is not a way to create new church law or doctrine, and therefore it would be unlikely to have any effect on this timeline.

It will be for the 2016 General Assembly to decide what to do with reports it receives. It is within the power of the Assembly to not receive a report, to receive a report and adopt all or some of its recommendations, to send portions of a report to the church for study and report to give additional time, and to remit items of doctrine or church law to the Barrier Act. Each option presents a different timeline.

Recommendation No. 22 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above be the response to Overture No. 2, 2016 re timeline for human sexuality overtures.

OVERTURE NO. 8, 2016 (p. 28.1.4–5)

Re: Standing committee secretaries

This overture requests that apart from Assembly Council, all standing committees of the church provide from among their membership a secretary.

The Assembly Council affirms the role of staff in providing administrative support to standing committees at their request, and has ascertained from staff their willingness and ability to continue doing so.

The Assembly Council also notes and reminds standing committees that they have always had and continue to have the right to appoint a secretary from among their own members.

Recommendation No. 23 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above be the response to Overture No. 8, 2016 re standing committees secretaries.

OVERTURE NO. 9, 2016 (p. 28.1.5)

Re: Utilize and develop resources re passive energy

The Assembly Council received the interim response of the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) to this overture (see p. 12.1.39–40) and concurred in the request to present a response to the 2017 General Assembly. The Council will continue to collaborate with Justice Ministries on a response over the coming year.

OTHER ASSEMBLY COUNCIL MATTERS

MINIMUM STIPEND FOR 2017

In 2005, the General Assembly agreed that the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) would be applied to the entire grid of minimum stipends and increments, and not simply to the level of the fourth increment, as had been the practice prior to 2006. In 2007 a recommendation was adopted by the Assembly as follows: “that the twelve month average CPI as determined by Statistics Canada be used to determine COLA each year; the period to be used will be the twelve month average running from June to May.” (A&P 2007, p. 213, 18) A letter will be circulated to presbyteries with the 2017 minimum stipend figures once available.

INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

The Principal Clerk continues to oversee and monitor our church’s participation in the Residential Schools Settlement Agreement that was approved in 2007. The following elements of the agreement are listed with their current status.

The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) provided a settlement of almost all Residential Schools litigation when it was signed by the parties (including The Presbyterian Church in Canada) in 2007.

The key components of the agreement are nearing completion and our church’s responsibilities under the agreement are also winding up over the next few years:

Component	Completed	PCC Commitment fulfilled
Funding contributions	Yes	Yes (payment complete 2007)
Common Experience Payment	Yes	n/a
Truth & Reconciliation Commission	Yes	Yes (documents and participation)

Commemoration	Yes	n/a
Independent Assessment Process	No	No (voluntary participation at hearings, shared representation on IAP oversight committee and shared legal representation on National Administration Committee)

While approximately 90% of the Independent Assessment Process hearings have been completed, the remaining 10% tend to be complicated for various reasons. Of the total 38,000 claims, this means there are about 4,000 remaining to be settled. Ian Morrison continues to coordinate our voluntary presence at hearings where a church representative is requested. Dave Iverson of the United Church of Canada represents the three Protestant churches on the Oversight Committee (at a small per-deim cost) and Alex Pettingil represents us on the National Administration Committee (NAC). The legal costs of Mr. Pettingill are shared with the United and Anglican Churches. The National Administration Committee is the body that represents the parties at the court as the Settlement Agreement proceeds, and is the body that one day will bring a motion to the court asking that the parties be deemed to have fulfilled the agreement. Until that date, we have a legal responsibility, under the agreement, to have legal representation on the NAC. It is hoped that the need for legal counsel will decrease in the future as the need for the churches to participate in decisions related to the windup of the agreement diminishes.

It is currently projected that a first hearing of every IAP claim be complete sometime in 2017 and final completion of all aspects of the Settlement Agreement by early 2020.

The General Secretaries of The United Church of Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada meet regularly with Stephen Kendall in order to have a coordinated participation in decisions related to all aspects of the Settlement Agreement.

The Assembly Council extended a particular note of thanks to Archivists, Kim Arnold and Bob Anger for their work regarding the preparation of our church’s records for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to walk a healing journey together with First Nation, Inuit and Métis both as a response to the legacy of residential schools and as we join with all Canadians in seeking to forge a new partnership based on respect and trust.

Ecumenical Working Group on Residential Schools (EWGRS)

With the conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the EWGRS convened a meeting with other partner churches and organizations committed to healing and reconciliation in order to encourage a broader ecumenical network of support for this important work in the future. In particular, churches and organizations beyond the four connected with the Settlement Agreement (see above) desire to work in partnership with Indigenous organizations on the implementation of the Calls to Action made by the Commission in its final report. This network is in the process of developing terms of reference and protocols for working together and meeting. The work of the EWGRS related to the Settlement Agreement commitments and any legal questions that arise are being handled by the Principal Clerk and the General Secretaries of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE RE PENSION SOLVENCY FUNDING

The Assembly Council welcomed the Rev. Cameron Bigelow, representing the General Assembly Special Committee re Pension Solvency Funding. Their report is found at p. 21.1.1. In responding to the report, the Assembly Council agreed to support the recommendation to adjust the current formula of allocating capital from undesignated bequests to the Pension Fund from 15% to 50% until December 31, 2018. The Assembly Council also supported the Special Committee in their exploration of changing the Pension Plan from a Single Employer Pension Plan (SEPP) to a Multiple Employer Pension Plan (MEPP). The implications of such a move can be found in the report of the Special Committee. Finally, the Assembly Council agreed to present to the General Assembly the committee’s suggested motion to adjust the formula for allocating capital from dissolved congregations from 25% to 100% for the same time period as above. The original formula is that the proceeds of dissolved congregations, all of which vest with the Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for the benefit of the church, 30% is allocated to New Church Capital and 70% to the presbytery in which the dissolved congregation existed, on approval of a mission plan. In 2013, based on power to issue granted to the Assembly Council to make necessary adjustments to assist with the Pension Solvency funding, the Council approved that the first 25% of proceeds go to the Pension Fund. The Assembly Council is aware that the power to issue ended with the 2014 General Assembly and so brings the following recommendation:

Recommendation No 24

Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the adjustment of the current formula of allocating capital from dissolved congregations to the Pension Fund be from 25% to 100% effective June 8, 2016 until December 31, 2018.

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY

The Life and Mission Agency is represented on the Assembly Council by its General Secretary and Convener. Two members of the Council also serve on the Life and Mission Agency Committee. The committee keeps the Assembly Council informed of its evolving mission and ministry programs and activities. In order to foster a high level of collaboration between Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency committee, a joint meeting is being planned for later this year.

APPRECIATION

The Assembly Council continues to be grateful to God for the commitment, energy, prayer and thoughtfulness of those who serve this church on its committees, agencies and councils. The Council takes this opportunity to thank those members whose terms expire with this General Assembly: Peter Baek, John Barrett, Paulette Brown, Derek Krunys, Mabel Litowski, Don MacMillan, Mark McLennan, Neal Mathers, Doug Maxwell and Dirk Van Ek; and exofficio members: Stephen Farris (Moderator of the 140th General Assembly), Dorcas Gordon (colleges) and Linda McKinnon (AMS).

Bob Smith
Convener

Stephen Kendall
Secretary

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA
Statement of Receipts and Expenditures
For the Year Ending December 31, 2015

	2015	2015	2016	2017
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget(rev)</u>	<u>Revised</u>	<u>Budget</u>
RECEIPTS				
<i>Presbyterians Sharing</i>	6,929,304	7,300,000	6,900,000	6,900,000
Budget – Individual <i>Presbyterians Sharing</i>	144,109	200,000	175,000	175,000
Income from Investments	359,773	380,000	380,000	380,000
Income from Estates	11,345	10,000	10,000	10,000
WMS Contributions	150,000	150,000	100,000	50,000
AMS Contributions	61,920	60,000	60,000	60,000
Income from Other Sources	(21,128)	75,000	50,000	50,000
Bequest Revenue	17,422	125,000	125,000	125,000
Gifts General Revenue	32,867	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Receipts	7,685,612	8,301,000	7,801,000	7,751,000
GENERAL ASSEMBLY/ASSEMBLY COUNCIL				
General Assembly	369,908	326,110	325,800	300,000
Assembly Council/Committees	54,431	52,500	52,500	51,500
Assembly Council/Secretary's Office	646,918	619,237	623,896	646,500
Archives	10,811	18,000	18,000	16,000
Total General Assembly/Assembly Council	1,082,068	1,015,847	1,020,196	1,014,000
LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY				
Administration	2,072,859	2,286,462	2,192,962	2,141,499
Church Vocations	48,464	68,850	68,850	68,850
EFD – Stewardship/Planned Giving	76,136	119,758	119,758	119,758
Justice Ministries	62,733	65,100	65,100	65,100
Regional Staff	416,692	497,856	497,856	497,856
International Ministries	1,079,026	1,183,736	1,183,736	1,133,736
Communications	37,067	78,540	77,040	77,040
Canada Ministries/The Vine	1,690,665	1,826,912	1,821,912	1,826,912
Total Life & Mission Agency	5,483,642	6,127,214	6,027,214	5,930,751
SUPPORT SERVICES				
Administration	934,168	885,000	928,000	928,000
Human Resources	1,526	1,400	1,500	1,500
Building Maintenance	298,471	342,000	327,000	300,000
Missionary Residence	33,313	30,000	30,000	33,000
Financial Services	135,806	134,553	134,000	134,000
RDC–Sales	26,399	43,000	32,000	32,000
RDC–Resource Distribution	19,482	4,500	8,500	11,000
RDC–Printing	53,525	54,000	50,000	53,000
Sub-Total	1,502,690	1,494,453	1,511,000	1,492,500
Approved by GA – Colleges	850,000	850,000	850,000	807,000
Total Support Services	2,352,690	2,344,453	2,361,000	2,299,500
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURES	8,918,400	9,487,514	9,408,410	9,244,251
NET EXPENDITURES (IN EXCESS OF RECEIPTS)	(1,232,788)	(1,186,514)	(1,607,410)	(1,493,251)
Opening Balance Operating Fund	826,723	826,723	581,030	18,620
Purchase of Capital Assets	0	(15,000)	0	0
Net Transfer from Restricted Fund	987,095	900,500	1,045,000	1,480,000
Closing Balance Operating Fund	581,030	525,709	18,620	5,369

	<u>2015 Actual</u>	<u>2015 Budget(rev)</u>	<u>2016 Revised</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>
Breakdown of Transfers Restricted to Operating				
From 2010/2011 College Bequest		5,500		
Transfer from Restricted Fund to Operating Fund	554,330	445,000	595,000	1,080,000
Transfer from Stabilization Fund	250,000	250,000	250,000	200,000
Transfer from New Congregation Fund	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
Deferred Bequests transfer to Restricted Funds	(17,235)			
	987,095	900,500	1,045,000	1,480,000

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA
Forecast of Receipts and Expenditures
For the period 2018 to 2020

Three Year Forecast	2018	2019	2020
	\$	\$	\$
<i>Presbyterians Sharing</i>	6,700,000	6,500,000	6,300,000
Budget – Individual <i>Presbyterians Sharing</i>	175,000	175,000	175,000
Income from Investments	360,000	360,000	360,000
Income from Estates	22,000	22,000	22,000
WMS Contributions	50,000	50,000	50,000
AMS Contributions	60,000	60,000	60,000
Income from Other Sources	75,000	75,000	75,000
Bequest Revenue	125,000	125,000	125,000
Gifts General Revenue	15,000	15,000	15,000
Total Receipts	7,582,000	7,382,000	7,182,000
TOTAL ALL EXPENDITURES	7,987,251	7,967,251	7,947,251
NET EXPENDITURES IN EXCESS OF RECEIPTS	(405,251)	(585,251)	(765,251)
Opening Balance Operating Fund	5,369	290,118	394,867
Purchase of Capital Assets	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Transfer from Restricted Fund	700,000	700,000	700,000
Closing Balance Operating Fund	290,118	394,867	319,616
Breakdown of Transfers Restricted to Operating			
transfer from NDF Fund	300,000	300,000	300,000
transfer Stabilization Fund	200,000	200,000	200,000
New Congregation Fund	200,000	200,000	200,000
	700,000	700,000	700,000

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Financial Statements
December 31, 2015



April 27, 2016

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Venerable General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2015 and the statements of revenues and expenses, changes in fund balances, and cash flows for the year then ended and the related notes, which comprise a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

*PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
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T: +1 905 326 6800, F: +1 905 326 5339*



Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Presbyterian Church in Canada as at December 31, 2015 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2015

	Operating Fund \$	Restricted Funds \$	Endowment Funds \$	
Assets				
Current assets				
Cash	576,640	4,401,236	3,174,425	
Accounts receivable	103,952	860,590	3,817	
Accrued interest and dividends receivable	-	224,285	159,754	
Prepaid expenses and sundry assets	114,183	85,656	6,671	
Loans/mortgages receivable (note 3)	-	125,912	-	
Executive staff mortgages receivable (note 4)	-	138,557	-	
	<u>794,775</u>	<u>5,836,236</u>	<u>3,344,667</u>	
Investments (note 5)	-	52,100,671	37,110,099	8
Loans/mortgages receivable (note 3)	-	1,358,233	-	
Executive staff mortgages receivable (note 4)	-	-	-	
Capital assets (note 6)	-	655,754	1,081,756	
Properties held for congregational use (note 7)	-	2,384,125	-	
Other assets	-	-	12,000	
	<u>-</u>	<u>56,498,783</u>	<u>38,203,855</u>	<u>9</u>
	<u>794,775</u>	<u>62,335,019</u>	<u>41,548,522</u>	<u>10</u>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2015

	Operating Fund \$	Restricted Funds \$	Endowment Funds \$	
Liabilities				
Current liabilities				
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 14)	213,746	1,834,374	157,571	
Gift annuities payable (note 2)	-	210,350	-	
	213,746	2,044,724	157,571	
Gift annuities payable (note 2)	-	2,179,526	-	
	213,746	4,224,250	157,571	
Fund Balances (note 9)	581,029	58,110,769	41,390,951	10
	794,775	62,335,019	41,548,522	10
Commitments (note 16)				

Approved by the Assembly Council

_____ Convenor _____ Conve

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

For the year ended December 31, 2015

	2015			2014	
	Operating Fund \$	Restricted Funds \$	Endowment Funds \$	Total \$	Total \$
Revenues					
Contributions					
Presbyterians Sharing received from congregations	6,929,304	-	-	6,929,304	7,330,380
Presbyterians Sharing received from individuals	144,109	-	-	144,109	579,748
Women's Missionary Society	150,000	-	-	150,000	350,000
Atlantic Mission Society	61,920	-	-	61,920	56,846
Presbyterian World Service and Development	-	3,180,134	-	3,180,134	2,741,997
Donations, bequests and gifts	61,634	2,979,063	563,320	3,604,017	6,675,993
	7,346,967	6,159,197	563,320	14,069,484	17,734,964
Other revenues					
Income from investments	359,773	3,552,305	826,670	4,738,748	8,918,390
Income from other sources	(21,128)	34,729	908,178	921,779	1,096,142
	7,685,612	9,746,231	2,298,168	19,730,011	27,749,496
Expenses					
Operating agencies					
General Assembly and its Council	1,082,068	-	-	1,082,068	958,189
Life & Mission Agency (note 12)	5,483,642	-	-	5,483,642	6,020,914
Support services	1,502,690	-	-	1,502,690	1,575,608
	8,068,400	-	-	8,068,400	8,554,711
Distributions and other					
Fund distributions (note 13)	-	7,009,997	887,708	7,897,705	8,208,027
Grants to colleges and residence	850,000	-	-	850,000	880,000
Amortization of capital assets	-	146,220	89,179	235,399	225,904
	8,918,400	7,156,217	976,887	17,051,504	17,868,642
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses for the year	(1,232,788)	2,590,014	1,321,281	2,678,507	9,880,854

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Statement of Changes in Fund Balances

For the year ended December 31, 2015

				2015	2014
	Operating Fund \$	Restricted Funds \$	Endowment Funds \$	Total \$	Total \$
Balance - Beginning of year	826,722	56,549,259	40,028,261	97,404,242	87,523,388
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses for the year	(1,232,788)	2,590,014	1,321,281	2,678,507	9,880,854
Interfund transfers (note 8)	987,095	(1,028,504)	41,409	-	-
Balance - End of year	581,029	58,110,769	41,390,951	100,082,749	97,404,242

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended December 31, 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Cash provided by (used in)		
Operating activities		
Excess of revenues over expenses for the year	2,678,507	9,880,854
Items not affecting cash		
Amortization of capital assets	235,399	225,904
Fair value difference on new loans, mortgages and gift annuities (notes 2 and 3)	49,580	104,079
Change in fair market value of investments	(1,711,599)	(6,413,741)
Net accretion of loans/mortgages receivable and gift annuities (notes 2, 3 and 4)	(260,565)	(150,289)
Reversal of loan provision	-	(181,666)
Change in non-cash working capital balances		
Accounts receivable	(440,302)	594,963
Accrued interest and dividends receivable	(49,960)	(91,125)
Prepaid expenses and sundry assets	(14,381)	2,909
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	426,931	717,618
	<u>913,610</u>	<u>4,689,506</u>
Investing activities		
Change in investments	(7,051,928)	(3,674,794)
Additions to loans/mortgages receivable	(335,520)	(515,025)
Repayment of loans/mortgages receivable	252,483	865,290
Additions to capital assets	(87,352)	(79,779)
Repayment of executive staff mortgages	3,976	13,066
Additions to gift annuities payable	140,000	495,775
Realization of gift annuities remainder	(51,769)	(174,660)
Payment of gift annuities, net of investment income	(78,785)	(57,942)
	<u>(7,208,895)</u>	<u>(3,128,069)</u>
Change in cash during the year	(6,295,285)	1,561,437
Cash - Beginning of year	<u>14,447,586</u>	<u>12,886,149</u>
Cash - End of year	<u>8,152,301</u>	<u>14,447,586</u>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

1 Reporting entity

The Presbyterian denomination in Canada consists of a General Assembly and its Assembly Council, synods, presbyteries and congregations.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada (the Church) is an unincorporated entity doing the work of the General Assembly, the Church's national governing body. Certain assets are held by the Trustee Board of the Church (according to its incorporating legislation) on behalf of the Church. The purpose of the Church is to proclaim the love and good news of Jesus Christ through words and actions. The Church serves and provides resources to synods, presbyteries, congregations, colleges and affiliated entities across Canada and in Bermuda. The Church is a registered charity and, as such, does not pay income taxes.

These financial statements include the assets, liabilities, revenues, expenses and cash flows under the administration of the Church including the J. B. MacLean Estate (operating as Crieff Hills Community), but exclude those of the synods, presbyteries, congregations, colleges (Knox and Ewart (inactive) Presbyterian College, St. Andrew's Hall), Women's Missionary Society, Atlantic Mission Society and the Presbyterian Record, which are affiliated with, but not controlled by, the Church. Congregations, Women's Missionary Society and Atlantic Mission Society provide funding for the Church. Also, the assets, liabilities, revenues, expenses and cash flows of the Church's pension fund are not included herein.

2 Summary of significant accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO) as issued by the Canadian Accounting Standards Board (AcSB).

Fund accounting and revenue recognition

The Church follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions in accordance with the ASNPO standards referred to above and are presented in the following funds:

- Operating Fund - is the fund used for day-to-day operations and may include amounts held pending transfer to another fund or grants made to presbyteries and congregations.
- Restricted Funds - are a group of funds that have been externally restricted by the contributor or have been internally restricted by the Church for a stated purpose.
- Endowment Funds - are a group of funds that have been contributed to the Church with the instruction to invest the capital in perpetuity and to use the income earned for specific purposes as outlined in the governing documents. The Endowment Funds also include the assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses of the J. B. MacLean Estate.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

All contributions and other income are recognized as revenue of the appropriate fund in the year received or receivable.

Presbyterians Sharing from congregations as at December 31, 2015, which were remitted to the Treasurer of the Church within 11 business days (2014 - 11) after year-end, have been included in revenues for the year and amounted to \$1,868,258 (2014 - \$2,212,263).

Classification of operating agencies' expenses within the Operating Fund

The Church presents its expenses on a functional allocation basis as follows:

- General Assembly and its Council - includes all expenses in connection with holding the annual General Assembly, the Assembly Council and its committees as well as some programs.
- Life & Mission Agency - includes the expenses of substantially all the program work of the Church, which includes Canada Ministries, International Ministries, Justice and Education programs.
- Support Services - includes the expenses of facilities and other common administrative expenses.

Capital assets

Buildings and equipment are amortized on a straight-line basis at the following rates:

Buildings	2% - 7%
Furniture and equipment	10% - 20%
Vehicles	30%
Computer hardware and software	20%
Septic and water system	3%

Improvements to buildings are amortized over the remaining useful life of the relevant building. Amortization of buildings commences when the property is ready for use and transferred from buildings under construction. The Church assesses all long-lived assets, including buildings and equipment, for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate the net carrying value of an asset exceeds the net recoverable amount.

Properties held for congregational use

Manses and properties acquired for development are recorded at cost and are written down to net realizable value in the case of an impairment in the carrying value. They are not amortized because they are held with the expectation that they will be ultimately distributed to congregations at their carrying value.

Financial instruments - recognition and measurement

Financial assets and financial liabilities are initially recognized at fair value and their subsequent measurement is dependent on their classification as described below. The classification depends on the purpose for which the financial instruments were acquired or issued, their characteristics and the Church's designation of such instruments.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

The Church measures its significant categories of financial instruments as follows:

Cash	fair value
Investments	fair value
Accounts receivable	amortized cost
Accrued interest and dividends receivable	amortized cost
Loans/mortgages receivable	amortized cost
Executive staff mortgages receivable	amortized cost
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	amortized cost
Gift annuities payable	fair value

Financial assets are tested for impairment at the end of each reporting period when there are indications the assets may be impaired.

Investments

Investments consist of a portfolio of stocks and bonds managed by independent investment managers in accordance with a statement of investment policy and procedures.

Interest earned or accrued, gains and losses realized on disposal and unrealized gains and losses from changes in fair value are included in income from investments in the statement of revenues and expenses. Financial assets are measured at fair value and transaction costs are expensed as incurred. The fair value of securities traded in an active market is the closing bid price.

Loans/mortgages receivable

These loans/mortgages are to be recorded initially at fair value using the effective interest method and discounted based on expected payments over the term of the agreement using a risk adjusted discount rate associated with each loan. These amounts are to be accreted over the life of the loans/mortgages using the amortized cost method assuming the majority of the loans/mortgages will be paid back interest free.

Executive mortgages receivable

Executive mortgages receivable are recognized using the effective interest method and discounted based on expected payments over the term of the agreement using a risk adjusted discount rate associated with each mortgage. These amounts are to be accreted over the life of the mortgage using the amortized cost method. For new mortgages extended during the year, the difference between the fair value and the principal balance of the loans is considered a contribution expense and included in total fund distributions under Restricted Funds in the statement of revenues and expenses. No new loans were made in 2015.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015**Gift annuities payable**

Gift annuity liabilities represent amounts payable under annuity agreements over various periods, generally the life of the donor. Any residual balance at the date of death is payable to the designated beneficiary within the Presbyterian denomination.

Gift annuities are recorded initially at fair value under the effective interest method and take into account the mortality of the annuitants.

The fair values of the outstanding gift annuities payable are determined by the actuaries based on the A2000 mortality table. The actuaries used the Canadian asset/liability method to forecast the rate of return.

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Present value of annuities payable to annuitants	1,640,621	1,920,609
Present value of future administration expenses	259,302	284,190
Present value of amount expected to be paid on death to various congregations	489,953	409,441
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total actuarially determined liability	2,389,819	2,614,240
Less: Current portion	210,350	207,855
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,179,526	2,406,385
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Present value of amount expected to be paid on death to the Church	589,096	445,139

The accretion for the year in the amount of \$8,021 (2014 - accretion of \$11,105) has been recorded as contribution expense and included in total fund distributions under Restricted Funds in the statement of revenues and expenses. For new annuities established during the year, the difference between the fair value and the principal balance of the annuity of \$7,207 (2014 - \$18,997) is considered to be contribution revenue and has been included in total donations, bequests and gifts under Restricted Funds in the statement of revenues and expenses.

Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with ASNPO requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities and the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amount of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Significant estimates include the valuation of properties held for congregational use and capital assets, recoverability of the loans and mortgages receivable, provision for doubtful accounts, accrued liabilities, and accrued interest. These estimates are reviewed periodically and as adjustments become necessary, they are reported in income in the period in which they become known.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

3 Loans/mortgages receivable

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Loans/mortgages receivable	1,484,145	1,399,840
Less: Current portion	125,912	162,611
	<u>1,358,233</u>	<u>1,237,229</u>

Loans/mortgages receivable consist of loans to congregations for the purchase of manses from the Church and for building projects. The loans for building projects are secured by promissory notes and/or a mortgage on the related property. The loans/mortgages receivable bear interest at rates ranging between 3% and 7% and are repayable over various terms.

The accretion of the loans/mortgages for the year using the amortized cost method amounted to \$58,055 (2014 - \$159,642), which has been recorded as interest earned and included in total donations, bequests and gifts under Restricted Funds in the statement of revenues and expenses. For new loans/mortgages extended during the year, the difference between the amortized cost and principal balance of these new loans/mortgages of \$56,787 (2014 - \$123,076) is considered a contribution expense and has been included in total distributions under Restricted Funds in the statement of revenues and expenses.

4 Executive staff mortgages receivable

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Executive staff mortgages receivable	138,557	142,487
Less: Current portion	138,557	16,194
	<u>-</u>	<u>126,293</u>

Mortgage to executive staff bears interest at the prescribed rate of 3.2% and is repayable over three years.

The accretion of the mortgages for the year using the amortized cost method amounted to \$46 (2014 - \$1,752), which has been recorded as interest earned and included in donations, bequests and gifts under Restricted Funds in the statement of revenues and expenses.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

5 Investments

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Fixed income securities	42,365,136	36,374,918
Money market	-	1,206,883
Canadian large and medium capital equities	17,494,845	18,927,429
US equities	21,149,534	17,053,239
International equities	8,201,255	6,884,774
	<u>89,210,770</u>	<u>80,447,243</u>

The interest rates and maturity dates for fixed income securities vary from 0.75% to 9.38% and from January 1, 2018 to December 16, 2049.

6 Capital assets

	2015		
	Cost \$	Accumulated amortization \$	Net \$
Restricted Funds assets			
Land	127,975	-	127,975
Buildings	3,620,863	3,220,702	400,161
Furniture and equipment	95,419	65,085	30,334
Computer hardware and software	741,100	643,816	97,284
	<u>4,585,357</u>	<u>3,929,603</u>	<u>655,754</u>
Endowment Funds assets			
J. B. MacLean Estate (Crieff Hills Community)			
Land	20,256	-	20,256
Buildings	2,101,881	1,198,914	902,967
Septic and water system	75,063	7,755	67,308
Furniture and equipment	324,949	254,273	70,676
Vehicles	72,983	52,434	20,549
	<u>2,595,132</u>	<u>1,513,376</u>	<u>1,081,756</u>
	<u>7,180,489</u>	<u>5,442,979</u>	<u>1,737,510</u>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

			2014
	Cost	Accumulated	Net
	\$	amortization	\$
	\$	\$	\$
Restricted Funds assets			
Land	127,975	-	127,975
Buildings	3,620,863	3,116,732	504,131
Furniture and equipment	95,419	59,909	35,510
Computer hardware and software	714,731	606,742	107,989
	4,558,988	3,783,383	775,605
Endowment Funds assets			
J. B. MacLean Estate (Crieff Hills Community)			
Land	20,256	-	20,256
Buildings	2,079,551	1,136,193	943,358
Septic & water system	49,092	5,892	43,200
Furniture and equipment	314,647	241,663	72,984
Vehicles	70,604	40,450	30,154
	2,534,150	1,424,198	1,109,952
	7,093,138	5,207,581	1,885,557

7 Properties held for congregational use

One of the properties held for congregational use with a carrying value of \$149,518 is under a 99-year lease with the City of Toronto. Subsequent to year-end, the Trustee Board sold a property in Calgary with a carrying value of \$502,000 in Calgary for \$1,070,000.

8 Interfund transfers

Interfund transfers are approved by management, the Assembly Council and certain synods and include such items as:

- a) transfers of a portion of unrestricted bequest funds received that are in excess of \$25,000, from Operating fund to Assembly Council approved Restricted Funds;
- b) amounts for the repayment of interfund loans;
- c) financing of capital asset additions by the Operating Fund and within the Restricted Funds;
- d) surplus accumulated within the Endowment Funds, above the original endowed principal amounts that has been released for use in the Restricted Funds; and
- e) transfers from internally restricted funds to fund various operating requirements.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015**9 Restricted Funds**

			2015	2014
	Externally restricted	Internally restricted	Total	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
McBeth Baker Fund	1,875,949	-	1,875,949	1,851,936
Barker Fund	164,210	-	164,210	208,572
J. Chisholm Estate Fund	1,267,619	-	1,267,619	1,327,252
Chalmers/Oakwood Fund	2,287,438	-	2,287,438	2,221,170
Mauritius (PCA US)	149,675	-	149,675	149,675
Allenby Fund	511,438	-	511,438	510,374
Ewart Fund	339,878	-	339,878	302,322
Property capital fund	-	2,749,105	2,749,105	2,868,957
The lending funds	-	3,720,685	3,720,685	3,692,050
Dissolved congregations	-	16,183,614	16,183,614	15,442,027
Presbyterian World Service and Development	-	3,409,666	3,409,666	3,152,733
Life & Mission Funds (LMA)	-	8,482,819	8,482,819	8,143,767
New Congregation capital fund (LMA)	-	6,522,546	6,522,546	5,702,135
Residential schools funds	-	233,794	233,794	288,101
National Development Fund	-	2,939,306	2,939,306	3,328,111
Long-term disability and insurance premium fund	-	752,755	752,755	857,687
Presbyterian Memorial Fund	-	796,839	796,839	781,605
Other	3,075,429	2,648,004	5,723,433	5,720,785
	9,671,636	48,439,133	58,110,769	56,549,259

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

10 Multi-employer pension plan

The Presbyterian congregations, boards, colleges and the Church (collectively the Employers) established a pension plan to provide ministers, employees and other designated individuals with retirement income. The plan is a contributory multi-employer defined benefit pension plan (the Plan) and is valued by an independent actuary. This Plan has been accounted for as a defined contribution plan because sufficient information is not available to apply defined benefit plan accounting.

The Church recognizes as expense on a cash basis the contributions required to be made under the plan. Total contributions for the year amounted to \$519,070 (2014 - \$469,158).

The most recent actuarial valuation as at March 31, 2014 indicates the multi-employer plan has a solvency deficit of \$37,500,000.

11 Funds held in trust

Amounts held for others not reflected in these financial statements of \$77,301,915 (2014 - \$71,965,110) comprise monies the Church invests in the consolidated portfolio on behalf of affiliated organizations. Total monies held for Knox/Ewart College amount to \$23,334,915 (2014 - \$23,037,001).

12 Life & Mission Agency

Life & Mission Agency expenses comprise the following:

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Canadian ministries	1,690,665	1,967,935
Regional staffing	416,692	634,661
International ministries	1,079,026	905,420
Stewardship	55,546	60,540
Justice ministries and other departments	168,854	176,998
Administration (all programs)	2,072,859	2,275,360
	5,483,642	6,020,914

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

13 Fund distributions

Distributions are paid in accordance with specific restrictions and designations. Distributions comprise the following:

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Presbyterian World Service and Development	2,998,860	3,149,194
Property fund	119,851	78,885
Pension solvency payments	325,284	-
Dissolved Congregations & Cooke's fund grants	965,878	929,230
Other fund expenditures	3,487,832	4,050,718
	<u>7,897,705</u>	<u>8,208,027</u>

14 Government remittances

Government remittances consist of amounts (such as property taxes, sales taxes and payroll withholding taxes) required to be paid to government authorities and are recognized when the amounts come due. In respect of government remittances, \$44,536 (2014 - \$33,440) is included in accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

15 Financial instruments risk disclosures

The main risks the Church's financial instruments are exposed to are foreign exchange risk, credit risk, liquidity risk, market risk, and interest rate risk. The Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) was formed by the Trustee Board of the Church as a working committee, and reviews fund managers' performance, compliance with the Statement of Investment Policy and Procedures (SIP&P) and the specific risks related to investments as listed below.

Foreign exchange risk

The Church holds 23.7% (2014 - 21.2%) of its investments in the United States and 9.2% (2014 - 8.6%) in international markets and, therefore, is subject to foreign exchange risks. The fund managers operate under a detailed SIP&P and are expected to manage this type of risk. The risk in this area is moderate.

Credit risk

The Church is exposed to credit risk on accounts receivable from congregations, presbyteries and synods. The Church has adopted a credit policy that includes the analysis of the financial position of its potential debtors. The Church's management also reviews the credit limits of its existing debtors regularly. The Church's accounts receivable credit risk is considered to be moderate to low.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Notes to Financial Statements

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Liquidity risk

The Church believes it has moderate to low liquidity risks given the makeup of its accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

Market risk

Market risk arises from the possibility that changes in market prices will affect the value of the financial instruments of the Church. The Church is exposed to fair value fluctuations on portfolio investments. The Church's short-term financial instruments (accounts receivable, accounts payable and accrued liabilities) are not subject to market risk.

Interest rate risk

The loans and mortgages receivable and fixed income securities bear interest at a fixed rate and as such are subject to interest rate price risk resulting from changes in fair value from market fluctuations in interest rates. Money market investments by their nature are subject to the same risk.

16 Commitments

The Church has entered into three lease agreements for certain office equipment. The aggregate future minimum lease payments expiring in fiscal 2018 are as follows:

	\$
2016	79,620
2017	79,620
2018	62,999
	222,239

**The Presbyterian Church in Canada
Pension Fund**

(Ontario registration number 0368902)

Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Statement of Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits

As at December 31, 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Assets		
Cash (note 3(a))	3,503,117	2,909,799
Investments (note 3(a))	235,198,141	222,950,151
Contributions and other receivables (note 7)	608,703	736,888
Accrued interest and dividends receivable	357,884	400,247
	239,667,845	226,997,085
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 8)	367,656	234,623
Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits	239,300,189	226,762,462

Approved by the Assembly Council

_____ Convenor _____ Convenor of Finance Committee

Approved by the Pension and Benefits Board

_____ Convenor Pension Board

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund**Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available for Plan Benefits****For the year ended December 31, 2015**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Increase in net assets available for plan benefits		
Contributions		
Employers - annual normal costs	1,212,000	1,208,113
Employers - special payments	5,665,492	5,078,255
Plan members	3,895,323	4,065,110
Interest and dividend income (note 3(b))	6,402,916	6,144,385
Net realized gains on sale of investments	9,964,486	4,586,878
Change in unrealized gain on investments	738,402	11,622,269
Other income (expense)	(43,752)	57,032
	<u>27,834,867</u>	<u>32,762,042</u>
Decrease in net assets available for plan benefits		
Benefit payments to retirees	11,607,645	11,119,723
Termination refunds and transfers out (note 9)	1,638,168	671,176
Administrative expenses (note 4)	2,051,327	1,913,464
	<u>15,297,140</u>	<u>13,704,363</u>
Increase in net assets available for plan benefits during the year	12,537,727	19,057,679
Net assets available for plan benefits - Beginning of year	<u>226,762,462</u>	<u>207,704,783</u>
Net assets available for plan benefits - End of year	<u>239,300,189</u>	<u>226,762,462</u>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

1 Description of Plan

The following is a brief description of The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund (the Plan). For more complete information, reference should be made to the Plan agreement.

General

The Plan has established a pension plan to provide ordained ministers of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCIC), employees and other designated individuals with retirement income. The Plan is a contributory defined benefit pension plan. It is registered under the Pension Benefits Act of the Province of Ontario (the Act) under registration number 0368902.

Contribution policy

The Plan is funded by contributions from its plan members and by contributions from the employers, congregations, boards, colleges and PCIC as defined in the Plan (collectively the Employer).

Normal retirement

- Eligibility

Each employee working on a regular basis is eligible to become a member.

- Retirement age

Normal retirement date is the first day of the month next following a member's 65th birthday. For vested terminated employees, deferred pensions are available as of attainment of age 55 reduced by 0.5% per month or 6% per year by which early retirement precedes age 65.

- Maximum pension

The greater of:

- a) 1.5% of the member's maximum qualifying income in that year, multiplied by the member's pensionable income ratio in that year, multiplied by one year of pensionable service or less; and
- b) 2% of pensionable income accrued based on the member's total earnings for members contributing to the Plan after December 31, 1989.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

Early retirement

- Eligibility

A member who has attained age 55 may retire before the normal retirement date with entitlement to a pension based on the pension accrued up to the date of retirement but reduced by 0.5% for each month by which their age is less than 65.

A member whose age and pensionable service total 95 or more may retire before the normal retirement date with entitlement to the full normal pension accrued up to the date of retirement.

Pre-retirement death benefit

- Eligibility

All members are eligible for pre-retirement death benefits.

- Benefit

The surviving spouse of a member who dies before retirement is entitled to a pension equal to 66.67% of the member's accrued pension payable until the spouse's death. For members who die before retirement, the spouse's pension is based on a minimum of 12 years of pensionable service (or, less the pensionable service the member would have accrued if the member had continued in pensionable service until the normal retirement date). Dependent children are entitled to additional benefits.

Death and survivor allowances

Death and survivor allowances are paid to spouses with provisions available for individuals to name other beneficiaries in the case of single persons.

Vesting

For services prior to January 1, 1987, benefits are vested after five years of Plan membership. For services since January 1, 1987, benefits vest after two years. In Ontario, effective July 1, 2012, everyone is vested immediately.

2 Summary of significant accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The Financial Services Commission of Ontario (the regulator) allows the preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans, excluding recognition and disclosure of pension obligations to comply with the filing requirements of Section 76 of Regulation 909 of the Act. As such, these financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Part IV of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA Canada) Handbook - Accounting, excluding recognition and disclosure of the

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

pension obligation and include certain additional disclosures required by Section 76 of Regulation 909 of the Act. These financial statements differ materially from financial statements prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for pension plans and do not purport to show the adequacy of the Plan's assets to meet its pension obligations. These financial statements have been prepared to assist in meeting the financial reporting requirements of the regulator.

These financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis and present the information of the Plan as a separate reporting entity independent of the Employer and Plan members. The Plan applies Canadian accounting standards for private enterprises in Part II of the CPA Canada Handbook - Accounting for its accounting policies not related to its investment portfolio.

Investment assets and liabilities

Investment assets and liabilities are recorded at fair value in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS) 13, Fair Value Measurement. Purchases and sales of investments are recorded as of the trade date (the date on which the substantial risks and rewards have been transferred). Transactions that have not been settled are reflected in the statement of net assets available for plan benefits as amounts receivable or payable for unsettled trades.

The methods used to determine fair value for each category of investment assets and liabilities are explained in note 6.

Investment income

Dividend income is recognized based on the ex-dividend date and interest is recognized on the accrual basis as earned. Net realized gains (losses) on investments sold during the year represent the difference between sale proceeds and average cost and are included in the statement of changes in net assets available for plan benefits. Changes in unrealized gains (losses) on investments represent the change in the difference between the fair value and the cost of investments at the beginning and end of the year and are included in the statement of changes in net assets available for plan benefits.

Transaction costs

Transaction costs are not part of the fair value of investments and are expensed as incurred in the statement of changes in net assets available for plan benefits. All transaction costs and investment management fees are grouped as part of the administrative expenses.

Contributions and funding policy

Contributions are made in accordance with actuarial valuations prepared by Eckler Ltd. The most recent actuarial valuation was completed as at March 31, 2014.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

Refunds and transfers

When a vested member ceases to be employed by the Employer, the Plan will record a liability to the member on receipt of the signed election form requesting a refund or transfer of assets. The amount of the payment is determined in accordance with the actuarial calculation.

Cash

Cash includes short-term investments with a term to maturity of 90 days or less on issuance.

Administrative expenses

Administrative expenses incurred are paid from the Plan and are treated as expenses in the financial statements.

Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of income and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates. The most significant estimates relate to the determination of the fair value of the financial instruments (note 6).

Income taxes

The Plan is a registered pension plan, as defined under the Income Tax Act (Canada), and is not subject to income taxes in Canada. Foreign income and any related withholding taxes are recorded on a gross basis in the statement of changes in net assets available for plan benefits.

Benefits

The cost of benefits to members (pension, survivor, disability benefits and termination refunds) are recorded in the year in which the benefits are payable.

Prior to 1998, benefits were purchased and payments of required benefits to retirees were fulfilled through annuity payments. All required pension benefits are now paid through the Plan.

Translation of foreign currencies

Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into Canadian dollars at the exchange rates prevailing as at the year-end date. Income and expenses are translated into Canadian dollars at the exchange rates prevailing on the dates of the underlying transactions. The realized and unrealized foreign exchange gains and losses arising from these transactions are included in realized and unrealized gain or loss on investments.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015**3 Cash and investments**

a) Cash and investments at year-end are summarized as follows:

	2015		2014	
	Book value	Fair value	Book value	Fair value
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Cash	<u>3,503,117</u>	<u>3,503,117</u>	<u>2,909,799</u>	<u>2,909,799</u>
Investments				
Short-term investments	<u>2,666,153</u>	<u>2,666,153</u>	<u>2,821,026</u>	<u>2,821,026</u>
Equities				
Canadian	25,512,249	25,375,148	47,092,353	54,038,591
Foreign	-	-	114,615	170,495
	<u>25,512,249</u>	<u>25,375,148</u>	<u>47,206,968</u>	<u>54,209,086</u>
Bonds				
Canadian	51,825,616	52,760,144	47,391,398	49,328,704
Foreign	618,577	640,633	540,459	556,349
	<u>52,444,193</u>	<u>53,400,777</u>	<u>47,931,857</u>	<u>49,885,053</u>
Pooled funds				
Short-term investments	90,105	90,105	1,295,465	1,295,465
Canadian equities	32,184,400	30,428,320	1,975,010	2,586,044
Foreign equities	61,064,155	97,904,823	62,588,226	88,313,864
Bonds	16,904,774	16,962,968	16,885,714	16,984,814
Mortgages	3,273,971	3,272,598	3,020,740	3,011,945
	<u>113,517,405</u>	<u>148,658,814</u>	<u>85,765,155</u>	<u>112,192,132</u>
Infrastructure fund	<u>4,651,950</u>	<u>5,010,000</u>	<u>3,528,980</u>	<u>3,727,229</u>
Mortgages	<u>87,249</u>	<u>87,249</u>	<u>115,625</u>	<u>115,625</u>
	<u>198,879,199</u>	<u>235,198,141</u>	<u>187,369,611</u>	<u>222,950,151</u>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

b) Interest and dividend income for the year ended December 31 is summarized as follows:

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Bond interest	2,430,145	2,532,293
Dividend income	3,810,422	3,426,932
Mortgage interest	111,003	116,411
Short-term investment income	28,814	39,743
Interest on cash balances	22,532	29,006
	6,402,916	6,144,385

c) Included in total investments are the following individual investments, which have a fair value or book value as at December 31, 2015 equal to or greater than 1% of the fair value of the total investment portfolio at that time:

	\$
Bonds	
Canada Housing Trust, 1.75% 15/06/2018	2,706,449
Canada Housing Trust 1.7% 15/12/2017	2,673,506
Pooled funds	
Canadian equity - Foyston Gordon Small Cap Fund	2,625,858
Canadian equity - TD Emerald Low Volatility Canadian Equity Fund	27,802,462
Foreign equity - TD Emerald Low Volatility Global Equity Fund	28,228,946
Foreign equity - Walter Scott & Partners Fund	69,675,878
Bond - Phillips H & N Investment Grade Corp Bond Fund TR series	16,962,968
Mortgage - Phillips H & N Mortgage TR series	3,272,598
Infrastructure fund	
Northleaf Infrastructure Co-Investment L.P. Fund	5,010,000

4 Administrative expenses

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Investment management fees	1,292,588	1,132,916
Salaries	280,416	302,089
Actuarial fees	416,679	376,213
Other administrative expenses	61,644	102,246
	2,051,327	1,913,464

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

5 Investment risk management

The objective of the Plan is to achieve medium to long-term growth of its investment portfolio to provide the Plan with assets sufficient to meet members' pension benefit payment obligations. The Plan's investment policy is set out in the Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (SIP&P). The latest SIP&P was amended and approved on May 28, 2015 by the Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The Plan has investments held by a third party custodian in cash, short-term investments, Canadian and foreign equities, bonds, mortgages, infrastructure limited partnership units and pooled funds. The pooled funds are invested in government and corporate bonds, debentures, equity securities and mortgages. The pension fund's investment in infrastructure is in a private equity fund. The infrastructure portfolio is currently invested in six projects. The projects invested in by the fund consists of wind farms, a water treatment plant, a rooftop solar portfolio and a tolled highway. Third party investment managers are used to manage the Plan's investments. The investment managers must adhere to the investment policies governing these funds, which are monitored by the Trustee Board of the PCIC. The Plan's investing activities expose it to a variety of direct and indirect financial risks: market risk (including currency risk, interest rate risk and equity price risk), credit risk and liquidity risk.

The allocation of assets among the various types of investments and the performance of investments held by the Plan are monitored by the Plan's investment managers on a monthly basis and are reviewed by the Investment Advisory Committee quarterly and approved by PCIC on a regular basis. Divergence from target asset allocation and the composition of the portfolio are monitored by the Plan's investment managers daily and the Pension Committee quarterly.

The Pension and Benefits Board oversees how management monitors compliance with the Plan's risk management policies and procedures and reviews the adequacy of the risk management framework in relation to the risks faced by the Plan.

Market risk

The Plan's investments are susceptible to market risk, which is defined as the risk the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The Plan's market risk is affected by changes in the level or volatility of market rates or prices, such as interest rates, foreign exchange rates and equity prices. The sensitivity analysis provided below discloses the effect on net assets available for plan benefits as at December 31, 2015, assuming that a reasonably possible change in the relevant risk variable has occurred as at December 31, 2015 and has been applied to the risk exposures in existence at that date to show the effects of the reasonably possible changes. The reasonably possible changes in market variables used in the sensitivity analysis were determined based on implied volatilities where available or on historical data.

The sensitivity analysis provided is hypothetical and should be used with caution, as the impacts provided are not necessarily indicative of the actual impacts that would be experienced, since the Plan's actual exposure to market rates may change. Changes in fair values or cash flows based on a variation in a market variable cannot be extrapolated because the relationship between the change in a market variable and the change in fair value or cash flows may not be linear. In addition, the effect of a change in a particular market variable on fair values or

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

cash flows is calculated without considering interrelationships between the various market rates or mitigating actions that would be taken by the Plan.

Currency risk

Currency risk is the risk the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in foreign exchange rates. The Plan holds assets denominated in currencies other than the Canadian dollar, the Plan's functional currency. It is therefore exposed to currency risk, as the value of the financial instruments denominated in other currencies will fluctuate due to the change in exchange rates. Foreign exchange exposure primarily arises from the Plan's holdings of non-Canadian assets through pooled funds and foreign equities, which totalled \$95,846,299 for 2015 (2014 - \$86,888,957), representing 41% (2014 - 39%) of total investments. The risk in this area is considered to be moderate.

The table below summarizes the foreign currencies to which the Plan had exposure as at December 31, 2015 and the approximate change in this exposure for a 10% change in the Canadian dollar exchange rate. It is not expected the exchange rates would all move in the same direction for all currencies at the same time. However, the estimate provides a sense of the magnitude of the sensitivity of the portfolio to currency exchange rate movement.

Currency	Amount		Impact of 10% change on exposure 2015	Impact of 10% change on exposure 2014
	\$	%	\$	\$
US dollar	49,992,141	52.2	+/- 4,999,214	+/- 4,460,570
Japanese yen	11,282,687	11.8	+/- 1,128,269	+/- 969,038
Swiss franc	7,653,686	8.0	+/- 765,369	+/- 600,380
Hong Kong dollar	6,941,134	7.2	+/- 694,113	+/- 677,542
Euro	6,681,385	7.0	+/- 668,139	+/- 529,780
British pounds	6,249,332	6.5	+/- 624,933	+/- 756,096
Australian dollar	2,054,756	2.2	+/- 205,476	+/- 247,852
Singapore dollar	2,021,771	2.1	+/- 202,177	+/- 179,086
Swedish krona	1,365,971	1.4	+/- 136,597	+/- 134,674
Danish kroner	1,572,385	1.6	+/- 157,239	+/- 130,786
Israeli shekel	16,937	-	+/- 1,694	+/- 1,665
Norwegian kroner	14,114	-	+/- 1,411	+/- 1,427
Total	95,846,299	100.0	+/- 9,584,631	+/- 8,688,896

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The Plan has investments in bonds and mortgages. As at December 31, 2015, had interest rates increased or decreased by 1%, with all other variables held constant, the increase or decrease in net assets available for Plan benefits for the year would amount to approximately \$4,177,000 (2014 - \$3,600,000) for investments directly held, and \$@@@ (2014 - \$912,000) for investments held in pooled funds.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

Short-term investments have minimal sensitivity to changes in interest rates due to the short-term nature of the investments.

Equity price risk

The Plan holds equity financial instruments. The Plan is therefore exposed to equity price risk as the value of equity financial instruments will fluctuate due to changes in equity prices. If the unit price of the equity pooled funds and infrastructure limited partnership and the value of the Plan's equities directly held were to increase or decrease by 10%, with all other variables held constant, the impact on the net assets available for Plan benefits would be approximately \$15,871,000 (2014 - \$14,884,000).

As noted above, the Plan manages its market risk by investing in a diversified portfolio and by monitoring the performance of the individual investments and the compliance of each investment manager with the set investment policies.

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Plan is exposed to credit risk primarily through its bond investment portfolio.

The investment grade of the Plan's bond and mortgage portfolio as at December 31 is as follows:

Credit ratings	2015		2014	
	\$	% yields	\$	% yields
Directly held				
AAA/AA	38,635,487	72.4	36,854,323	73.9
A	11,221,454	21.0	10,882,990	21.8
BBB	3,543,836	6.6	2,147,740	4.3
	<u>53,400,777</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>49,885,053</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Indirectly held in pooled funds				
AAA/AA	-	-	6,944,864	34.7
A	-	-	4,665,049	23.3
BBB	-	-	5,197,353	26.0
B	-	-	237,787	1.2
Unrated	-	-	2,951,706	14.8
	<u>20,235,566</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>19,996,759</u>	<u>100.0</u>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk the Plan may be unable to meet obligations in a timely manner. In addition to recurring expenses, the Plan is called on to meet regular pension benefit payments as well as lump sum transfers that may occur on retirement or termination of qualifying members. The risk the Plan would be unable to meet such obligations is managed through the Plan's ongoing monitoring of the individual investment managers and in their ability to liquidate investments in which the Plan has invested. The risk in this area is assessed by the Plan to be insignificant.

The following is a maturity analysis of the Plan's investments that are held both directly and indirectly through its investments in pooled funds for managing liquidity risk:

					2015
Maturity	< 1 year \$	1-5 years \$	5-10 years \$	> 10 years \$	Total \$
Directly held	-	16,604,486	15,824,944	20,971,347	53,400,777
Indirectly held in pooled funds	-	-	-	-	20,235,566
	-	16,604,486	15,824,944	20,971,347	73,636,343

					2014
Maturity	< 1 year \$	1-5 years \$	5-10 years \$	> 10 years \$	Total \$
Directly held	-	13,763,387	15,325,945	20,795,721	49,885,053
Indirectly held in pooled funds	1,542,080	10,490,598	5,437,193	2,526,888	19,996,759
	1,542,080	24,253,985	20,763,138	23,322,609	69,881,812

The amounts shown as indirectly held in pooled funds represent the Plan's proportionate share of the investments held in the underlying pooled funds.

Methods and assumptions used in preparing sensitivity analysis

For indirect risk exposures from investments held in pooled funds, the various sensitivity analyses are based on similar disclosures presented in the audited financial statements of the various pooled funds. When the Plan invests in more than one pooled fund with similar financial instrument risks, the impact on the Plan's net assets available for Plan benefits is calculated separately for each of these funds based on the pro rata holdings of the Plan, and then added together. When funds with similar financial instrument risks use a different level of

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

reasonability of possible change to assess the impact on their net asset value, the impact has been estimated by pro-rating the reported change in the audited financial statements in order to arrive at a consistent level of possible impact.

6 Fair value measurement

The following is a summary of the methods used to determine the fair value of the Plan's investments directly held and indirectly held in pooled funds, and an analysis of those investments using the hierarchy set forth in IFRS 7, Financial Instruments: Disclosures. The hierarchy prioritizes the inputs to fair value measurement, placing the highest priority on unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to inputs not based on observable market data (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are:

- Level 1 - unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2 - inputs that are observable for the assets or liabilities either directly or indirectly; and
- Level 3 - inputs for assets or liabilities that are not based on observable market data.

Cash

Cash is classified as Level 2.

Short-term investments

Short-term investments are generally classified as Level 2. These instruments mature within one year and are stated at cost, which, when combined with accrued interest income, approximates fair value.

Equities

The Plan's equity investments are classified as Level 1 when the security is actively traded and a reliable quote is observable. Certain of the Plan's equities do not trade frequently; therefore, observable prices may not be available. In such cases, fair value is determined using observable market data (e.g. transactions for similar securities of the same issuer) and the investment is classified as Level 2, unless the determination of fair value requires significant unobservable data, in which case the investment is classified as Level 3.

Bonds and mortgages

Bonds, mortgages and other interest bearing securities are classified as Level 1 when they are actively traded. They are classified as Level 2 when they are valued using observable inputs, including interest rate curves, credit spreads and volatilities. Mortgages for which significant unobservable data is required in determining fair value have been classified as Level 3.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

Infrastructure

Investments in infrastructure limited partnership units are classified as Level 3. They are measured and reported at fair value in accordance with fair value policies and procedures, which give consideration to a range of factors. The investment manager considers any control, size, liquidity or other discounts or premiums on unlisted and unquoted investments in determining fair value. A number of valuation methodologies are considered in arriving at the fair value of investments including analysis of recent transactions and internal or external valuation models, which may include discounted cash flow analysis. The most appropriate methodology used to estimate fair value is determined on an investment by investment basis. Due to the inherent uncertainty of valuing investments for which no market price exists, these estimated values do not necessarily represent amounts that might be ultimately realized had a ready market existed for the investments.

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the Plan's financial assets at fair value as at December 31:

	2015			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Cash	-	3,503,117		3,503,117
Investments				
Short-term investments	-	2,666,153	-	2,666,153
Equities				
Canadian	25,375,148	-	-	25,375,148
Bonds				
Canadian	-	52,760,144		52,760,144
Foreign	-	640,633	-	640,633
Pooled funds				
Short-term investments	-	90,105		90,105
Canadian equities	30,428,320	-	-	30,428,320
Foreign equities	97,904,823	-	-	97,904,823
Bonds	-	16,962,968	-	16,962,968
Mortgages	-	3,272,598	-	3,272,598
Infrastructure	-	-	5,010,000	5,010,000
Mortgages	-	-	87,249	87,249
	153,708,291	79,895,718	5,097,249	238,701,258

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

	2014			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Cash	-	2,909,799	-	2,909,799
Investments				
Short-term investments	-	2,821,026	-	2,821,026
Equities				
Canadian	54,038,591	-	-	54,038,591
Foreign	170,495	-	-	170,495
Bonds				
Canadian	-	49,328,704	-	49,328,704
Foreign	-	556,349	-	556,349
Pooled funds				
Short-term investments		1,295,465	-	1,295,465
Canadian equities	2,586,044	-	-	2,586,044
Foreign equities	87,935,680	378,184	-	88,313,864
Bonds	-	16,984,814	-	16,984,814
Mortgages	-	3,011,945	-	3,011,945
Infrastructure	-	-	3,727,229	3,727,229
Mortgages	-	-	115,625	115,625
	<u>144,730,810</u>	<u>77,286,286</u>	<u>3,842,854</u>	<u>225,859,950</u>

The following is a reconciliation of Level 3 fair value measurements from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015:

	\$
Opening balance	3,842,854
Investment into infrastructure	1,122,970
Change in fair value	159,801
Redemption of mortgage units	<u>(28,376)</u>
Closing balance	<u>5,097,249</u>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

7 Contributions and other receivables

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Contributions receivable from members	277,975	277,382
Contributions receivable from Employer	316,621	445,593
Other receivables	14,107	13,913
	<u>608,703</u>	<u>736,888</u>

8 Accounts payable and accrued liabilities

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Audit fees	18,000	34,800
Actuarial fees	59,317	26,827
Investment management fees	77,000	73,585
Group insurance	52,710	-
HST	28,606	11,618
Due to PCIC (a)	132,023	87,793
	<u>367,656</u>	<u>234,623</u>

(a) PCIC provides administration services to the Plan at no cost. The Plan reimburses PCIC for all expenses paid on its behalf.

9 Termination refunds and transfers out

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Retirement/disability	120,656	119,189
Termination	1,124,785	433,634
Death	392,727	118,353
	<u>1,638,168</u>	<u>671,176</u>

10 Capital management

Management of the Plan defines capital as the net assets available for plan benefits. As the Plan represents only the net assets available for plan benefits, it does not manage capital on a stand-alone basis. Management of capital is done at the Plan level.

As the net assets of the defined benefit component of the Plan represents only the net assets available for benefits of the defined benefit component of the Plan, the management of capital is directly related to the management of investments. Capital is managed to achieve a long-term (five to ten year period) total rate of return equal to the long-term discount rate assumption used for the going-concern actuarial valuation.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Additional Disclosure Document (Unaudited)

December 31, 2015

Purpose

This document is prepared by the administrator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund (the “Plan”) to provide additional information to comply with the requirements in the Financial Statements Guidance Note-100 issued by the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (“FSCO”). The information contained in this document is prepared solely for the Pension Investment Committee of the Plan (the “Committee”) and FSCO and should not be used by parties other than the Committee or FSCO. This document is authorized for issue by the Committee on @@, 2016.

Capital management

Management of the Plan defines capital as the net assets available for plan benefits. As the Plan represents only the net assets available for plan benefits, it does not manage capital on a stand-alone basis. Management of capital is done at the Plan level. As stated in note 2, these financial statements do not purport to provide information about the solvency of the Plan.

The SIP&P was last amended on May 28, 2015. The return expectation of the Fund is to achieve a long-term (five to ten-year period) total rate of return equal to the long-term discount rate assumption used for the going-concern actuarial valuation. The discount rate is determined by the Pension Board with input from the Plan’s actuary. As of the March 31, 2014 actuarial valuation, the discount rate is 6.35%. The annualized five-year return as at December 31, 2015 was 8.6 % (gross of fees) (2014 - 8.9%).

The following table presents the asset allocation and annual rate of investment return for each asset category, and total investments, along with appropriate benchmarks.

Asset categories	Benchmark	SIP&P targets	Asset allocation		Annual rate of investment return (%)			
			December 31, 2015	As at December 31, 2014	Benchmark		Actual (gross of fees)	
			2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014
Cash and short-term investments	n/a	n/a	2.4%	2.7%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fixed income and mortgages	DEX Universe Index	35.0%	31.2%	31.2%	3.5%	8.8%	3.6%	8.7%
Canadian equities	S&P/TSX Composite Index	25.0%	23.6%	25.3%	(8.3%)	10.6%	(6.8)	7.9%
Foreign equities	MSCI World Index (\$C)	35.0%	40.8%	39.1%	18.3%	14.5%	20.7%	15.5%
Infrastructure	DEX Long Bond Index + 5%	5.0%	2.1%	1.7%	9.0%	23.2%	6.5%	7.6%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	5.6%	11.5%	7.7%	11.0%

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Fund

Additional Disclosure Document (Unaudited)

December 31, 2015

As of the most recent SIP&P, the Plan invested with the following managers/mandates:

Mandate	Investment manager	Target weight
Canadian equities and fixed income	Foyston, Gordon and Payne	29.5%
Canadian equities	TD Asset Management	12.5%
Canadian fixed income and mortgages	Phillips, Hager & North	18.0%
Foreign equities	Walter Scott	25.0%
Foreign equities	TD Asset Management	10.0%
Infrastructure	Northleaf Capital Partners	5.0%

ATLANTIC MISSION SOCIETY REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The purpose of the Atlantic Mission Society is to glorify God and support with prayer, study and service mission endeavours through The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Our 139th annual meeting was held in First Church, Stellarton, Nova Scotia, with President Bonnie Langille presiding. The entire weekend was one of rejoicing and worshiping in God's name. It was hosted by the Pictou Presbyterial. The theme was "We are Friends of the Lord". The guest speakers were the Rev. Major Charles Deogartias, who spoke about finding peace after leaving a refugee camp in western Tanzania. Ms. Penny Gilles also spoke about her trip to Haiti with the Rev. Lara Scholey updating what was happening in Haiti and Syria.

Our new Honorary President is Ethel Porter who has been an active member of AMS working hard within the archives of the Atlantic Mission Society.

The new updated Constitution and By-Laws were passed and can be found on the AMS website. Due to a drop in revenue, the Financial Committee moved that the amount budgeted for The Presbyterian Church in Canada would be lowered by ten percent. The annual meeting was as usual a huge success with an entire weekend of rejoicing and worshiping in God's name and we were blessed with good fun, fellowship and food. The local committee is to be commended for a job well done.

The President of the AMS will attend the General Assembly in June. The President Bonnie Langille attended the Life and Mission Agency Committee meetings and Vice-president Linda MacKinnon attended the Assembly Council meetings in November and April. They present reports at these meetings. The President represents the AMS at various synod meetings and attended the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces in October in Moncton to update on the AMS activities.

Our two Executive meetings took place in the months of April and November. These are always generously hosted by St. James' Church in their Koinonia Centre in Truro. As we continue our work with missions some members finish their terms and we thank these leaders for all their dedication and leadership throughout their terms.

Discovery Days took place in Truro in April. Our theme this year was "Joy in the Lord" with guest speakers the Rev. Karen Horst, Moderator of the 141st General Assembly; the Rev. Beth Mattison (clown ministry) and representatives from Teen Challenge in New Brunswick.

As a mission minded group we continue to support our overseas projects in places such as Ukraine, Malawi and India, as well as the many projects here at home. Our Men's group are starting their second year supporting their project: The Atlantic Teen Challenge, New Brunswick. They were very pleased to be informed that their second project the New Minister's Library Fund in Malawi has reached its goal. All gifts given through the AMS for this project since its completion will go to another project of International Ministries.

We continue to support the three Atlantic camps, and give up to four bursaries to students studying for ministry. Winter is a cold time of year so this year the AMS members and knitters were encouraged to make Canada the recipient of their handiwork.

The *Presbyterian Message* continues to keep us updated with articles from the Presbyterian missionaries and their work overseas as well as articles concerning The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We have an interesting study this year on the Reformation and the AMS prepared by Rob Griffiths. Many thanks goes to the Editor and Webmaster Joan Cho.

We are a busy group of ladies and gentlemen learning, praying and seeking ways to help God's people in need.

Our membership is down a bit this year but our prayers and support for Missions is still strong in the hearts of the AMS members.

Bonnie Langille
President

COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

There are no consent recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Committee on Bills and Overtures is one of the committees proposed by the Committee on Business to be appointed during the Assembly's first sederunt. As a way of facilitating its work, the Committee on Bills and Overtures met by conference call prior to the Assembly on Tuesday, April 26, 2016.

Book of Forms section 308 describes the responsibilities of this committee. In short, it receives documents transmitted to the Assembly, such as unREFERRED overtures, and prepares recommendations proposing how the Assembly might deal with them.

The committee offers the following recommendations:

The prayer of Overture No. 10, 2016, asks the General Assembly to rule any consideration of overtures relating to the approval of the celebration of marriage of same-sex couples out of order.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures notes that the 2015 General Assembly deemed in order and received for consideration a number of overtures related to human sexuality and sexual orientation, some of which made reference to same-sex relationships and marriage. Since last year's General Assembly agreed to invite the church to discuss same-sex marriage, the committee makes the following recommendation.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the prayer of Overture No. 10, 2016 re declaring overtures re same sex marriage out of order (p. 29.1.1) be not granted.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 11, 2016 re develop a Reformed confessional hermeneutic (p. 29.1.1–2) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine.

Overture No. 12, 2016, asks the General Assembly to consider a means for the dismissal of congregations that may want to withdraw from The Presbyterian Church in Canada if those congregations are unable to accept changes in doctrine or discipline.

A very similar overture was referred to the Clerks of Assembly, in consultation with the Assembly Council, the Trustee Board and the Pension and Benefits Board, by the 2015 General Assembly. Subsequently, three 2016 overtures expressing essentially the same request were also referred to the Clerks to consult with the same three bodies. Given the similarity of these overtures, the Committee on Bills and Overtures recommends that the prayer of Overture No. 12, 2016 and Overture No. 14, 2016 be answered by the response of the General Assembly to the Clerks of Assembly Rec. No. 2 concerning these previously referred overtures (see p. 7.1.2–5).

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 12, 2016 re policy for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination (p. 29.1.2) be answered by the General Assembly's decision on the Clerks of Assembly Recommendation No. 2, 2016.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 13, 2016 re request more time for human sexuality discussion (p. 29.1.2–3) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries).

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 14, 2016 re Indigenous spirituality and defer Native Ministries Endowment Fund (p. 29.1.3–4) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) and the National Native Ministries Council.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 15, 2016 re extending time for human sexuality responses (p. 29.1.4–5) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries).

Recommendation No. 7 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 16, 2016 re policy for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination (p. 29.1.5) be answered by the General Assembly's decision on the Clerks of Assembly Recommendation No. 2, 2016. (Clerks of Assembly Rec. No. 2, p. 7.1.5)

Recommendation No. 8 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 17, 2016 re develop a bereavement leave policy (p. 29.1.5–6) be referred to the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations).

Recommendation No. 9 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 18, 2016 re research reasons for declining membership (p. 29.1.6) be referred to the Life and Mission Agency (Canadian Ministries) in consultation with the Assembly Council.

Recommendation No. 10 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 19, 2016 re congregational vote re sexual orientation and process for leaving the denomination (p. 29.1.6) be referred to the Clerks of Assembly.

Recommendation No. 11 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 20, 2016 re congregational vote re sexual orientation and process for leaving the denomination (p. 29.1.6–7) be referred to the Clerks of Assembly.

Recommendation No. 12 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 21, 2016 re ministry and eldership of and performing marriage of those in same gender relationships (p. 29.1.7) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries).

Recommendation No. 13 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 22, 2016 re preparing a statement on Indigenous Spirituality (p. 29.1.7–10) be referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) and the National Native Ministries Council.

Susan Mattinson
Convener

COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

That Recommendation Nos. 1 to 11 (identified by ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 1

That with a view to having their attendance recorded, each commissioner, young adult and student representative be requested to register with the Assembly Office. (see p. 5.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 2

That the sederunts and worship of Assembly be held in the gym of the Tail McKenzie Centre of York University on Friday from 1:00 pm to approximately 4:30 pm, Saturday from 8:30 pm to approximately 11:30 am, Saturday from 2:00 pm to approximately 5:00 pm, Saturday from 7:00 pm to approximately 8:30 pm, Sunday from 9:00 am to approximately 12:00 noon, Sunday 2:00 pm to approximately 4:00 pm, Sunday 7:00 pm to approximately 8:30 pm, Monday 8:30 am to approximately 12 noon; and the worship and celebration of communion on Friday at 7:30 pm noting that other times of worship are scheduled throughout the Assembly. (see p. 5.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 3

That the agenda for the first and second sederunts be approved as printed (see p. C-1 to C-2). (see p. 5.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 4

That all announcements be given in writing to the Business Committee no later than 20 minutes prior to the end of each sederunt. (see p. 5.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 5

That in order for the Assembly Office to prepare reports for projection, commissioners who have knowledge that they will be presenting additional motions or amendments prepare them in a preceding sederunt for presentation to the Business Committee. (see p. 5.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 6

That the committees of Assembly be constituted as follows: (see list of names below on p. 5.1.3).

► Recommendation No. 7

That the Committee to Nominate, Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency's Ministry and Church Vocations' Committee on Education and Reception be granted leave to sit during the sederunts. (see p. 5.1.3)

► Recommendation No. 8

That permission be granted to distribute, if necessary, the supplementary report of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees when prepared. (see p. 5.1.3)

► Recommendation No. 9

That conveners and staff members of committees and agencies be given permission to speak during their reports. (see p. 5.1.4)

► Recommendation No. 10

That the young adult representatives and student representatives be permitted to participate in the debates of this General Assembly and be granted an advisory vote in the terms above. (see p. 5.1.4)

► Recommendation No. 11

That any request for permission to distribute handouts to the General Assembly be directed through the Business Committee. (see p. 5.1.4)

Notices of Motion

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the terms of reference for the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education be reconsidered (Assembly Council Rec. No. 6, see p. 2.1.14).

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the terms of reference for the Assembly Council be reconsidered (Assembly Council Rec. No. 13, see p. 2.1.23).

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the Constitution of the Pension Fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be reconsidered (Pension and Benefits Board, Rec. No. 3, see p. 16.1.6).

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the terms of reference for the Life and Mission Agency Committee be reconsidered (Life and Mission Agency, Rec. No. 19, see p. 12.1.85)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Committee on Business presents the following report.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That with a view to having their attendance recorded, each commissioner, young adult and student representative be requested to register with the Assembly Office.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the sederunts and worship of Assembly be held in the gym of the Tail McKenzie Centre of York University on Friday from 1:00 pm to approximately 4:30 pm, Saturday from 8:30 pm to approximately 11:30 am, Saturday from 2:00 pm to approximately 5:00 pm, Saturday from 7:00 pm to approximately 8:30 pm, Sunday from 9:00 am to approximately 12:00 noon, Sunday 2:00 pm to approximately 4:00 pm, Sunday 7:00 pm to approximately 8:30 pm, Monday 8:30 am to approximately 12 noon; and the worship and celebration of communion on Friday at 7:30 pm noting that other times of worship are scheduled throughout the Assembly.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the agenda for the first and second sederunts be approved as printed (see p. C-1 to C-2).

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That all announcements be given in writing to the Business Committee no later than 20 minutes prior to the end of each sederunt.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That in order for the Assembly Office to prepare reports for projection, commissioners who have knowledge that they will be presenting additional motions or amendments prepare them in a preceding sederunt for presentation to the Business Committee.

CLERKS OF ASSEMBLY

The Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp, Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly, is unable to attend this year's General Assembly due to ill health. Therefore, this Assembly will be served by the Principal Clerk, The Rev. Stephen Kendall and Deputy Clerk, The Rev. Donald Muir. Please see Clerks of Assembly report, Recommendation No. 1, (p. 7.1.2) for a historic note regarding Dr. Plomp's service as a Clerk of Assembly.

COMMITTEES OF THIS ASSEMBLY

In light of the schedule of the General Assembly, the Business Committee and the Committee on Bills and Overtures each met by telephone conference prior to the Assembly. These meetings enabled both committees to deal with their responsibilities and to be ready for the first sederunt of the Assembly.

Below is the list of committees and the membership proposed for this General Assembly.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the committees of Assembly be constituted as follows:

Committee on Bills and Overtures

Convener: the Rev. Susan Mattinson

Clerks of Assembly: the Rev. Stephen Kendall, the Rev. Donald G.A. Muir

Commissioners who are clerks of presbytery or synod: the Rev. Jinsook Khang, the Rev. Dr. Jeffrey F. Loach, the Rev. Charles E. McPherson, the Rev. George S. Malcolm, the Rev. Shirley F. Murdock, the Rev. Dr. Cheol Soon Park

Committee on Business

Convener: the Rev. Dr. Peter D. Coutts

Members: the Rev. Keith A. McKee, the Rev. Deborah Rapport, Mr. Robert J. Shaw, Ms. Liz Stark

Committee to Confer with the Moderator

Convener: the Rev. Karen R. Horst

Members: the Rev. J. Wesley Denyer, the Rev. Dr. Alfred H.S. Lee, the Rev. Geoffrey M. Ross, the Rev. Lara Scholey, the Rev. Fred Stewart

A Clerk of the General Assembly

Committee on Courtesies and Loyal Addresses

Convener: the Rev. Kathy A. Fraser

Members: the Rev. Dr. Andrew J.R. Johnston, Mr. Young Jin Lee, Ms. Margaret R. Clow

Committee to Examine the Records

Convener: the Rev. Harry J. Bradley

Members: Ms. Ruth Chueh, the Rev. Peter D. MacDonald, Ms. Janet MacDowell

Committee on Remits

Convener: the Rev. Martin Baxter

Member: the Rev. Dr. J. Stanley Cox, Ms. Shirley Zehr

Committee on Roll and Leave to Withdraw

Convener: the Rev. Kristine E. O'Brien

Members: Mr. John Barrett, the Rev. M. Diane Ollerenshaw

Committee on Terms of Reference

Convener: Dr. Alexandra Johnston

Members: the Rev. Jeanie Lee, Ms. Linda MacKinnon, the Rev. George S. Malcolm

LEAVE TO SIT

Recommendation No. 7 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Committee to Nominate, Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency's Ministry and Church Vocations' Committee on Education and Reception be granted leave to sit during the sederunts.

AGENDA DOCUMENTATION

The following have been distributed at registration:

1. Original reports: Business Committee (p. 5.1.1–5), Biographical Information Ecumenical/Interfaith/International Guests (p. 9.1.1–2).
2. Supplementary reports: Life and Mission Agency (p. 12.1.85–96), Presbyterian Record (p. 18.1.3), Knox College (p. 23.1.6–7).
3. Replacement pages: Daily Schedule (A–1), Roll of Assembly (p. B–1 to B–5), Agenda (p. C–1 to C–4), Assembly Council (p. 2.1.27–30), Clerks of Assembly (p. 7.1.1, 7.1.5, 7.1.7), Life and Mission Agency (p. 12.1.81), Remits Under the Barrier Act (p. 19.1.1–2).
4. General Information Sheet, Presbyterian College Alumni Lunch, Knox College Reception, E.H. Johnson Reception, Pension and Benefits Board Gathering.
5. Voting Cards with Summary of Motions: yellow for commissioners.

Recommendation No. 8 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to distribute, if necessary, the supplementary report of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees when prepared.

Motion Papers

There are two copies of yellow motion sheets located at the front section in each Book of Reports which are to be used for any motions such as amendments, procedural motions or additional motions. Commissioners are asked to print legibly and to submit these to the Business Committee. Additional sheets can be obtained from the Business Committee table.

CONVENERS OF COMMITTEES AND STAFF

Each year, many of the conveners of committees and staff members of committees and agencies of the General Assembly are not commissioners. In such cases, the General Assembly has granted permission for them to speak to issues during the presentation of their reports.

Recommendation No. 9 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That conveners and staff members of committees and agencies be given permission to speak during their reports.

YOUNG ADULT REPRESENTATIVES AND STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

The 1997 General Assembly adopted a recommendation from the Clerks of Assembly requesting the Business Committee to ensure that a recommendation is presented to each successive General Assembly permitting young adult representatives and student representatives to participate in the debates of the Assembly but without vote. (A&P 1997, p. 261, 24, Rec. No. 6)

In 2009, General Assembly adopted a recommendation to grant an advisory vote to young adult representatives and student representatives that permits them to vote on matters selected by them or suggested to them by the Moderator or the Assembly itself. (A&P 2010, p. 283, 362–63, 13 and A&P 2009, p. 261–63, 17) The procedure provides the representatives with voting cards of an alternate colour from those used by the commissioners. When they wish to give an advisory vote, the Moderator asks first for the advisory vote, then for the commissioner vote. While the advisory vote advises the court on the will of the representatives, only the commissioner vote is used to determine whether or not a recommendation is adopted.

Recommendation No. 10 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the young adult representatives and student representatives be permitted to participate in the debates of this General Assembly and be granted an advisory vote in the terms above.

CIRCULATION OF MATERIALS AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Any committee wishing to circulate material at the General Assembly must request permission through the Business Committee. Committees and Boards of the church may keep material in the display area.

Recommendation No. 11 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That any request for permission to distribute handouts to the General Assembly be directed through the Business Committee.

OVERTURES**Referred Overtures**

Referred overtures are those which are submitted by a presbytery or a session transmitted through the presbytery with a request that they be sent to one of the committees of the General Assembly. The following three overtures have been received by the Committee on Business and forwarded on to the referred committee (the first page reference is the overture and the second reference is where a committee has reported on it):

- No. 1 from the Presbytery of Paris re revising appointment protocols for associate secretaries (referred to Assembly Council, p. 2.1.28–29).
- No. 2 from the Presbytery of Winnipeg re timeline regarding overtures relating to human sexuality (referred to Assembly Council, in consultation with the Clerks of Assembly, p. 2.1.29–31, 7.1.12).

- No. 3 from the Presbytery of Winnipeg re Barrier Act and an individual's dissent (referred to Clerks of Assembly, p. 7.1.6).
- No. 4 from the Session of St. Andrew's, Moncton, New Brunswick re a policy for a congregation leaving the denomination (referred to Clerks of Assembly, in consultation with Trustee Board, Assembly Council and Pension and Benefits Board, p. 7.1.2–5, 2.1.28).
- No. 5 from the Session of Bethel, Riverview, New Brunswick re a policy for a congregation leaving the denomination (referred to Clerks of Assembly, in consultation with Trustee Board, Assembly Council and Pension and Benefits Board, p. 7.1.2–5, 2.1.28).
- No. 6 from the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry re revise SASH Policy when complainant is minister in a congregation (referred to Life and Mission Agency Committee (Ministry and Church Vocations) p. 12.1.46–47).
- No. 7 from the Presbytery of Paris re policy for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination (referred to Clerks of Assembly in consultation with Trustee Board, Assembly Council and Pension and Benefits Board, p. 7.1.2–5, 2.1.28).
- No. 8 from the Presbytery of Paris re standing committees secretaries (referred to Assembly Council, p. 2.1.31).
- No. 9 from the Presbytery of Winnipeg re utilize and develop resources re “passive energy” (referred to Assembly Council and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries), p. 2.1.31, 12.1.39–40).

Unreferred Overtures

Unreferred overtures are those that are submitted by a presbytery, synod or a session transmitted through the presbytery to the General Assembly. These overtures are directed to the Committee on Bills and Overtures which recommends either the action to be taken at the General Assembly or the referral to a standing or special committee of the Assembly. (Book of Forms section 296.3) This committee's report is found starting on p. 4.1.1. There are 13 unreferred overtures (Nos. 10 to 22) and the text of these overtures are on pages 29.1.1–10.

Names to be placed on the Constituent Roll

There is no request for a name to be placed on the constituent roll.

Overtures received after April 1st (Book of Forms section 296.3)

The 2003 General Assembly adopted the practice for handling overtures received after the annual April 1 deadline whereby they will be held by the Clerks of Assembly for next year's General Assembly. The originator of the overture is given an opportunity to request to which committee or agency it shall be referred for consideration in following year. This year no overtures fall into this category.

MEMORIALS, PETITIONS, REFERENCES, CORRECTIVE CASES AND APPEALS

There are no memorials, petitions, references, corrective cases or appeals for this Assembly.

NOTICES OF MOTION

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the terms of reference for the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education be reconsidered (Assembly Council Rec. No. 6, see p. 2.1.14).

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the terms of reference for the Assembly Council be reconsidered (Assembly Council Rec. No. 13, see p. 2.1.23).

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the Constitution of the Pension Fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be reconsidered (Pension and Benefits Board, Rec. No. 3, see p. 16.1.6).

I give notice that, at a future sederunt, I will move or cause to be moved that the terms of reference for the Life and Mission Agency Committee be reconsidered (Life and Mission Agency, Rec. No. 19, see p. 12.1.85)

Peter Coutts
Convener

COMMITTEE ON CHURCH DOCTRINE

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

That Recommendation Nos. 2 and 3 [identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

Recommendation No. 1

That the document “Presbyterian Polity: Its Distinctives and Directions for the 21st Century” be commended to the courts and, in particular, to the clerks of those courts for study and response to the Committee on Church Doctrine through the Assembly Office by August 31, 2017. (see p. 6.1.8)

► Recommendation No. 2

That The Presbyterian Church in Canada seek the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in light of the Reign of God, in a response to the overtures named above and, in particular, the prayer of Overture No. 16, 2015 re encouraging dialogue on marriage and sexuality. (see p. 6.1.14)

► Recommendation No. 3

That all courts of the church be urged to deal with people in same-sex relationships with tender pastoral care. (see p. 6.1.14)

Recommendation No. 4

That the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency continue to reflect on the nature of Christian marriage in relation to LGBTQ and intersex people and report back to the 2017 General Assembly. (see p. 6.1.14)

Recommendation No. 5

That the Life and Mission Agency in consultation with the Committee on Church Doctrine continue to reflect theologically on the spiritual needs of transgender and intersex people, and report back to the 2017 General Assembly. (see p. 6.1.14)

Recommendation No. 6

That the General Assembly receive the above report as an interim response to the prayers of Overture Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 35, 2015; and grant permission to report on the various matters raised in these overtures to a future General Assembly. (see p. 6.1.14)

Recommendation No. 7

That the document “Understanding and Interpreting the Bible” be commended to congregations, presbyteries and other groups in The Presbyterian Church in Canada for their use. (see p. 6.1.27)

Recommendation No. 8

That sessions, presbyteries and other interested groups using the document “Understanding and Interpreting the Bible” report comments to the Committee on Church Doctrine through the Assembly Office by January 31, 2017, and that the results of these comments be reported to a future General Assembly. (see p. 6.1.27)

Recommendation No. 9

That the matters and concerns raised in Memorial No. 1, 2015 be answered in terms of the above report. (see p. 6.1.28)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Committee on Church Doctrine has met twice in person and once using on-line technology since the last General Assembly.

The 2015 General Assembly spent considerable time considering many overtures broadly addressing matters of sexuality, sexual orientation and some of the current practices and beliefs of The Presbyterian Church in Canada related to those matters. The General Assembly also tasked the Committee on Church Doctrine to work jointly with

the Life and Mission Agency to prepare a study guide on those matters for posting on the web by the end of October 2015. In addition, the church was invited by the 2015 General Assembly to send the results of their prayerful conversations, discernment and Bible study to both committees prior to March 31, 2016. Further the two committees were instructed to confer throughout the year as they continued their work on the matters raised in the overtures.

All of those decisions and tasks resulted in a greatly increased workload for the members of the Committee on Church Doctrine. The study guide, initially envisioned as something on a smaller scale, quickly became a large, though not comprehensive, document demanding several reviews and revisions. While cognizant of some 'frailties' in the guide, *Body, Mind and Soul* was accepted for posting on The Presbyterian Church in Canada website by the deadline set by the 2015 General Assembly.

Even six weeks before the recommended response date of March 31, the invitation to send the results of conversations and study has produced an almost overwhelming number of submissions. Over 200 responses have been already submitted with others arriving on a daily basis. Attempting to sift through this collective wisdom, while still doing the careful research, investigation and reflection outlined in our initial report on the related overtures presented to last year's General Assembly, as well as addressing other important matters on our agenda, has pushed the limits of time and energy available to us.

Nonetheless we are pleased to report as follows.

A STUDY OF PRESBYTERIAN POLITY: ITS DISTINCTIVES AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

For several years, the Committee on Church Doctrine has been working on a study of "Presbyterian Polity: Its Distinctives and Directions for the 21st Century". Following a number of revisions, we are pleased to present the following document to the 2016 General Assembly. Our intent is to ask that the document be commended to the church for study and response. As the dynamics of Canadian society change with great rapidity and the shape of all organizations and institutions are being examined and challenged, we believe reflecting on our governing processes and core understandings is of great importance, if we intend to engage effectively our neighbours and our world with the grace and truth evident in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The document asks some questions for consideration within the text. We hope it will evoke others and look forward to considering the responses of the various courts of our church.

Introduction

"[F]or though they keep up a form of religion, they will have nothing to do with it as a force." (2 Timothy 3:5, Moffat translation)

For many generations, The Presbyterian Church in Canada sat comfortably near the centre of Canadian society, resting on our perception of ourselves as one of the founding traditions (together with the Roman Catholic and Anglican) that shaped Canadian history. As society has become both more secular and more diverse in recent generations, and as we have come to acknowledge and appreciate other heritages, including those of First Nations peoples, we have become less certain of just who we are as a church and what place we have in that society. This has provoked questions about the relevance and importance of the church. Some question the exclusive nature of the claims of Christ; others have decided that they have no need to be part of any community of faith; and still others are content to engage in spiritual quests apart or aloof from an ordered or organised religious entity. An increasing number of people now affiliate with a variety of non-Christian faith groups or deny any belief in a god of any description.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada experiences these trends measurably in a decline in membership, participation and income; and immeasurably in feelings like uncertainty about what our purpose and presence in Canadian society should be. We can choose how to respond to those tensions. The easiest choice is to focus on the church as a human organization, considering this simply a management challenge to be solved by following the rules and procedures developed over the years.

In this case, the easiest answer is almost certainly wrong, and leaves us open to holding firmly to the forms of godliness while missing the true power of new life in Jesus Christ. We are more likely to find that power by looking past the procedures to the first principles that lie behind them, looking into why the rules and procedures were created and what values those rules were intended to incarnate.

Reformed and Presbyterian polity has provided the framework for much of our life as the Church of Christ. Our Reformed emphases on the supreme authority of scripture (“the only rule of faith and life”), the importance of a defined theological confession (“This we believe...”), the collegiality and plurality of shared oversight and mutual accountability (“elders”, plural in each congregation and equal numbers of ministers and elders in the presbytery and higher courts), and an orderly record (regularly “attested” which has ensured a long and retentive corporate memory) have all served us well. Any substantive changes contemplated to our polity must be rooted in a clear or clearer understanding of scripture, adequately based on and growing out of our theological confessions, and need to safeguard the strengths inherent in the shared oversight and mutual accountability which remain part of what it means to be Presbyterian. There is a present danger amid a climate of widespread change that we may fail to know what we have until it is gone.

A distinguishing characteristic of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is the way we make decisions through a system of representative courts. The rules tell us how those courts are constituted, but in recent years following those rules has not left us with confidence that we have been able to respond faithfully and effectively in our changing society.

The rules say “A court can be convened only by its moderator.” (Book of Forms section 6) This seems to create an office of presiding elder, but the historic Reformed confession is that directive authority rests not in an individual, even one styled as first among equals, but in a court meeting together to discern the voice of the Spirit. In a society that looks to organizational charts to define who is in charge and who is responsible, what does it mean to place authority and responsibility not in an individual, but rather in the collegial deliberations and shared ministry of elders called together as shepherds under the authority of the Good Shepherd?

The rules say “The session shall assign the names of all members and adherents to the elders who shall keep a list of the names and addresses of those assigned to them, and shall cultivate a personal relationship with those persons through visiting, counselling and encouraging them in the Christian life.” (Book of Forms section 109.4) How does this activity grow out of the church’s call to make disciples, to help people grow in the grace of Jesus Christ? What kind of gifts does a person need to fulfil this calling? Does this unfairly limit who can faithfully serve as a presbyter? In a society increasingly sensitive to privacy concerns and governed by privacy laws, how do elders and ministers work together as equals in providing pastoral care and counsel to individuals and families?

Our Reformed confession is that “the organic unity of the church is maintained in a hierarchy of courts (in contradistinction to a hierarchy of persons); the authority of which courts is ministerial and declarative” (Book of Forms section 3). In this hierarchy of courts, presbyteries oversee the work of sessions. The rules set standards for how presbyteries shall oversee the records of sessions, such as “It is required of minutes that: The number of each page shall be written in full where it is not printed.” (Book of Forms section 27.1) Do these standards adequately ensure the church is working together in faithfulness to Christ’s mission? Or is a different kind of oversight required?

The changing society in which we live calls for a church that does not rest on its heritage. It needs a church focused on its calling as a community sent forth by Jesus Christ to proclaim the word of God, to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to lead people to life in a new kingdom or realm of the Spirit. It needs a church dedicated not to maintaining an institution, but to building a new community.

The heritage of polity we have received from previous generations has given us the place where we stand. Over the years it has preserved the community of faith in which we live. The challenge today is how to build on that foundation so that this community can respond to new challenges and become a place where future generations can be nurtured in the faith we received from Jesus Christ.

Do we need different rules and procedures? Or a different way of looking at those rules and procedures? Perhaps the way our Book of Forms describes the activities of church courts leads us to see them primarily as agents of administrative control and institutional maintenance. How could we rewrite them to make our calling as a community with a mission clear? Darrell Guder in his Laidlaw lecture (2015) challenged the church to recognize that the Christendom model of maintenance ministry is no longer adequate for a church in a culture in which a missional model is required.

Towards a study of church polity

The Oxford English Dictionary defines “polity” as “a form or process of civil government or constitution”.

Polity, or church organization and government, has largely been taken for granted by many individuals, congregations and courts in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As much of our presbyterian polity has been bequeathed to us as part of our Reformed heritage, we have not had to think too long or too deeply about how it was constructed. How we conceive of the nature of the church has a substantial impact on how we approach the forms and processes of our governance.

Historically, the Presbyterian Church has affirmed and espoused a form of government that emphasizes a shared leadership by “presbyters” – teaching and ruling elders, who are spiritually equal in authority and mutually accountable. We are organised on four levels, sometimes called courts, each with defined areas of oversight. The local congregation is led and overseen by the session, composed of a pastor or pastors and a plurality of elders, elected by the congregation, but ordained – set apart – as examples to the believers and to the community at large to which the congregation bears witness. Congregations in close proximity to each other are grouped in presbyteries, composed of equal numbers of pastors and representative ruling elders. Provincial or regional conference among the leadership is facilitated by synods, which now may be either representative or all-inclusive of the membership of the presbyteries. Nationally, the General Assembly gathers representatives, appointed by the presbyteries, together on an annual basis to oversee the whole and to facilitate and co-ordinate corporate witness to the country and to the world.

Is the expression “the courts of the church” still helpful? In what other ways might we describe shared leadership and governance that is collegial and mutually accountable?

Apart from one relatively recently revised section on formal ecumenical shared ministries (Book of Forms section 200.13), there is very little said in our polity about local inter-denominational co-operation or work with para-church agencies. Yet in many communities and congregations, current reality is that there is much in the way of such collegial support and co-operation in Christian ministry to the local community.

Beyond national geographic borders, the formal governance process is consultative and fraternal, rather than definitive or legislative. We have relations and partnerships with other Presbyterian and Reformed churches and with other branches of the Christian church espousing other forms of polity (most are Episcopalian, although some are Congregationalist). It could be argued that a lack of a formal structure for presbyterians beyond national borders is a weakness of our polity and one which may need further reflection and redress in the present age of globalisation.

How might our polity better reflect existing and future ecumenical and international relationships?

The Church – Marks and Ministry

We confess in the Nicene Creed that we believe in “one holy catholic apostolic church”. In his book, *Models of the Church*, the Roman Catholic Avery Dulles reviews and critiques various models of the church, including the church as institution, as mystical communion, as sacrament, as herald, and as servant. In chapter ten, entitled, “Ecclesiology and Ministry”, he describes how differing understandings of the church lead to different approaches to ministry. Dulles understands Protestant ecclesiology to view the church primarily “as a witnessing congregation” and contrasts a “word-centered” witness with a “sacrament-centered” one espoused by the Roman Catholic communion. (p. 161)

Calvin was clear in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* that the essential marks of the church are the preaching of the word and the celebration of the sacraments: “Wherever we see the Word of God purely (or sincerely) preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ’s institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists.” (Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, chap. 1, sec. 9, Battles trans.; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960; alt. reading taken from Eerdmans edition, cited below)

“We have said that the symbols by which the Church is discerned are the preaching of the word and the observance of the sacraments for these cannot anywhere exist without producing fruit and prospering the blessing of God.” (Calvin, *The Institutes*, Book IV, chap. 1, sec. 10, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1957)

To these two marks, Reformed churches have often added a third mark: discipline rightly administered. “Where Christ is, there is the true Church. Since the earliest days of the Reformation, Reformed Christians have marked the presence of the true Church wherever the Word of God is truly preached and heard, the Sacraments are rightly administered, and ecclesiastical discipline is uprightly ministered.” (Scots Confession, 3.18)

The Belgic Confession reiterates this: “The marks by which the true Church is known are these: If the pure doctrine of the gospel is preached therein; if she maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; if church discipline is exercised in punishing of sin; in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto rejected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only Head of the Church. Hereby the true Church may certainly be known, from which no man has a right to separate himself.” (The Belgic Confession, in *The Creeds of Christendom*, ed. Philip Schaff, rev. David S. Schaff, Vol. 3, New York: Harper and Row, 1931, p. 419–420.)

Living Faith describes these marks in more contemporary language: “The church is present when the Word is truly preached, the sacraments rightly administered, and as it orders its life according to the word of God.” (Living Faith, 7.1.6) It goes on to emphasize that the church as the community of those who live in Christ are called to a faithful discipleship: “Disciples of Christ are called to obedience. Jesus said: “If you love me, keep my commandments.” Obedience involves us totally. Yet as we give ourselves to him we discover that his service alone brings true freedom.” (Living Faith 8.1.1)

In our relatively recent rewrite of chapter 9 of the Book of Forms, we have sought as a church to reform and uphold processes for church discipline which emphasize the collegial nature of our leadership and our mutually accountable responsibilities for the oversight of members (by the session) and ministers (by the presbytery).

The marks of the church, whether they be one, two, three, or four, are to point to Christ. James Bannerman, professor in the Free Church of Scotland, in his classic study, *The Church of Christ*, maintained: “The only true and infallible note or mark of a Church of Christ is the profession of the faith of Christ.” He wrote, “Other things, such as sacraments and ordinances, the ministry, and the outward administration of the Church, are not essential to it, but only accidental; they are necessary for its wellbeing, but not for its being. He goes on to quote Jerome, referring to the prevalence of Arianism in the church of the fourth century: “The Church does not consist of walls, but in the truth of its doctrines; the Church is wherever there is true faith.” [James Bannerman, *The Church of Christ*, orig. 1869, reprinted Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2015, p. 65]

Accepting that the marks of the true preaching of Christ, the right administration of the sacraments and the appropriate administration of discipline are essential for the church’s wellbeing, our polity needs always to be ordered and reviewed with an eye to ensuring that the forms and processes of church administration enable these marks to be clearly seen.

The marks of the church need to be reflected in the way the church is organized. In the Reformed church, such organization has been built around the distinctive offices or orders of ministry.

T.H.L. Parker wrote, commenting on Calvin’s commission to re-organise the church in Geneva: “For him, the Church in any place must faithfully mirror the principles laid down in the Holy Scripture. In the New Testament, he found four permanent orders of ministry, and around these he constructed his organization. He prepared a draft document, “Ecclesiastical Ordinances”, which was discussed in committee, somewhat modified, and passed for approval by the City Councils. In this fourfold ministry, the whole life of the Church was covered, its worship, education, soundness and purity, and its works of love and mercy.” (Christian History Institute, christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/life-and-times-of-john-calvin/ reprinted from *Christian History Magazine* #12 – Calvin, 1986)

Calvin in his Draft Ecclesiastical Ordinances states: “There are four orders of office instituted by our Lord for the government of his Church. First, pastors; then doctors; next elders; and fourth deacons. Hence if we will have a Church well ordered and maintained we ought to observe this form of government.” (*Calvin, Theological Treatises*, J.K.S. Reid, ed., Library of Christian Classics, Ichthus edition, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954)

The Second Book of Discipline reiterates this: “There are four ordinary functions or offices in the kirk of God: the office of the pastor, minister or bishop; the doctor; the presbyter or elder; and the deacon.” (Chapter 2, section 6)

The primary role of ministers ordained as “pastors and teachers” is preaching and teaching. Historically, the role of the “doctor” was to teach doctrine. The primary role of ruling elders is to share in the pastoral oversight of the people. Historically, the primary role of the deacon was the care of the poor and the sick.

Dulles' review of different models of ecclesiology highlights the dangers inherent in viewing the church as "institution", modeled on the secular state, in which the exercise of power in administration becomes divorced from the fulfilling of "the spiritual mission of the Church" (p. 154).

H. Richard Niebuhr, Daniel Day Williams, and James M. Gustafson in a book entitled, *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry*, ask a challenging and focusing question: "Is not the result of all these debates and the content of the confessions or commandments of all these authorities this: that no substitute can be found for the definition of the goal of the Church as the increase among men of the love of God and neighbor?"

Accepting that the church does not exist for itself (maintenance, as in the now-past age of Christendom), but to bear witness to Jesus Christ in a non-Christian culture and environment (missional, in our new reality), how might our polity better show a priority for the love of neighbours presently outside and beyond the Church? Is there room for a recovery of the office of deacon to ensure that the evidence of the church's fourth mark of works of mercy and charity is more visible?

Certainly, as the 2014 General Assembly has affirmed, "a clear and critical priority as a denomination is to renew, equip, and inspire local congregations and missions to fulfil the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19–20) and the Great Commandment (Mark 12:29–31)." (A&P 2014, p. 30) To that end, we would affirm that a key focus of our work on polity needs to be directed toward sessions and presbyteries in their leadership in renewing, equipping and inspiring local congregations and missions. In what ways does the polity of The Presbyterian Church reflect our ecclesiology (i.e. our doctrine of the church)? In what ways does our polity fail to reflect our ecclesiology?

The plurality of elders in the local session, and the spiritual and numerical equality of ministers and elders in the higher courts of the church within our Reformed and Presbyterian practice has served well as a barrier and bulwark against clericalism. What it has not done, at least in recent years, is to prevent us from becoming increasingly immersed – some would say submerged – in administrivia. Neal Mathers in a recent online posting said, "Perhaps we need to ask the question: If presbyteries could only do three things to move the mission of the church in their bounds forward what would those three things be? – I can see referrals from GA, examining records, and chasing down statistical reports not being on the list." The volume and length of regulations governing the church has grown in recent years almost in direct proportion as the size of the church has shrunk.

At the risk of provoking presbyters and presbyteries by giving them one more internally-focused task, it might be helpful along the lines of Neal Mathers' question to ask presbyteries and sessions to reflect on aspects of our polity which help to facilitate effective ministry, and to identify, with a view to elimination or minimalization, those which do not.

A review of the role and responsibility of the session

Recent initiatives to re-imagine the church in terms of being the "missional church" call for substantial reflection on the contours of church polity, especially at the local level. Acknowledging the call from the 2014 General Assembly for all agencies and committees of the Assembly to give priority to strengthening local congregations, we would review sections 109–113 of the Book of Forms in which the responsibilities of the session are set out. The headings and groupings and the order of these serve to point out emphases which may well have served the church in a settled, Christian culture, but which perhaps do not serve as well to aid in energizing and equipping a missional church in a post- and non-Christian environment to take the gospel to a largely non-Christian population.

The following observations and questions are offered to teaching and ruling elders, to sessions, to presbyteries and to synods as a stimulus to discussion:

1. What does it mean to be an elder or presbyter?

Is it to be gathered in courts where we are accountable to one another under Jesus Christ? Is it to pray and take counsel together? Is it to be out in the world and the workplace bearing witness, living and sharing with neighbours, colleagues, and strangers the love of God found in Jesus Christ? Is it all of these, and more? How can we recover a sense of mutual accountability to the voice of the Spirit? How can the church – the community of Christ – respond nimbly (i.e. appropriately, quickly and effectively) to what Christ calls us to do today? How might the roles of pastors and ruling elders be different in a missional church?

2. What does it mean to be a session?

How are the description and delineation of duties in sections 109–113 of the Book of Forms helpful? How is it limiting? (“Duties and Powers” are broken down as “Supervision and Oversight”; “Membership and Pastoral Care”; “Worship”; “Christian Education”; “Stewardship and Mission”.) Would “Responsibilities” be a better introductory tag than “Duties and Powers”?

Is the first task of the session “Supervision and Oversight”? Might we conceive of the session first as a community of mutually-accountable elders who are called as disciples of Jesus Christ to bear one another’s burdens and to spur one another on to love and good deeds?

Is the linking of “Stewardship and Mission” really appropriate? Asserting as does section 113.2 that “The session is responsible for seeing that the congregation develops and maintains programs of mission and outreach...” reduces mission to a program. In his essay on “Missional Renewal”, Todd Hobart quotes from Darrell L. Guder et al in *Missional Church: A vision for the sending of the church in North America*, “It has taken us decades to realize that mission is not just a program of the church.” Rather, the church is defined as “God’s sent people”. The quotation goes on to say, “Either we are defined by mission, or we reduce the scope of the gospel and the mandate of the church. Thus our challenge today is to move from church with mission to missional church.” (Craig Van Gelder, ed. *The Missional Church and Denominations*, p. 246)

Would a greater emphasis on “discipleship” be helpful amid or ahead of the section on “Christian Education”?

Congregational renewal in worship has engaged many more than the minister or pastor alone in the conduct of worship. In some congregations, multiple staff and in many congregations teams of volunteers work together in crafting and leading worship, especially with respect to praise, employing a variety of voices and instruments. Readers other than the minister share in the reading of scripture. Although we affirm that the minister is responsible for the conduct and content of public worship, most sessions either directly or through delegation to a worship co-ordination team undertake with respect to worship many other responsibilities than simply “regulating the hours and forms of public worship”.

What might be said about the use of church facilities as a witness to the community and as a means to bridge barriers and build bridges to the local neighbourhood? Nothing concerning online audio and video communication or the use of social media has found its way into any part of our stated polity.

A review of the roles and responsibilities of presbyteries and synods

We would put forward to sessions, presbyteries and synods some questions for study and reflection on first principles:

3. What does it mean to be a presbytery?

In acknowledging the declaration of the 2014 General Assembly “that a clear and critical priority as a denomination is to renew, equip and inspire local congregations and missions to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment” (A&P, 2014, p. 31), we would seek to challenge presbyteries to answer this question from the viewpoint of the congregation.

In the chapter of the Book of Forms pertaining to the role and work of the presbytery, only three relatively short sections (sections 198–200) are “in relation to congregations”, while 52 sections, and many long ones (sections 201–252) are “in relation to the ministry”.

Beyond appointing interim moderators, processing calls, and approving building and borrowing plans, how are presbyteries serving in aiding, equipping and supporting congregations?

There is also a need to renew an emphasis on the planting of new congregations, at the initiative of the presbytery. The underlying assumptions in sections 200.1 through 200.4 appear to be that in most cases congregations will be organized on the basis of a petition from a group of individuals eager to be a congregation. The stated alternative is that the presbytery may “of its own motion” form a congregation, but it first “must give notice to the session of any congregation that may be affected...” All of this is fine, but how can we communicate a vision that challenges and encourages presbyteries to be planting churches as a vital part of its work and witness?

The current framework appears focused on the erection of places of worship and their “character”. Section 200.1 says: “Congregations may be organized and places of worship erected only with the sanction of the presbytery, which should be satisfied that such places of worship are of a suitable character.” A preoccupation with buildings is part of the bane of our existence. The early church met together in homes. The persecuted and missional church in every age has met in fields and camps. The extent of our preoccupation with buildings contributes to time, energy, talents and resources being directed and expended more inwardly than outwardly.

Recognising that large geography is a fact and factor of life in Canada, are some presbyteries too small in terms of numbers to be effective? Should some presbyteries be combined? Should there be provision for some roaming presbyters to support the work of presbyteries, as the former superintendents of mission did in the synods, in times when The Presbyterian Church in Canada was planting or strengthening more missions and congregations?

4. What does it mean to be a synod?

Part of the impetus for current discussion and decisions around “optional elimination of synods” arises from observations that synods do not have as much “work” or “money” to manage as formerly. Yet our first principles remind us that synods are “for weighty matters, to be intreated by mutual consent and assistance”. (Book of Forms section 274, quoting the Second Book of Discipline, VII, sec. 19)

Presbyteries can go astray, and fail congregations. Small presbyteries, scattered by distance, stretched to the limit through vacancies, or troubled by inter-personal conflicts, may be unable to function in ways that ensure appropriate and necessary oversight of congregations and support for effective missional ministry to the communities in which they are situated, and necessary and appropriate collegial oversight of presbyters. In such cases, it is the role of the synod to intervene to provide what is needed and to ensure mutual accountability.

In addition, synods as corporate entities provide for oversight and organisation for multi-presbytery initiatives and programs, including camps, conferences and retreats which may foster leadership training.

If one or more synods were eliminated, how would the oversight of presbyteries and the coordination of multi-presbytery functions and programmatic initiatives be exercised? How might the polity and ecclesiology of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be more effectively reflected in the processes of committees and boards of the General Assembly?

Concluding Reflections

What is the scriptural context for the way we have done things? How have our procedures expressed the values we confess? And if in our current society those procedures obscure our confession, how can we change those procedures to more accurately reflect the values we learn from Christ’s word? How can we be both reformed and reforming according to God’s word in a rapidly changing context?

In what ways do our existing rules and patterns of doing things set The Presbyterian Church in Canada free to be creatively missional? How do current rules and behavioural patterns get in the way of creativity and mission? He said to me, “‘Mortal, can these bones live?’ I answered, ‘O Lord God, you know.’” (Ezekiel 37:3, NRSV)

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the document “Presbyterian Polity: Its Distinctives and Directions for the 21st Century” be commended to the courts and, in particular, to the clerks of those courts for study and response to the Committee on Church Doctrine through the Assembly Office by August 31, 2017.

LIVING IN GOD’S MISSION TODAY (A&P 2015, p. 255-68, 33)

In our report to the 2015 General Assembly we presented a document ‘Living in God’s Mission Today’ which outlined priorities and understandings for believing and being God’s people in our time and situation. That General Assembly commended this document to the church for its ‘up-building and understanding’. We also invited the church to study the document and forward comments to the Committee on Church Doctrine by May 31, 2016.

At the time of preparing this report only a few comments had been received. We will review all the comments and make a report of our findings to the 2017 General Assembly. This document can be found in the A&P 2015, p. 254–268 or on the website, presbyterian.ca/gao/committee-on-church-doctrine under ‘Related Resources’.

500TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROTESTANT REFORMATION

Since the last Assembly, the Committee on Church Doctrine, through its sub-committee, has continued to discuss with other agencies ways in which we can celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in 2017. Several have or are engaged in various initiatives. The Committee on History has been holding annual events across the country focussing on the five solas of the Reformation to culminate in a final event at Knox College in Toronto. Knox College intends to sponsor or co-sponsor a number of events through 2017, both for scholarly and for wider audiences, including lectures, colloquia and an exhibit at the Fisher Rare Book Library. VST/St. Andrew's Hall also has plans for lectures and workshops. The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee is working with representatives of the Christian Reformed Church on a joint liturgy for the anniversary.

In co-operation with the *Presbyterian Record*, the committee is planning to offer a series of four articles in the fall of 2017 focussing on the theological legacy of the Reformation. These articles intend both to review how we have been shaped by the major affirmations and actions of the Reformation and to ponder how this legacy can assist us in imagining our church moving forward.

In addition we are investigating the establishment of an on-line list of resources for those who are seeking information about or ways of participating in or initiating activities related to the 500th anniversary.

There are many exciting opportunities to pursue in the next eighteen months and we intend to continue to work in partnership with the various agencies and committees of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in exploring, designing, producing and promoting all parts of the celebration available to us.

ASSEMBLY COUNCIL ADDITIONAL MOTION, 2014 (A&P 2014, p. 30–31)

Item 4 of this additional motion 'directed' all 'national committees' to include an evaluation re the priority of congregations in The Presbyterian Church in Canada in their report to 'future General Assemblies'. The Committee on Church Doctrine would report diligence. As noted above, we devoted many hours of members' time to the preparation of a study guide to assist congregations in their consideration of the various issues raised in the overtures on human sexuality and sexual orientation and related matters of polity and belief.

Our ongoing study of polity has always been undertaken with a goal of congregational vitality as an important factor. We believe the document presented in this report offers the opportunity for congregations and sessions to examine their processes with a view to enhancing their life and mission. One intent of the initiatives being planned for the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation is to enable individual members and congregations both to celebrate and to experience the power of the Spirit evident in our history.

Our continued work on the matter of Biblical Hermeneutics (understanding and interpreting the Bible) is intended to assist each member of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to comprehend better the how, as well as the what, of discerning the divine message of the scriptures. We are convinced that such 'gains' are essential for vital congregations in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

As we continued our deeper considerations of the overtures noted above, we have been aware of the deep concerns and anxieties that are present in many of our congregations. Thus, as we ponder and prepare our response as a committee, we are hoping to offer our church a way forward that will add to, not take away from, congregational health and vitality. The initial section of a paper, 'The Way of God's Reign' offered later in our report (p. 6.1.11–14), presents some characteristics of kingdom life that we believe is a step in achieving this goal.

Our prime task is to undertake with thorough and diligent care the work entrusted to us on an annual basis by the General Assembly. As we do so, we seek to be both cognizant of the direction given by this motion and faithful in fulfilling its directives.

***BODY, MIND AND SOUL* – STUDY GUIDE ON HUMAN SEXUALITY**

As noted earlier the 2015 General Assembly tasked the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) jointly to prepare a study guide "on the topics of human sexuality, sexual orientation and other related matters raised in the overtures to be posted on the church's website by the end of October, 2015." (A&P 2014, p. 46)

In June 2015, discussions began between the convener of this committee and the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency seeking to set a process for pursuing this goal. Engaging a contract writer and establishing guiding terms of reference for an 'editorial team' to produce the guide were suggested by the General Secretary. It was agreed to go that route.

Our committee convener made an initial proposal of terms of reference for the guide and the team. They were as follows:

1. To outline and provide both areas for the study guide to address and the general content/approach for the guide to express.
2. The broad areas will be:
 - a. A covering 'page'* along the lines of respectful listening used at the Vancouver Assembly acknowledging that within the church there are varying degrees of prior reflection that exist. It also notes materials on the PCC website, especially the 1994, 2000 and 2003 documents.
 - b. Other 'pages' [or modules] that assist engagement around passages of scriptures either cited in documents and/or overtures or considered relevant by the Design Team on the topics of
 - Sexuality and Marriage
 - Homosexuality [*could be more such topics, but for brevity's sake*]
 - c. A 'page' of scientific perspectives [perhaps referencing material in church documents and/or overtures]
 - d. ...
3. To recruit and engage a writer to prepare the guide.
4. To review the prepared guide and offer any editing deemed helpful.
5. To present the 'edited' document to the Life and Mission Agency and the Committee on Church Doctrine for their approval.

* page is intended to suggest each module should as brief as possible not necessarily that it is limited to one page.

After several exchanges and recognizing the tight timeline, the terms of reference as posted on the Sexuality page on the church's website were accepted, with the verbal caveat that the whole Committee on Church Doctrine would need to approve any document presented as a result of their work to fulfil the task given to them by the General Assembly.

August and September were busy months for the design team and the writer. A very extensive proposed guide was presented to the early October meeting of the committee. It was not endorsed and many suggested revisions were made and forwarded to the team and writer. Changes were made and timeline challenges considered. At the end of October, the Committee on Church Doctrine met via internet and agreed to accept a revised guide for posting. We also agreed to prepare a letter to share with The Presbyterian Church in Canada some of the challenges that had emerged in the consideration of the study guide.

We are pleased, that together with our partners in the Life and Mission Agency, we were able to fulfil our task and present to the church a guide that can assist us, as we engage the many varied perspectives and topics raised by the overtures that precipitated the preparation of the Study Guide, *Body, Mind and Soul*. Stephen Allen was a helpful administrator throughout the summer and fall, and he ably assisted in the production and preparations required.

OVERTURE NOS. 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 26 and 31, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 576–81, 582–87, 601–02, 605–06, 248–49, 16–17)
Re: Affirming the Statement on Human Sexuality (1994)

OVERTURE NOS. 14, 18, 19 and 21, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 588–90, 591–95, 595–97, 248–49, 16–17)
Re: Study paper on Human Sexuality affirming the Statement on Human Sexuality (1994)

OVERTURE NOS. 5, 24, 30 and 35, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 575–76, 598–99, 603–05, 609–10)
Re: Full inclusion regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity

OVERTURE NOS. 15, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 590, 268–73, 47)
Re: Calling the church to listen regarding human sexuality

OVERTURE NOS. 16, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 590–91, 268–73, 47)
Re: Encouraging dialogue on marriage and sexuality

OVERTURE NO. 23, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 598, 248, 16)
Re: Gay and lesbian candidates for ministry and same-sex marriages

OVERTURE NO. 29, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 603, 248, 17)

Re: Review biblical texts that speak to homosexual relationships

OVERTURE NO. 32, 2015 (A&P 2015, p.17, 606)

Re: Upholding marriage as between one man and one woman

OVERTURE NO. 33, 2015 (A&P 2015, p.17, 607–08)

Re: Issues of Human Sexuality

Immediately following the 2015 General Assembly, members of the Committee on Church Doctrine began to consider the diverse prayers and affirmations made in these 22 overtures. [A related Overture No. 4, 2015 was not referred to our Committee]. Our initial investigations focussed on seeking and considering some of the relevant scientific information available, looking at the biblical material cited in the overtures and other passages deemed important, theological themes and a concise bibliography.

When we met in October to share our initial findings some broad directions for our ongoing work emerged. As we examined the various biblical texts, reviewed different and often antithetical interpretations, recalled previous work pursued on these matters, the range of perspectives among us and some of the themes that had arisen, we agreed to develop a ‘Kingdom’ framework or perspective to root and guide our ongoing work. Some early parts of this document are shared below.

We also agreed to continue to ponder and reflect on the biblical texts noted above and other passages that would ‘naturally’ reflect a Kingdom perspective as we endeavour to assist our denomination ‘to seek first God’s Kingdom and God’s righteousness’. In addition we are carefully examining the various assertions in the overtures and their prayers to be able to respond directly to the requests based on the validity of the reasoning.

In our ongoing reflections, investigations and discussion we have been able to make interim decisions to present as recommendations. We also have become very aware that while some overtures are seeking quick action, the scope of the material to be considered, the reports of many who are still in the process of reflection, the large number of requests for additional time to do careful consideration and the importance of the decisions for The Presbyterian Church in Canada indicates that we be permitted to continue these initiatives and make further reports of our findings to the 2017 General Assembly.

As noted above we are developing material on a Kingdom perspective as a basis and guide for our work on these 22 overtures. Some of the foundational work has been completed and we offer this beginning piece to the church for consideration, encouragement and as a way to continue discussion and reflection embracing both grace and truth. Even though this initial part is a work in progress, it does provide some of the foundation for the recommendations which follow. It is entitled ‘The Way of God’s Reign’.

THE WAY OF GOD’S REIGN

Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace

There is no simple solution that slices the Gordian knot in which we have tied ourselves regarding sexuality and marriage, gender and faithfulness, discipleship and mission within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Indeed, the issues are so complex and fraught that we find that most of our discussion concerns only a piece of all that needs to be discussed – and that piece is the question of whether The Presbyterian Church in Canada should affirm same-sex relationships.¹ It is unlikely that a clear way through the tangle of our differences will appear with more conversation about how we interpret scripture. While The Presbyterian Church in Canada has not officially argued about same-sex relationships for a number of decades, we would be ignorant not to acknowledge that many Christians, both within and outside of our denomination, have been making nuanced and subtle exegetical and theological arguments on the matter. Still, no agreement on the path forward has become manifest. Any new path will likely not come about with more conversation regarding our understandings of theological anthropology, Christology, or justice. While we are Reformed and there is profound agreement about the core of our faith and our subordinate standards, there is also a breadth within the tradition in terms of opinion and practice. At the same time, it is also not likely that a constructive way ahead will come about merely with more scientific research: science can add to our understanding of God and one another, but does not necessarily determine it.

We argue that a way forward can only emerge if we start in a different place than we have in the past. Turning away from our favoured arguments to such a different place will take courage because we all have a stake in the prayers of the overtures around same-sex relationships. Given that we do not have agreement on many issues, the question

becomes how can we have unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Our answer is, “within the Kingdom of God”. As we have examined the theological lens of “the Kingdom of God” we have become convinced that it offers a better option because it so profoundly points to the unity within diversity of the church and where we are called to go as disciples. The conversation we should be having first is about the nature of the church and then about human sexuality.

Our argument proceeds in three parts. First, we trace how the coming Reign of God is conveyed in the larger themes of scripture. Second, we point to an ethic for us as servants within the Kingdom that finds its centre at the Lord’s Table. This ethic includes a posture of humility before each other and God as we work together towards a common Kingdom – diverse but unified. Third, we explore how faithful unity in diversity might begin to be lived out within The Presbyterian Church in Canada in the light of the characteristics of God’s reign.

Contours of the Kingdom of God

As we speak about the reality of God’s coming gracious rule, we will use the terms “Kingdom of God” and “Reign of God” interchangeably. This use of language highlights some of the paradoxical truths about the great hope that God offers to the world, as Christians proclaim it. We declare that the hope God offers has appeared with the coming of Jesus Christ, with his life, death and resurrection; but we also proclaim that the completion of that hope has not yet happened, as the universe does not yet exhibit the peace and holiness which God intends. Alongside this, we declare that God has sovereignty over all that is, was and will be, now and forever, beyond the beginning and the end of time. We trust in these things, but have only a limited understanding of them. Thus, the term “Kingdom” implies a static political boundary that has a punctiliar nature – that is, it happens at a particular point in time – and so can refer to the hope inaugurated by Jesus as well as the final fulfilment of that hope. The term “Reign” implies a dynamic political action that has an ongoing nature, and underlines the constant work of God in the world. The Kingdom of God is all of this: present and effective today, a time we long for, and the ongoing action of God’s ruling providence that stretches backward and forward in time. Faithful followers of Christ have always witnessed to the tensions between these while still affirming all three, and the situation is no different for us today.

As we trace the Reign of God theme in scripture we recognize the Kingdom as:

A Metaphor Appropriate to Describe God’s Intentions for Creation. The Bible regularly resorts to parable, a way of telling something slant, and poetic imagery to stake the contours of the Kingdom. For example, in Isaiah’s prophetic vision of redemption, people “are inscribed on the palms of God’s hands” while ruins are rebuilt (Isaiah 49:16–17); in Matthew’s account the Kingdom is said to be like a mustard seed which grows into an impossible tree (Matthew 13:31–32).² Following scripture, our speech about the Reign of God must be humble. To speak of the thing itself as if we know it entirely is to fall into idolatry. Humility does not imply apophaticism or appeals to the “ineffable mystery” of God. Rather, it is to suggest that God in God’s action in the world disturbs our normal discursive ways of encountering God so that we must rely on God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ for our knowledge.

Centred on Jesus Christ, Servant King. Scripture proclaims the Reign as coming near in the presence of Jesus (Matthew 4:17). While King, Jesus reigns like no other. Christ reverses worldly conceptions of power by means of a righteous grace, a holy love and, ultimately, a powerful self-giving on the cross. With Christ’s ascension to the right hand of God the Father, the Kingdom of God continues until that final day when every knee shall bow in submission and worship before the throne. The Reformed tradition recognizes this as an integral part of the offices of Christ by naming him King. The Reign of God is therefore personal (found in relationship to a person not a concept) and when we encounter Jesus Christ, we encounter God.

Upheld by Jesus Christ, Lord of Time. Because Jesus Christ was and is and ever shall be, the Kingdom of God is found within the witness of all scripture, within our everyday lived experience, and within time as yet to come. Christ’s presence is made known through God’s Holy Spirit, even as all creation exists through that providential accompanying, sustaining, and creating Spirit. To privilege either protology or eschatology (theology of creation and of end-times, respectively), or to dwell on matters of chronology is to deny the reality of the Reign of God.

Proclaimed by the Son of Mary, Son of God. God sent Jesus as a human man, a Jew, a student and interpreter of the law, teaching and ministering in a particular time and place. Christians are bound to follow this Jew, this Galilean of a different faith than our own. The Kingdom is not Docetic, a purely ‘spiritual’ reality. Thus, the Kingdom of God revealed in Jesus of Nazareth looks to the redemption of all

our ordinary moments, the transfiguration of us as creatures in all our particularities and differences, and not in the abolition of those particularities and differences.

The Law Fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ did not come to abolish the law but to fulfil it in his person. Like all kingdoms, God's Reign has a law but a different one from the normal human legal systems. Following Deuteronomy and Leviticus, Jesus Christ sided with those interpreters who defined the heart and essence of the law as the love of God and neighbour (Matthew 22:37–40). Consistently and thoroughly, Jesus challenged and reinterpreted any understandings of God's covenant with humanity which strayed from justice, love and holiness. The Law of the Kingdom is Jesus Christ. For instance, Jesus reminds listeners that Sabbath is a time of mercy (Matthew 12:7) rather than a time for prideful neglect of the needs of others. In the Reign of God, the law will be/is written upon human hearts rather than carved in stone (Jeremiah 31:31–34).

A Prophetic Call to Faithfulness. Jesus as Prophet calls all of humanity to lives that are consonant with his reign as Servant King. Earlier prophets, such as Isaiah, called God's people to covenantal faithfulness all the while pointing to an eschatological vision of God's Kingdom that encompasses all of creation (Isaiah 62:6–12; 65:17–25). When Jesus uses Isaiah to declare the Reign coming, he declares that the Kingdom is at work right now as the world becomes a place of abundance, freedom, healing and justice for the poor, the captives, the blind and the oppressed (Luke 4:16–22).

Inviting and Requiring Obedience. Through Jesus Christ, who is the fulfilment of God's covenantal faithfulness with and for humanity, God reveals how we should act as citizens of the Reign of God. Our duty is not onerous or based on a set of laws or principles. Rather, we submit to Jesus Christ through the way of the cross. This obedience will result in a unity of action and belief. God's reign is lived out by seeking mercy and justice through humility before God (Micah 6:8; Matthew 6:33). Christians are those who call on Jesus as Lord and seek to do God's will as God's Kingdom comes.

Creating a Community. No king reigns without citizens. We should not conflate “church” and “Kingdom”, for some once considered unclean or excluded find a place in the eschatological vision of the reign of God (e.g. eunuchs, foreigners, the blind, the lame; see Isaiah 56:1–8, Matthew 11:5, 20:1–16 for examples) and in the end God chooses who stands within God's Reign. One of the hallmarks of a Kingdom community is a concern for those who are “lost” (Luke 15:3–10). The Kingdom belongs to those such as children, although some, such as the rich, may find obedience too high a price to pay (Mark 10:13–16, 23).

Restoring Creation through Reconciliation. The power of sin that leads to death has been abolished by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus is called King and he demonstrates his lordship over all by conquering death. In the empty tomb found in a garden, God reveals God's saving action to restore the natural world and heal fractured relationships (Isaiah 11:6–9; Matthew 13:31–32), leading creation to the full reconciliation of all things (Colossians 1:20).

A Concrete Reality. Contrary to popular conceptions of “heaven”, the Kingdom is not ephemeral or some sort of parallel universe. Rather, both in the here-and-now and in the time-to-come, the Kingdom is tangibly manifest. Jesus Christ was both fully human and fully divine, and as the fulfilment of the Kingdom, demonstrates that both flesh and spirit are constitutive parts of being a creature. The Reign of God includes a new temple (Priest), new Jerusalem (King), and a new earth (Prophet) (Ezekial 40:1–47; Revelation 21:1–4).

A Feast whose Promise is Embodied in the Lord's Supper. On the night of his arrest, condemned in part by the political charge of treason, Jesus gave a banquet for his disciples. Contrary to images of grandeur and opulence, Jesus gathered his friends (including those who betrayed, abandoned and denied him) around a table to inaugurate a new community. As often as we, faithful servants and sinners, eat the bread and drink the wine we do so with Christ the King presiding. Each communion is a proleptic revelation, an anticipation of the final feast hosted by God (Isaiah 25:6–10a; Luke 14:15–24).

Endnotes

¹ Similarly, the majority of this paper addresses same-sex relationships within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We suggest that the Kingdom/Reign of God lens that we use may also help to address questions of lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender, intersex and queer identities and belonging but have only hinted at that further conversation

here. That said, we acknowledge that the challenges facing LGBTQ would be in no way ended by an ecclesiastical agreement over same-sex relationships. We admit, neither for the first nor the last time, that much more work needs to be done.

². See also Isaiah 60:1–61:11; Jeremiah 31:10–14; Ezekial 34:11–31; Micah 4:1–4; Matthew 14:44–53; 25:31–46; Luke 1:46–55, 68–79; 13:20–21; Revelation 22:2, among many others.

The 2015 General Assembly also instructed our committee to confer with the Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries) throughout the coming year as each continues the work of responding to the overtures referred to them. (The joint preparation of the study guide was a separate initiative mandated by last year's Assembly.) We have attempted to do so by sharing draft reports and also relevant material approved by our committee for reporting to the 2016 General Assembly. These documents were normally sent to Stephen Allen, Associate Secretary, Justice Ministries. One of our sub-committee's conveners also spoke with him during the preparation of their draft report. Throughout the course of the year some responses sent to the Committee on Church Doctrine were also shared with Stephen Allen and vice-versa. Most responses from our church, however, were distributed directly to both groups. As well a number of conversations and emails between the convener and Life and Mission Agency staff have taken place.

Unfortunately, the decision of the 2015 General Assembly to make available the notes of the conversations during the facilitated process to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries) to assist our committees as we prepared our responses for this year's Assembly wasn't completed. We did have the prayers accessible and many of them were incorporated into the study guide.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That The Presbyterian Church in Canada seek the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace in light of the Reign of God, in a response to the overtures named above and, in particular, the prayer of Overture No. 16, 2015 re encouraging dialogue on marriage and sexuality.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That all courts of the church be urged to deal with people in same-sex relationships with tender pastoral care.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency continue to reflect on the nature of Christian marriage in relation to LGBTQ and intersex people and report back to the 2017 General Assembly.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Life and Mission Agency in consultation with the Committee on Church Doctrine continue to reflect theologically on the spiritual needs of transgender and intersex people, and report back to the 2017 General Assembly.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly receive the above report as an interim response to the prayers of Overture Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 35, 2015; and grant permission to report on the various matters raised in these overtures to a future General Assembly.

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE (A&P 2015, p. 273–74)

As reported to previous General Assemblies, the Committee on Church Doctrine has been developing a paper on "Understanding and Interpreting the Scriptures", commonly referred to as biblical hermeneutics. As we noted in our report last year this is a very timely topic for The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

We have a document ready to share with the church and are looking forward to the responses its use will engender. We also believe, even at this stage of its development, it has great value and hope that it will assist all of us as we seek to know more fully the revelation of God's will, character and purpose written in the scriptures.

**UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING THE BIBLE
AN AID FOR THOSE WISHING TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE'S AUTHORITY,
AND FOR THOSE WISHING TO STUDY AND INTERPRET IT**

1. Introduction
2. The relationship of scripture to God's authority

3. What does it mean to say the Bible is “inspired”?
4. Who wrote the Bible?
5. Who decided what books would be in the Bible?
6. Jesus’ perspective
7. Other perspectives within scripture itself
8. Understanding *sola scriptura*
9. The role of tradition in interpreting the Bible
10. The “literal” sense of scripture
11. New interpretations and changing understandings
12. The role of worship
13. An awareness of our own contexts
14. One perspective on why scripture is authoritative
15. Images and metaphors for what the Bible is and does
16. Aids for interpreting the Bible
 16. A The Holy Spirit
 16. B Heinrich Bullinger
 16. C The United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
 16. D Living Faith and the Westminster Confession
17. A Note on The “Wesleyan Quadrilateral”
18. Conclusion

1. Introduction

The Bible is centrally important to Christians because “the written word bears witness” to the living Word, Jesus Christ¹. In the Presbyterian tradition, the Bible’s vitality to the life of faith is evident in various places including, but not limited to, the Bible itself, our subordinate standards, ordination vows, and the devotional lives of those who seek to follow Jesus. The Bible is our “canon”, meaning “that which regulates, rules, or serves as a norm or pattern for other things.”²

Eugene Peterson writes: “Language is spoken into us; we learn language only as we are spoken to. We are plunged at birth into a sea of language.... Then slowly syllable by syllable we acquire the capacity to answer: mama, papa, bottle, blanket, yes, no. Not one of these words was a first word.... All speech is answering speech. We were all spoken to before we spoke.”³ In a similar way, just as a child’s talking is directly impacted by the language used by his or her parents, the life and actions of God’s children are directly impacted by the word of God heard in scripture.

However, for all the importance that the Bible holds for Christians, the scriptures are not always easy to interpret. Along with a great diversity in style and approaches within the Bible itself, a large distance in time and place exists between us and the people who wrote the Bible. The culture, the geography and even the spiritual practices portrayed in the text remain in many ways foreign to our twenty-first century Canadian lives. That said, it is written that “the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and your heart for you to observe” (Deuteronomy 30:14). Christians approach the Bible in the faith that the Holy Spirit will shed light on what seems dark to us.

The intent of this document is to provide some background information and help for those wishing to understand the nature of the Bible’s authority for Christians, and for those wishing to interpret the Bible, especially given its centrality to the Christian life for Presbyterians. In the Reformed tradition there has been no definitive rule for how to interpret scripture; however, various principles have been proposed which aid in this process. Such principles are meant to help guide us as we seek to discern God’s will in scripture with the help of the Holy Spirit. This document seeks to draw attention to some of these principles and to tools for using them.

We begin by looking at what is meant by Biblical authority and inspiration, followed by some notes on the writing and assembly of the Bible as we know it. We then give some examples of models for understanding what the Bible means for us as Christians, and tips on how these may be helpful for studying and interpreting scripture.

We also offer a word about vocabulary. Various terms are used to describe what are commonly called the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament is also sometimes called the “Hebrew Scriptures”, “First Covenant”, or “First Testament”. The New Testament is also sometimes called the “Greek Scriptures”, “Second Covenant”, or “Second Testament”. In this report we will use the terms most common among Presbyterians in Canada today – The Old and New Testaments. As we do so we honour the fact that the books of the Old Testament are sacred scripture for our Jewish brothers and sisters.

2. The relationship of scripture to God's authority

When making statements about various topics, many people quote or appeal to the Bible. When people say “The Bible says...” or “God’s word says...” they are often appealing to God (through the Bible) as an authoritative voice who lends strength to a point of view. Yet we also know that two people quoting from the Bible may also be claiming very different things. So when we try to evaluate different claims, it’s important to understand the nature of any claim to authority, especially since, for people of faith, there is no higher authority than God.

What is God’s “authority”? In short, it is God’s almighty and creative rule. It is when and how God makes God’s will be done. This power belongs to God to exercise; that is, God is free to act as God desires. The Swiss theologian Karl Barth sheds some light on the nature of God’s authority by comparing Jesus to ancient ideas of what a judge is: “In the biblical world of thought, the judge is not primarily the one who rewards some and punishes others; he is the man [sic] who creates order and restores what has been destroyed.”⁴ God’s authority is the power to give and renew the life of the universe.

Let us continue to go deeper. According to Anglican Bible scholar Tom Wright, God’s authority “is the sovereign rule of God sweeping through creation to judge and to heal. It is the powerful love of God in Jesus Christ, putting sin to death and launching new creation. It is the fresh, bracing and energizing wind of the Spirit.”⁵ Similarly, Presbyterians declare that God’s authority is revealed in the mystery of the relationship of the Trinity.

So what does “the authority of scripture” mean, and how does that relate to God’s authority? It is helpful when answering this question to consider these things:

1. All true authority is from God.
2. Jesus Christ, fully human, fully divine, reveals the nature of God’s authority. (In Matthew 28:18, Jesus says: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”)
3. As the Bible is the primary way we learn about God’s dealings with creation, the Bible is where, led by the Holy Spirit, we encounter this authority. Thus, as Wright notes, “the authority of scripture” is shorthand for “God’s authority exercised through Scripture.”⁶
4. The authority of scripture thus refers to the Bible’s ability, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to make and nurture a new relationship between readers, God, others, and the world.⁷

Still, as the sixteenth-century Reformer John Calvin wrote “the Word will not find acceptance in [human] hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit.”⁸ To look more closely at the connection between God’s authority and scripture, we turn now to the idea of “inspiration”.

3. What does it mean to say the Bible is “inspired”?

Out of many ways to understand this term, a helpful place to start is here: to say the Bible is “inspired,” according to Wright, can mean that the Holy Spirit “guided the very different writers and editors, so that the books they produced were the books God intended his people to have.”⁹ At the same time, the words of scripture are also expressions of the faith of men and women who came to profound understandings of God in their daily life, in the midst of both joy and suffering. As we believe that God’s Spirit is at work in prodding human faith, so there is also inspiration in people trying to understand their experience of God’s presence and action in the world. Inspiration at the level of the production of what Christians know as the Bible stretched from ancient Israelite times to a few hundred years after Christ.

As it says in the Westminster Confession, the books of the Bible “are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life” (1.2). Because of this, and because God inspired the writers to produce the books God wanted God’s people to have, “God...still speaks to us through the Holy Scriptures”.¹⁰

But inspiration does not only refer to the Bible itself and its creation; inspiration needs also to be involved in the relationship between the written words and the reader. As the Westminster Confession states, “we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word” (1.6). That is, without the Holy Spirit working within us, the Bible would be merely interesting ancient literature and history, beautiful even, but not sacred; the Spirit is required for the words of scripture to speak to us and light the path to the way of God for us.¹¹

4. Who wrote the Bible?

The Bible is not a book in the modern sense of the word where we think of a single human author. The Bible is a library – a collection of ancient writings by dozens and dozens of authors spanning over a thousand years.

Many different people wrote and edited the Bible. Sometimes it is hard to know who wrote certain books – for example, the letter to the Hebrews. Ancient convention did not always demand that authors identify themselves. Sometimes the books are connected to particular people – for instance, through the titles which have become attached to them over the years – but ancient ideas of authorship may not have been quite the same as ours. So we have writings like the letter to the Romans, which clearly was from the apostle Paul, but at the same time we have letters like the one to the Colossians which says that it was written by Paul, but whose authorship is disputed by some scholars. Even if the identity of the author is not certain, early Christian communities concluded they were the word of God. We believe that the Holy Spirit continues to connect Christians to what God is saying through these texts in order to form faith and life.

This means, of course, that not everyone agrees about who wrote different biblical books. There is also much ongoing discussion about the effect of the process of writings being passed down through time, and what roles the editors who put the text together – who are also considered as being inspired by the Holy Spirit in their work – had in the shaping of scripture. In all of it, it is important to remember that communities of faith agreed upon the writings that would be authoritative for their lives.

John Calvin placed a high emphasis on the Bible. He knew that human writers and editors are not perfect, but felt that, ultimately, God was the author of scripture, though the revelation of this depends on the Holy Spirit acting inwardly upon the readers. In a sense, people write and read sacred texts, but God moves hearts.¹²

5. Who decided what books would be in the Bible?

Various people wrote, edited and collected the texts of what we call the Bible over a span of more than a thousand years. Some suggest that the community was collectively using many early writings by the time of King David (about the year 1000 BCE). As the community developed, and as time went on, other writings were added including psalms and various prophetic works. A significant time for this collection occurred while the Israelites were in exile in the Babylonian Empire in the 6th century BCE. While we are used to Bibles which have a fixed order, this was not always the case. Even at the time of Jesus the order of the books of the Hebrew Scriptures (the only writings he would have known as sacred), including the Greek translation known as the Septuagint, had not been fully fixed. Changes continued to happen in both Judaism and Christianity, so that the collection used by much of modern Judaism, called the Tanakh, has a very different order than any Christian Old Testament. Protestant Bibles also differ from Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox ones because the reformers of the 16th century sought to clarify which books should be used when making decisions about doctrine. Books which were mostly Greek Jewish texts, commonly called the Apocrypha, were excluded – they were considered helpful for instruction, but not sacred.

Very early in the Christian movement, Jesus' words were considered authoritative (see 1 Corinthians 7:10, 9:14) and at least once quoted as scripture (see 1 Timothy 5:18b). This was also happening for the writings of the apostles (see 2 Peter 3:16).

In the debates about which books to include in the New Testament, it was “widely conceded” argues American Religious Studies professor Bart Ehrman, that for a book to be accepted as scripture it needed to meet four criteria. It needed to be: (a) ancient (near to the time of Jesus), (b) apostolic (written by an apostle or companion of an apostle), (c) catholic (meaning it needed to have wide-spread acceptance among churches), and (d) orthodox (the views presented needed to be right teaching).¹³

The New Testament came into being after a long process of discussion and debate. The first time we encounter an exact listing of the 27 books that would be included is in a letter written in 367 CE by an influential bishop named Athanasius. Through it all, both before this listing appears and in the debates that continued afterward, the Holy Spirit guided his people to ensure they had access to the books that told God's unfolding story. The process of Christian texts being included in the Bible took place over a long period of time and involved a wide range of Christians.

6. Jesus' perspective

As Christians, it is also helpful to reflect on Jesus' own usage of scripture. The gospels often depict Jesus' followers as calling him “Rabbi”, that is “Teacher” or “Master”. Although the term did not have the same type of official or

formal meaning as it has taken on in later Judaism,¹⁴ it still indicates the respect and authority which many granted to his teaching. Jesus the Rabbi, our Lord, frequently appealed to scripture as an authority. As a Jewish teacher, Jesus joined in the interpretation of scripture. He was part of a tradition of interpretation going back to the prophets and earlier, and used scripture in his teaching and debates with other religious teachers. Jesus' interpretation of the Law and the prophets can help to shape our own interpretation.

Take, for instance, when Jesus asked about or was asked about the greatest commandment (Matthew 24:34–40; Mark 12:28–34; Luke 10:25–28); movement from the loving God (Deuteronomy 6:5) to loving neighbour (Leviticus 19:18) involves linking texts based on associated ideas (love) in a way that has each interpret the other. This example also shows how he stood in an interpretative community – others before and after him made a similar connection between loving God and loving neighbour.¹⁵ Jesus also built on or expanded scripture based on his interpretation (“You have heard...but I say to you...”). He also joined in what became a common rabbinic method for exploring the interpretation of scripture, conversation and debate. He confronted various religious leaders, including members of rival Jewish groups, the Sadducees and Pharisees (Matthew 22:23–33; 15:1–9). Three of the gospels even show Jesus using this type of argument beyond human debates – when he is tempted by the devil, Jesus counters the devil's use of scripture with his own quotations (Matthew 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–12). Like Jesus, we are called to use all the tools for interpretation at our disposal in the twenty-first century. This includes historical-critical analysis and other methods which have been devised over the centuries.

The New Testament proclaims Jesus to be the living Word to whom the written scripture bears witness, and who thus is the measure of Christian interpretation of scripture. Jesus says that the scriptures testify about him (John 5:39), and “cannot be broken” or “cannot be set aside” (John 10:35). In addition he says that his words “will never pass away” (Mark 13:31). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus also said that he came to “fulfill” the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17).

7. Other perspectives within scripture itself

Several biblical writers highlight that the Bible is not just a storehouse for information, but a means by which we learn about God's will and are equipped to live it out. A psalmist writes of the Lord's Law as “reviving the soul”, “making wise the simple”, “enlightening the eyes”, and “sweeter also than honey” (Psalm 19:7–10). Observing God's commandment brings blessings (Deuteronomy 28:1–14). Scripture teaches how to walk in the way of the Lord. In a passage intended to comfort God's people, assuring them that God will restore them after they have been exiled to a foreign land, the writer of the book of Isaiah declares that God's message and promise is never diminished: “For the word of our God stands forever” (Isaiah 40:8).

In addition to what Jesus said, there is a consistent pattern within the Bible itself stressing not only the centrality but the divine origin of the inspiration of scripture. Perhaps most famously in the New Testament, the apostle Paul, while writing to Timothy, says that “All scripture is God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16). Here, the author was referring to the Old Testament and was encouraging Timothy to be well-schooled as he prepared for ministry.

While encouraging God's people to make every effort to enter God's Sabbath rest – a term equivalent to the Kingdom of God in the letter to the Hebrews – the writer of the letter notes that “the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword” and “able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). This speaks of an ongoing power in the lives of those reading the letter; moreover, it reminds us that the word of God is not always (not often?) safe and easy in the good news that it brings, but causes us to bare the secrets of our hearts before God, and works to transform even our innermost thoughts.

In 2 Peter, we read that “no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (1:20–21). In this letter, followers of Jesus are encouraged through hardship to hold fast to right teaching. One of the emphases is on the fact that prophetic words recorded in the Bible were of divine inspiration: their utterance and authority depend on the work of the Holy Spirit.

8. Understanding *sola scriptura*

There are five great *solas* of the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation. These are short Latin summary statements which highlight key emphases of those who desired to reform the European church. They are *sola fide* (by faith alone), *solus Christus* (through Christ alone), *sola gratia* (by grace alone), *solus Deo gloria* (glory to God alone), and *sola scriptura* (by scripture alone). *Sola scriptura* refers to the Reformers' strong belief that Christianity should, first and foremost, look to the Bible to understand the origins and shape of our faith. According to Tom

Wright, in the great debates of that time, this phrase meant that “nothing *beyond* scripture is to be taught as needing to be believed in order for one to be saved. On the other hand, it gave a basic signpost on the way: the great truths taught in scripture are indeed the way of salvation...”¹⁶

Karl Barth used the term “the scriptural principle”, which is closely linked to the idea of *sola scriptura*: truth is found in scripture, and “every *doctrine* must therefore be measured against an unchangeable and impassable standard discoverable in the scriptures.”¹⁷ Such a principle is at work today in the ordination vows of The Presbyterian Church in Canada when, in the preamble, it states: “The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the written Word of God, testifying to Christ the living Word, are the canon of all doctrine, by which Christ rules our faith and life.” (Book of Forms section 447)

The *sola scriptura* emphasis can also be seen in Living Faith, one of our subordinate standards:

The Bible has been given to us
by the inspiration of God
to be the rule of faith and life.
It is the standard of all doctrine
by which we must test any word that comes to us
from church, world, or inner experience (5.1).

The emphasis here is that we turn to the scriptures, in part, to check, that our thoughts and actions in the present day do not go against what the Bible shows to be the way of God. But *sola scriptura* does not mean that the Bible is the only book Christians should read, or the only source for learning about God. We also have reflections and expressions of women and men down the ages, theology and poetry and prayer, the traditions of the churches, and signs of God working outside the churches too. The Bible is a measuring stick and not a god; we must beware turning a book, however holy, into an idol.

9. The role of tradition in how we understand scripture and its authority

People understand tradition in different ways. Some people think that *sola scriptura* means that tradition has no role to play in the church. This is a fairly new view and doesn't honour the practice and understanding of the early church or the reformers of the sixteenth century. The churches, and the traditions of the churches, offer a community for interpreting the Bible; thus, the traditions of the churches have authority, but only insofar as they stand on the firm foundation of scripture. Of course, different churches, and even different people within the same church, will have different understandings of that foundation, but we work out our interpretations using the gifts which God has given to us, relying on the Holy Spirit to guide us. The gifts include the work of Biblical scholars and theologians, teachers and companions who help us in our reading, and our own reason and imagination. (For an explanation of tradition and the “Wesleyan Quadrilateral” see below, p. 6.1.25.)

Whenever we read and interpret the Bible, we are part of a community of other people who are also reading and trying to understand its meaning. Even if we are reading alone, our reading is shaped by other people: translators and scholars of the text, teachers who have shared ways for finding meaning, and also by the way that society around us thinks about what the Bible is for and about. In the Presbyterian Church, we believe that acknowledging the community nature of reading the Bible is important. Even more, we think that it is essential that we remember that we are not alone in the task of interpretation, but are stronger together.¹⁸ Sometimes we must even help one another unlearn things we thought we knew, in order to find our path as pilgrims.

We rejoice in the gifts of interpretation, thoughtful reflection, and imagination which God has given to many. Christianity has a long tradition of scholarship that includes various viewpoints. Bible scholars and theologians and others continue to wrestle with the meaning of the text as it was written and for addressing the needs of the world today. While the multitude of approaches may be bewildering at times, God has also given us minds with which to think, to evaluate the work, and even to add to it.

10. The “literal” sense of scripture

In popular vernacular, the expression “taking the Bible literally” (or uncritically) has almost become synonymous with fundamentalism; a movement that sprung from a meeting of mostly American churchmen in 1895 in Niagara-on-the-Lake that tried to stress certain “fundamentals” of the faith.¹⁹ Today it is often used to more broadly refer to strict, conservative theological positions on various topics. However, an uncritical “literal” reading of scripture does injustice to the history, layers and interpretation of the text.

For ancient Christians, it was not uncommon to interpret the Bible through various methods at the same time; the four key readings were: the literal, or the plain sense or surface meaning of a text; the allegorical, a reading which interprets the characters, events and images as symbolic meaning; the anagogical, looking for what the text might tell you about the end of all things; and the moral, or interpreting the text in terms of what it means for how you should behave. Influenced by the humanism of the Renaissance, the reformers of the sixteenth century argued that the literal sense represented the one most intended by the first writers, and should be preferred. The reformers who sought the literal sense would have pursued the historical, cultural, and linguistic background and context to better understand a passage, all of which is necessary when trying to find out what the first writers intended. Yet, in interpreting the Bible, Christians seek to discern God's will for today, meaning that uncovering what the first writers intended is always only a first step. Thus, in the twenty-first century, some interpreters have returned to ancient methods, while others find insight using literary and artistic methods.

Occasionally, words like “infallible” or “inerrant” are used to describe scripture. Are they appropriate? The Committee on Church Doctrine has previously provided guidance on this question in their 2010 response to Overture No. 15, 2009:

In recent confessional documents, The Presbyterian Church in Canada does not use the words “inerrant”, “literal inerrancy” or related terms such as “infallible” or “without error in the original autographs” with respect to the nature of the Bible. We recognize that all these terms are subject to considerable range of interpretation in an extensive body of literature.

The words used to describe the Bible, as Holy Scripture of the Church, in *Living Faith and A Catechism for Today* are “necessary”, “sufficient” and “reliable.”²⁰

11. New interpretations and changing understandings

Looking back through church history, we find several examples of Christians changing their interpretation of the Bible and theology in ways that affect Christian understanding of the world. Sometimes change results from new understandings of the text itself and translation. Sometimes people have reinterpreted particular passages on the basis of considering wider visions of the way of God shown elsewhere in the Bible, such as God's justice or the offering of mercy. Sometimes developments in the world we experience prompt us to look at scripture with new eyes. Notable instances of change include altering interpretation on slavery and race, supporting the ordination of women in many Protestant churches, and turning to a new understanding of and relationships with people of other faiths. In Canada, new understandings of scripture have helped churches answer the call to seek reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples.

Sadly, we must confess that the Bible has not always been used to promote the common good for all people. Some passages have been identified as “texts of terror” for advocating anything from the oppression of women to genocide.²¹ Faithful men and women have sought to address difficult Biblical passages in many ways over the years; for some, this has prompted new models for reading the Bible, such as feminist and postcolonial, which have provided churches with new insights.

Not everyone accepts each new interpretation. But there has never been a time when there has only been one interpretation of the Bible. Even in the Bible itself there are tensions: four gospels, several creation stories, differences of opinion from one letter writer to another, and more. New interpretations will always be proposed to address new (and old) issues. As *Living Faith* declares: “Relying on the Holy Spirit, we seek the application of God's word for our time.” (5.4) The church must always look afresh at the Bible and do the difficult, but rewarding work of more fully understanding what the text can teach us today.

12. The role of worship

While seeking to understand scripture and its authority, we are wise to remember the central place of preaching in the life of the church. When God's people gather as a worshipping community, the written word, through the work of the Holy Spirit, is proclaimed and points to the Living Word, Jesus Christ. It is a moment when the world behind the text, meets the lives and current world of the hearers, and seeks to equip God's people to engage in Christ's mission to the world. Jesus himself, when visiting the synagogue in Nazareth, used the moment of public worship to read scripture (Isaiah 61:1, 2) and proclaim its fulfilment in himself: “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:21) Question 67 in *A Catechism For Today* links the reading and study of scripture with worship in a helpful way: “The regular reading and study of scripture, together with the hearing of the word in public worship, are some of the richest joys of Christian commitment.”

When God's people gather to pray, sing, celebrate the sacraments, read scripture and interpret it, they are nourished on the words of eternal life. As we are reminded in Deuteronomy 8:3 – a passage quoted by Jesus when he was being tempted by the devil – “one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.” When God's people gather, they don't do it because a speaker has something unique to say on his or her own, but in hopeful anticipation that God's energizing and probing wisdom will speak a fresh word to them, their communities and world.

13. An awareness of our own contexts

While we work prayerfully and thoughtfully to hear God's word in the Bible, it is also important that we be aware of our own contexts. Every person has a history which includes an upbringing, socio-economic context, linguistic frame-of-reference, perspective, etc. It is very difficult to be fully impartial or “objective” when we read the scriptures. We must be honest about that.

While we work to listen for God's word to us in the present day, we may be tempted to think that our own initial reading of scripture is the only reading. One way to grapple with this temptation is to ask intelligent questions about the passages under consideration, such as:

- What does God seem to be doing in this text?
- Might God be doing something similar in our world?
- Who are the persons or groups in this text?
- How are we dissimilar or similar?²²

Another way to grapple with this temptation to think that our own reading is the only reading is to learn from those who are different from ourselves – especially by listening to the way they interpret the Bible, and by listening to the questions they ask of various passages. For example, Professor Musa Dube from Botswana asks “How can we know and respect the Other?”²³ By learning to ask broader questions and from different perspectives, we may see new aspects of God's word.²⁴

The process of studying a text to draw out a meaning is called exegesis. But the process of reading a meaning into a text, a meaning which may not have originally been present, is called eisegesis. Much like “proof-texting”, the practice of finding an isolated passage and quoting it out of context to support a point-of-view, deliberate eisegesis contaminates biblical study. Every student of the Bible must be careful to examine their motives and ask whether or not they are seeking God's will, or simply their own.

Hopefully the principles listed below will help in the process of interpretation. But it needs to be stressed that the choices we make about which passages to study and which to ignore or gloss over may be choices that reflect our own biases and agendas. As Christians, we should approach scripture with humility, seeking God's will. Sometimes we will find what we expect to find. Other times, we will be surprised, and may need to adapt to a different perspective.

14. One perspective on why scripture is authoritative

In light of what has been said, here are six points that may help us think about how scripture is authoritative.

1. Scripture is the primary way we learn about and encounter God's will.
2. God uses scripture to judge and to heal.
3. Jesus himself appeals to the authority of scripture.
4. If we look within the Bible itself, its authors confirm divine origin.
5. God's people have affirmed its use as authoritative for thousands of years and we stand in solidarity with them as an ongoing community of faith.
6. Biblical authority appears in the way that reading the Bible, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can generate new relationships between the reader, God, other people, and creation, as they look to pattern themselves in the living Word, Jesus Christ.

15. Images and metaphors for what the Bible is and does

Over the years, people have used various models to help understand the Bible as they have sought to interpret scriptures. None of the models are perfect, and they do not always agree; some make more sense in certain situations than in others. Still, each can be helpful in some ways, so we point out a selection here, with strengths and weaknesses.

The Bible as story

In this view, the Bible's various parts come together to tell one overarching story of God's relationship with the world; this story begins with creation, reaches a climax with Jesus, and ends with the vision of a new heaven and a new earth in the book of Revelation. This image helps us to understand the wider movements and themes within scripture better, and to see our place within them. However, looking at the Bible in these terms can obscure the fact that the Bible is not set up like an ordinary story, but is made up of many books, some of which are not stories at all. Moreover, the Bible-as-story model does not always make it clear that any overarching narrative is a theological interpretation, and threatens to fit the Bible to the interpretation.

The Bible as reference library

This model depicts the Bible as a collection of books which you use to look up information that you need when you need it. You can consult more than one book at a time to see how one might help you understand another. This understanding takes the variety of types of writing in the Bible seriously, helping you to read poetry as poetry and history as history, and so on. However, this does not necessarily stop you from spending too much time in one section of the library, while neglecting others.

The Bible as script for sacred living

Another way of thinking about the Bible is that it is like the script of a play or a musical score which readers must bring to life in their actions in the world. Feminist Reformed theologian Letty Russell writes that

The Bible continues to be a liberating word as I hear it together with others and struggle to live out its story. For me the Bible is "scripture," or sacred writing, because it functions as "script," or prompting for my life. Its authority in my life stems from its story of God's invitation to participation in the restoration of wholeness, peace, and justice in the world. Responding to this story has made it my own story, or script, through the power of the Spirit at work in communities of struggle and faith."²⁵

This model focuses on the way that the Bible forms people into disciples. Will Willimon is a bishop in the United Methodist Church. He notes, "The truthfulness of scripture is in the lives it is able to produce."²⁶ One great strength of this understanding of the Bible is that it takes into account the fact that people are embodied creatures; it acknowledges that reading the Bible should change the whole person, and not just the way that a person thinks. Sadly, the witness of the lives of readers of the Bible is not always convincing. It is also not always easy to know how to perform a book like, for example, 1 Chronicles.

The Bible as eyeglasses

Calvin compared the Bible to the eyeglasses we must use to see clearly.²⁷ Using that same metaphor, American theologian Garrett Green writes, "The scriptures are not something we look at, but rather look through, lenses that refocus what we see into an intelligible pattern."²⁸ That is, in this model, the Bible changes the way we see, allowing us a vision of truths about the world that we would not be able to see without God's word, including granting readers a vision of God working in creation. This image helpfully reminds us that the Bible is never the goal of the churches' mission, but rather is used in looking for God at work in the world. Still, this model in itself does not tell us where to look in the world, and there is always a danger that we will bring the Bible to bear on one area of the world while missing God where we are not looking.

The Bible as lamp/map/compass

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" we read in the Psalms (119:105). This image and others like it, such as map or compass, present the Bible as a tool for helping you find your way in the world. To that end, this view focuses on the life of faith as a journey, bringing out the important aspect of discipleship as following Jesus Christ. A strength of this image is that travelling involves the whole self, and seeing the Bible as a guiding light reminds us that the life of faith is not just about intellectual beliefs. A beacon is also light available to more than one person. No one needs to be guided by this light alone. Yet, this model is mainly for the pilgrims; it does not say much about the world and its transformation through the power of the grace of God.

The Bible as measuring tool

The scriptures can be pictured as a ruler, as measuring tape, as a level. As mentioned earlier, the word "canon" is connected to the idea of measuring. This model emphasizes the word of God's role in the judgement of human

actions, as a check on whether people measure up. Perhaps because of this, it seems to be the image most favoured by people drafting subordinate standards and texts for occasions such as ordinations. This model offers a way to set a standard for a church. However, problems can arise when people think of the Bible as exactly like a kilometre or a litre: such units of measurement as these have simple, defined standards, easily consulted, but the Bible's standard is God's own self, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and any measurement of life taken by human beings from the Bible will always be an interpretation open to revision through new insights offered by God.

16. Aids for interpreting the Bible

As Christians who conclude that the Bible is authoritative, we want to do our very best in our attempts to understand what the Bible is revealing to us about the word God is speaking to us today. If we are to honour the Bible's richness, we will admit that no one person can figure it all out by themselves: we need one another, as well as the faithful who have gone before us; we need help interpreting scripture. So here is some help in the often multi-layered process of interpretation. Below are several insights which seek to honour the authority and complexity of scripture as we seek to interpret it.

16.A The Holy Spirit

It should be stressed again that it is only with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, that we can faithfully interpret scripture. As it states in the Westminster Confession, "our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority [of the Word of God], is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts." (1.5). This affirmation is echoed in Living Faith 5.1: "The Holy Spirit gives us inner testimony to the unique authority of the Bible and is the source of its power." On our own, we have no capacity to fully grasp the words we read and seek to live.

16.B Heinrich Bullinger

Bullinger was a 16th century Swiss theologian. He held 5 principles of interpretation that are helpful today.²⁹ Each principle is listed below with some short explanation. Some language has been updated to reflect modern usage:

1. Scripture should be interpreted by scripture, the more obscure passages by the clearer

This means, if one passage is confusing, we look at other passages on similar topics. The hope is that other passage(s) will be able to shed light on the more difficult one.

2. With attention to language, to historical setting, to the author's intention

This means that looking to a word's meaning and context can be important. For example, the word "cool" today means more than just a low temperature. Some biblical words also have more meanings that the original author may have had in mind. Context is very important. For example, if a passage says that "All chocolate is bad," but it was originally written to a group of people who were all allergic to chocolate, then we have to take that into consideration. The author was surely looking out for their health and not pronouncing a universal principle for all-time. This is a light-hearted example, but others exist for more serious issues.

3. In the light of the church's understanding of scripture

We're encouraged to lean on the enduring wisdom of the church and its teachers. It has long and deep wisdom, dating back centuries from which we can benefit. There are many different commentaries available. Bible teachers and ministers should also be a helpful resource to know the historic wisdom of the church. In The Presbyterian Church in Canada, we expect ministers to have been trained in both historic and present-day understandings of the Bible.

4. Any authentic interpretation of scripture will increase love for God and love for humanity

Jesus emphasizes the great commandment as loving God with our whole being and our neighbours as ourselves. Therefore, any interpretation that instead advances hate, greed, etc. is surely misplaced. We must have this central command in mind as we interpret scripture. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world...".

5. All true interpretations of scripture presuppose that the heart of the interpreter loves God and seeks to do God's will

When we go to the Bible to find out what it "says" about something, we must ask whose agenda we are trying to further. It is sometimes possible to find small chunks of scripture and pull them out of context to

support a variety of views. So we need to pray before we read the Bible, asking that God purify our motives so that they align with God's own. Interpretation is not an abstract dusty exercise, but an act of love and devotion, furthering what Jesus taught us to pray: "Your will be done" (Matthew 6:10).

16.C The United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America

In 1982 this denomination produced a resource to help summarize some of the basic principles of interpretation from the Reformed tradition. Here are these six basic rules for interpreting the Bible found in this tradition's confessions:

1. First, Jesus Christ, as our redeemer, is the central focus of scripture.
2. Second, our appeal should be to the plain text of scripture, to the grammatical and historical context, rather than to allegorical or subjective fantasy.
3. Third, the Holy Spirit aids us in interpreting and applying God's message.
4. Fourth, the doctrinal consensus of the early church as summarized in the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Definition of Chalcedon is the "rule of faith" that guides us.
5. Fifth, all interpretations must accord with the "rule of love," the two-fold commandment to love God and to love our neighbour.
6. Sixth, interpretation of the Bible requires human scholarship in order to establish the best text, to understand the original languages, and to interpret the influence of the historical and cultural context in which the divine message has come.

Some of these principles are reflected in Bullinger's approach. Yet they stand as strong summary statements of much of the wisdom in the Reformed tradition.

16.D Living Faith and The Westminster Confession of Faith

Living Faith, the most recent subordinate standard of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, includes a section on the Bible which has been partly excerpted above. As a statement of our faith, its words offer a guidepost for our work of interpretation by providing a framework for understanding the aims and reasons behind interpretation.

The whole section is reproduced here:

- 5.1 The Bible has been given to us
by the inspiration of God
to be the rule of faith and life.
It is the standard of all doctrine
by which we must test any word that comes to us
from church, world, or inner experience.
We subject to its judgment
all we believe and do.
Through the Scriptures the church is bound only to Jesus Christ its King and Head.
He is the living Word of God
to whom the written word bears witness.
- 5.2 The Holy Spirit gives us inner testimony
to the unique authority of the Bible
and is the source of its power.
The Bible, written by human hands,
is nonetheless the word of God
as no other word ever written.
To it no other writings are to be added.
The Scriptures are necessary, sufficient, and reliable,
revealing Jesus Christ, the living Word.
- 5.3 Both Old and New Testaments were written
within communities of faith
and accepted as Scripture by them.
Those who seek to understand the Bible
need to stand within the church
and listen to its teaching.

- 5.4 The Bible is to be understood in the light of the revelation of God's work in Christ. The writing of the Bible was conditioned by the language, thought, and setting of its time. The Bible must be read in its historical context. We interpret Scripture as we compare passages, seeing the two Testaments in light of each other, and listening to commentators past and present. Relying on the Holy Spirit, we seek the application of God's word for our time.

The Westminster Confession of Faith has long been a subordinate standard in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Its first chapter is about scripture and stresses how necessary it is. The confession states that "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his glory, man's [sic] salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from scripture..." (1.6). At the same time, it states that "All things in scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them" (1.7). In other words, if it is necessary for salvation, scripture will offer sufficient and clear understanding.

When it comes to the matter of interpretation, the confession states that "The infallible rule of interpretation of scripture is the scripture itself." This means that other parts of scripture should be searched to shed light on more obscure passages. As it goes on to explain, "when there is a question about the true and full sense of any scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly" (1.9).

The Westminster Confession also confirms that "our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority [of scripture], is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts" (1.5).

17. A Note on The "Wesleyan Quadrilateral"

People often talk about the "Wesleyan Quadrilateral" as a helpful tool when trying to interpret something. Although John Wesley (1703–1791) never used the term, he did refer to these ideas. Here is the quadrilateral:

Scripture	Tradition
Reason	Experience

The idea is that you reflect with these four lenses to better understand something and make a decision. However, this was never intended to be a four-legged stool, i.e. never was it intended that these four things be weighed equally. To Wesley, scripture was primary, and our tradition and reason helped us better understand scripture. Further, "experience" was never our 'isolated modern experience'. What was meant was our experience of God's Spirit helping us grow in obedience to his word.³⁰

Perhaps it's helpful to understand the quadrilateral like this:

1. Scripture guides us
2. Reason, Tradition and our Experience of God's Spirit helping us grow in obedience to his word help us better understand how scripture guides us.

18. Conclusion

The Bible has long been authoritative for God's people. It has also been the primary place where we seek God's will no matter what lies before us. Through the Bible, guided by the Holy Spirit, we listen for what God is speaking to us today.

Speaking of himself as "the gate for the sheep," Jesus said that his sheep follow him "because they know his voice" (John 10:4). We have offered this document in the hope that it may help provide some basic background to scripture

and its authority, and also some practical tools for when we try to interpret the Bible as we seek to know Jesus' voice and follow him.

Endnotes

¹ Living Faith 5.1.

² Henry Jackson Flanders, Jr., Robert Wilson Crapps, David Anthony Smith, *People of the Covenant: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 13.

³ Eugene Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), p. 49.

⁴ Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (London: SCM Press, 1949), p.134–35.

⁵ N.T. Wright, *The Last Word* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2005), p. 33.

⁶ Wright, *The Last Word*, p. 23.

⁷ See Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), 1991.

⁸ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, vol. xx of The Library of Christian Classics (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960) I.vii.4, p. 79.

⁹ Wright, *The Last Word*, p. 37ff.

¹⁰ Second Helvetic Confession.

¹¹ See Douglas John Hall, *What Christianity is Not: An Exercise in “Negative” Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2013), p. 52–3.

¹² John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*: “God is its Author. Thus, the highest proof of scripture derives in general from the fact that God in person speaks in it.” ... “the Word will not find acceptance in men’s hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit.” 1.7.4.

¹³ Bart D. Ehrman, *After the New Testament: A Reader in Early Christianity* (Oxford University Press, New York, NY: 1999), p. 308ff.

¹⁴ Cf. Craig Evans, *Jesus and His World: The Archaeological Evidence* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012), p. 85.

¹⁵ See the footnotes in Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

¹⁶ Wright, *The Last Word*, p. 72.

¹⁷ Karl Barth, “The Doctrinal Task of the Reformed Churches”, delivered at the General Assembly of the Union of Reformed Churches at Emden, September 1923.

¹⁸ Living Faith 5.3.

¹⁹ These were: the verbal inerrancy of scripture, the divinity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, the substitutionary theory of the atonement, and the physical resurrection and bodily return of Christ.

²⁰ Readers are encouraged to read the entire report found in the Acts and Proceedings 2010, p. 287–90.

²¹ The phrase “texts of terror” comes from Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984).

²² These four questions are based on a set of questions proposed by The Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris in a course for lay preachers and leaders of worship.

²³ “Toward a Post-Colonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible,” in *Hope Abundant: Third World and Indigenous Women’s Theology*, ed. Kwok Pui-lan (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010) 89–102, 98.

²⁴ One helpful resource in this regard may be, Grace Ji-Sun Kim, *Embracing the Other: The Transformative Spirit of Love* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2015), particularly the chapter “Overcoming the Gendered Division of Humanity,” p. 91–114.

²⁵ Letty M. Russell, “Authority and the Challenge of Feminist Interpretation,” in Letty M. Russell, ed., *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*, 1985, p. 138.

²⁶ William H. Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry* (Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN: 2002), p. 130.

²⁷ Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.6.1.

²⁸ Garrett Green, *Imagining God: Theology and the Religious Imagination* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), p. 107.

²⁹ See Heinrich Bullinger, *Decades*, Parker Society ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1852), Third Sermon for the First Decade.

³⁰ In an essay called “the Wesleyan Quadrilateral in Wesley” that appeared in *Wesleyan Theological Journal* in the Spring 1985 edition, historical theologian Albert Outler says this: “The term “quadrilateral” does not occur in the Wesley corpus—and more than once, I have regretted having coined it for contemporary use, since it has been so widely misconstrued. But if we are to accept our responsibility for seeking *intellecta* for our faith, in any other

fashion than a “theological system” or, alternatively, a juridical statement of “doctrinal standards,” then this method of a conjoint recourse to the fourfold guide-lines of scripture, tradition, reason and experience, may hold more promise for an evangelical and ecumenical future than we have realized as yet—by comparison, for example, with biblicism, or traditionalism, or, rationalism, or empiricism. It is far more valid than the reduction of Christian authority to the dyad of “scripture” and “experience” (so common in Methodist ranks today). The “quadrilateral” requires of a theologian no more than what he or she might reasonably be held accountable for: which is to say, a familiarity with scripture that is both critical and faithful; plus, an acquaintance with the wisdom of the Christian past; plus, a taste for logical analysis as something more than a debater’s weapon; plus, a vital, inward faith that is upheld by the assurance of grace and its prospective triumphs, in this life.”

Recommendation No. 7 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the document “Understanding and Interpreting the Bible” be commended to congregations, presbyteries and other groups in The Presbyterian Church in Canada for their use.

Recommendation No. 8 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That sessions, presbyteries and other interested groups using the document “Understanding and Interpreting the Bible” report comments to the Committee on Church Doctrine through the Assembly Office by January 31, 2017, and that the results of these comments be reported to a future General Assembly.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE RE OVERTURE NO. 34, 2015

Rec. No. 1 re Physician Assisted Death (A&P 2105, p. 608–09, 47–49)

This recommendation instructs the Committee on Church Doctrine to undertake a study of physician assisted death and to report to a future General Assembly. One congregation and one individual have made submissions. We have assembled a task force of committee members and other persons well-versed in fields of medicine and law to explore the many dimensions of this subject. The unexpected resignation of the convener of the task force doing our initial investigations has caused some delay in our progress, but we expect to be able to present a substantive report to the 2017 General Assembly. We are very cognizant of the pressing nature of this topic.

MEMORIAL NO. 1, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 611–12, 249–50, 17)

Re: Process re changes to church’s teaching on human sexuality

This memorial from the Presbytery of Montreal made several comments about the scope and use of a Declaratory Act, with particular reference to specific overtures addressed to the 2015 General Assembly. This memorial was referred to the Clerks of Assembly to provide a definition of the scope and purpose of a Declaratory Act. It was also referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries).

The Committee on Church Doctrine makes the following response.

Memorial No. 1 from the Presbytery of Montreal was referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine, as well as the Clerks of Assembly and the Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministry). The Clerks of Assembly were specifically asked “to provide a definition of the scope and purpose of a Declaratory Act.”

The Committee on Church Doctrine’s mandate generally is to consider and report on “all matters of faith and order which the General Assembly may from time-to-time refer to it and make recommendations to the General Assembly for the furtherance of the church’s continuing ministry of determining and declaring the church’s confessional position.” The expertise the committee brings to reviewing this memorial is our expertise in the church’s confessional heritage and how the church has expressed and modified it in changing circumstances.

The memorial’s rationale includes the statement “the denomination’s historic belief and teaching concerning human sexuality is encapsulated in the statement of Living Faith (a subordinate standard adopted in 1998) that “Christian marriage is a union in Christ whereby a man and a woman become one in the sight of God.” (8.2.3) This stands in the tradition of the Westminster Confession, which is a formally-adopted confessional standard of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is also an accurate description of the Reformed tradition as a whole, which has generally seen marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

Some recent theological thinking has raised the question of whether marriage should be considered a confessional issue. Whether Living Faith should have included marriage as part of the doctrinal teaching of the church is not a question for us to decide now. It did include the topic as part of the doctrinal standards of the church. If the church

wishes to change its teaching on marriage, it needs to do so by the ordinary process for a change in the doctrinal standards and in the law of the church, that is, through the Barrier Act process.

In the list of Declaratory Acts in the Book of Forms, only one pertains to the confessional standards of the church, one adopted in 2001 declaring “we do not believe it is now warranted to” refer to the Pope as antichrist. This Declaratory Act declared a belief that was already broadly held in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and at that only after a long process of conversation and study. No such breadth of agreement exists in The Presbyterian Church in Canada about a change in our teaching on marriage. And the recent round of conversation and study has only been going for months, not years. Another occasion when the church made a significant change in its teaching is the decision in the mid-1960s to allow women to be ordained as teaching and ruling elders.

In this case, the Barrier Act process was respected and followed. A decent respect for the peace of the church, and for the church’s historic law and practice, and for the convictions of members deeply conflicted over these questions, leads the Committee on Church Doctrine to recommend to the 2016 General Assembly that any change in the church’s teaching on marriage should be through the Barrier Act process.

Recommendation No. 9 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the matters and concerns raised in Memorial No. 1, 2015 be answered in terms of the above report.

PUBLICATIONS

The committee draws attention of the church to some of its works that are both available and offer assistance to individuals and congregations. Most can be found on The Presbyterian Church in Canada website at presbyterian.ca/gao/committee-on-church-doctrine. Some are located elsewhere as well:

A Catechism for Today. [presbyterian.ca/resources-od]

Wisely and Fairly for All: The Christian Gospel and Market Economy (A&P 1997, p. 235–54, 38). [presbyterian.ca]

Confessing the Faith Today: The Nature and Function of Subordinate Standards (A&P 2003, p. 247–72, 25), and (A&P 2010, p. 220–65). [presbyterian.ca/resources-od]

One Covenant of Grace: A Contemporary Theology of Engagement with the Jewish People (A&P 2010, p. 291–355). [presbyterian.ca/wp-content/uploads/referrals_2011_one_covenant_of_grace_study_document_re_engagement_with_jewish_people.pdf]

1994 Report on Human Sexuality. [presbyterian.ca/sexuality]

Living Faith, Foi Vivante, Living Faith–Korean version, [presbyterian.ca/resources-od]. They are available in print. Contact the Resource Centre. A study guide is also available.

Doing Weddings Better (A&P 2009, p. 243–49, 26). [presbyterian.ca/wp-content/uploads/ga137_report_church_doctrine.pdf]

TECHNOLOGY

The Committee on Church Doctrine often uses on-line technology to enhance our meetings and to facilitate our work between meetings. When the press of deadlines required an additional meeting, we were able to meet using on-line technology. Though not as advantageous as being in one physical space to consider our tasks, it did enable some work to be completed. It has also enabled two of our corresponding members to participate actively in ‘real’ time, even though they were separated by 1,000s of kilometers from us and each other. Members have been provided, when needed with suitable headsets, to enable technology to serve us better.

ASSEMBLY COUNCIL

Our convener participated in a conference call meeting with several other committee conveners in the fall, discussing effective committee dynamics. He also provided some feedback to the Assembly Council regarding a Committee Conveners Handbook.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The 2015 General Assembly requested that the Rev. Jin Sook Khang be added to the Committee on Church Doctrine if a vacancy should occur (A&P 2015, p. 47). A resignation made it possible to act on this directive and our committee has requested that she continue to complete the term of the resigned member. The Rev. Paul Johnston

was also named to replace a corresponding member who resigned in the summer. We are grateful for the contributions both of them have made to our work.

APPRECIATION TO RETIRING MEMBERS

We express our sincere thanks to retiring members: the Rev. Dr. Aubrey J. Botha, the Rev. Dr. Dong-Ha Kim, the Rev. R. Ian Shaw, the Rev. Dr. Cynthia J. Chenard, the Rev. Dr. Roland De Vries and Ms. Myrna Talbot for their valuable service to the committee during their terms of service.

Ian Shaw
Convener

Myrna Talbot
Secretary

CLERKS OF ASSEMBLY

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

That Recommendation Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 9 (identified by ►) be adopted by consent.

Recommendation No. 1

That the General Assembly express its profound thankfulness to the Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp for 29 years of extraordinary commitment to the office of Clerk of the General Assembly and to the courts of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (see p. 7.1.2)

Recommendation No. 2

That the above be the response to Overture No. 37, 2015 and Overture Nos. 4, 5 and 7, 2016 re request for process for a congregation leaving the denomination. (see p. 7.1.5)

► Recommendation No. 3

That the above definition of the scope and purpose of a Declaratory Act be the response to Memorial No. 1, 2015. (see p. 7.1.6)

► Recommendation No. 4

That Overture No. 3, 2016, re Barrier Act and an individual's dissent be answered by the above response. (see p. 7.1.6)

► Recommendation No. 5

That the following Declaratory Act regarding the eligibility of ministers of member churches of The World Communion of Reformed Churches to preside at the Lord's Table be added to Book of Forms section 198.1. (see p. 7.1.7)

Ordained ministers of churches that are members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches are permitted to preside at the Lord's Table at the discretion of the moderator or interim moderator of the relevant session. (A&P 2015, p. 255)

Recommendation No. 6

That Book of Forms section 12.1 be deleted. (see p. 7.1.7)

Recommendation No. 7

That the following revision of Book of Forms sections 65–80.2, regarding overtures and petitions, be approved and remitted to presbyteries under the Barrier Act. (see p. 7.1.8)

Recommendation No. 8

That Book of Forms section 80.2 become the new section 300 as follows. (see p. 7.1.10)

300. The Clerks of Assembly and other agencies, committees and task forces of the Assembly are instructed to ensure that all study papers, referrals and questionnaires addressed to presbyteries and/or sessions are in the hands of the respective clerks three full months in advance of the deadline for response back to the agency, committee or task force of General Assembly. (see Appendix A–6)

► Recommendation No. 9

That Book of Forms section 312 be amended to read as follows. (see p. 7.1.10)

312. The Clerks of Assembly shall be responsible for producing the minutes of the General Assembly and making them available to the church.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

There are three clerks of the General Assembly. The Rev. Stephen Kendall is the Principal Clerk. The Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp and the Rev. Don Muir are Deputy Clerks. Mr. Kendall and Mr. Muir serve full time at the national office in Toronto while Dr. Plomp serves part time from his home in Richmond, British Columbia.

Throughout the year, the Clerks of Assembly respond to queries from officers and members of lower courts as well as from individual members of the church. In addition, they monitor the receipt of responses from presbyteries to remits sent down under the Barrier Act and to referrals from the General Assembly. They also act as consultants to General Assembly commissions and committees. The three clerks meet together twice each year. In the autumn they discuss and designate the work referred to them by the Assembly. In the spring they finalize their responses to overtures and prepare their report to the General Assembly. Matters of polity are discussed at both meetings.

THE REV. DR. TONY PLOMP

On April 4, 2016, the Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp became the longest serving Clerk of Assembly in the history of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It was the 1987 General Assembly that adopted the following motion, “That the Rev. Tony Plomp of Richmond, British Columbia, be appointed as a Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly effective July 1, 1987 for a term of five years.” Interestingly, Dr. Plomp was elected Moderator of that same Assembly.

The original appointment has been renewed five times in succession. Across the decades, Dr. Plomp has been a faithful servant of the church alongside three Principal Clerks and three other Deputy Clerks. He is also widely respected as a compassionate pastor, thoughtful theologian and kind friend to many. Regrettably, ill health has prevented Dr. Plomp from attending a General Assembly since 2006. He continues, however, to work closely with Mr. Kendall and Mr. Muir, providing wise council and unstinting dedication to our denomination.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly express its profound thankfulness to the Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp for 29 years of extraordinary commitment to the office of Clerk of the General Assembly and to the courts of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

REFERRALS AND OVERTURES

OVERTURE NO. 37, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 610–11, 249, 17)

Re: Process for a congregation leaving the denomination

OVERTURE NOS. 4, 5 AND 7, 2016 (p. 28.1.2–3, 28.1.4)

Re: A policy for a congregation leaving the denomination

These various overtures request the establishment of a means for congregations to leave The Presbyterian Church in Canada, retaining their property and assets, if they find themselves unable to accept changes in doctrine or discipline made by the General Assembly. Some of the overtures refer to current discussions around human sexuality as the source of the request.

In developing this response, the Clerks of Assembly consulted with members of the Trustee Board, the Assembly Council and the Pension and Benefits Board.

While the Clerks of Assembly will focus on the law and polity, they acknowledge the concern expressed in the overtures that there is the potential for division in the current discussions. The Clerks believe the denomination is called to work diligently to find ways to continue to be one family under Christ. There will always be tremendous scope for a generosity of spirit and diversity of practice as we seek to fulfill the mission of God in our communities and beyond.

Two of the overtures allude to a situation whereby former members of the congregation of St. Andrew’s, Lachine, Quebec, were able to keep their building at nominal cost when they wished to leave the denomination. This was not the case. At no time did the property move to the former members. Rather, a temporary lease agreement was arranged by the Trustee Board in which the former members paid a nominal rent and were responsible for all expenses related to the facility. Shortly thereafter, the Trustee Board sold the property, at market value, to the Norwegian Church Association.

Overture No. 37, 2015 begins with the assertion that the trustees of a local congregation hold the real property of a congregation in trust for that congregation. This is a misunderstanding of our polity.

Trustees of a local congregation hold property of a congregation under a dual trust. The first is for the benefit of that congregation, but it is also for the benefit of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Congregations are not independent bodies within our church. They are a part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada which is governed by the Book of

Forms and the Presbyterian system of church government. (See especially Book of Forms sections 109.2, 114.6, 139, 149, 150–157, 158–173 and 200–200.14.)

As noted in the Trust Deed for congregations found in Appendix C of the Book of Forms (section 5 C):

Congregational Trustees will hold all property and real estate for the sole use and benefit of the congregation. It is noted that in the event that the congregation is dissolved, by provincial and federal law, the ownership of the church, contents, funds and property transfer to the Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and will be used to further the mission of the church.

The federal and provincial legislation referred to in this section is found in Appendix B–6 From The Act to Incorporate The Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (1939), section 13, re Property of Congregations Ceasing to Exist.

All lands and premises and personal property and assets which have been, or shall hereafter at any time, be held by any trustee or trustees for any congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada which shall have ceased to exist shall vest in the Board upon trust to sell, get in and realize the same and to pay the proceeds to the treasurer of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for such trusts, institutions, organizations, schemes of funds thereof as may be determined from time to time by the General Assembly of the said church.

This legislation is in force federally and in each province. It means that while congregations themselves own their property, it is held by trustees for the congregation under a Trust arrangement. The Trust, in effect, is that the property must be used for the benefit of the congregation and its purposes and in the event that it ceases to exist (which takes place on dissolution) it reverts to The Presbyterian Church in Canada to be held in trust by the Trustee Board, still for the benefit of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Some of the overtures refer to other denominations, but we must adhere to our own polity and the legal implications of the specific Act (to Incorporate the Trustee Board) that governs our denomination. If a civil court were ever to be involved, and we pray that will not be the case, this Act and its application through our own internal polity will be the basis upon which decisions are made. Both stipulate that the property is held for the benefit of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

This is consistent with the principle that when donors through the years have given to the congregation, they have given to a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for the purposes of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. There is no provision for those donations, now represented in the assets of the congregation, to be moved outside The Presbyterian Church in Canada no matter how much support there may be to withdraw from The Presbyterian Church in Canada. When a congregation issues charitable givings receipts to members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada who have given to a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, a further trust relationship is established regarding the assets of the church, consequently they must be used for the ministry for which they were given, that is, a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A second principle that highlights members' connection beyond the congregation is in the fact that we are members both of a local congregation and also of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A member in good standing has the right to present a membership certificate to any session of any congregation in the country and immediately claim the privileges of membership in that congregation by virtue of their membership in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (Book of Forms section 125.2, 126 and Appendix A–8)

According to The Act to Incorporate The Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Board has a duty to realize assets for the benefit of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Our polity does not include any provision for a congregation to be dismissed as an entity from the denomination, with or without retaining ownership or property.

Members may leave a congregation under the provisions of Book of Forms section 142. Even if every member were to leave a congregation, the congregation still exists as a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada until the presbytery dissolves it (section 200.9).

142. Members of the church are under the care and subject to the authority of the session until they are disjoined by receiving a certificate, or having their names removed in consequence of voluntary withdrawal from the fellowship of the congregation, or as a result of a judicial process.

Ministers may also leave the denomination under the provision of Book of Forms section 251–251.1 thus receiving a letter of standing which indicates that they leave the denomination as ministers of the gospel in good standing at the date of issue.

251. Upon his/her own application, a presbytery may grant to a minister or certified candidate for ordination, against whom are pending no matters in the way of judicial process, a letter of standing (see Appendix A–15) setting forth the facts of his/her ordination or certification and certifying to his/her presbyterial standing at the date of issue.

251.1 Upon the receipt of a letter of standing, the applicant ceases to be a minister or certified candidate for ordination of The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and the letter of standing can only be received by a presbytery with the permission of the General Assembly. (A&P 1894)

In the past twelve years there have been three situations of congregations where the majority of members and the minister felt they could not remain within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In these cases, as a matter of principle, and consistent with our polity, the majority members received certificates (or were removed from the roll) and the minister a letter of standing. The remaining members carried on, retaining ownership of the property and all assets relating to the congregation, or those assets were transferred to The Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In each case, the presbytery, while disappointed by the departure, worked graciously with the departing members and minister. All were treated as brothers and sisters in Christ through their period of transition.

Book of Forms section 200.1 grants authority to the presbytery alone to organize new congregations and section 200.9 authorizes the presbytery to dissolve congregations.

200.1 Congregations may be organized and places of worship erected only with the sanction of the presbytery, which should be satisfied that such places of worship are of a suitable character (see sections 150 and 200.7).

200.9 It belongs to the presbytery, subject to a corrective case to synod and General Assembly, to sanction the name of congregations, unite or disjoin congregations in pastoral charges, raise or reduce the status of charges as self-supporting or mission fields, and to dissolve congregations and to discontinue preaching stations.

(Note for clarification: The authority to ‘disjoin’ a congregation in section 200.9 pertains only to disjoining congregations in multi-point pastoral charges.)

On dissolution, all assets (real and personal property – meaning land, buildings, bank accounts and all goods and chattels held by the congregation) vest with (become the property of) The Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for the ongoing use and benefit of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

One scenario that honours our polity and approximates the prayer of the overture would be as follows. Members of a congregation express their desire to leave The Presbyterian Church in Canada. They resign their membership and receive certificates to that effect from the session of the congregation, or if necessary, from the presbytery. If, in this case, the remaining members do not have sufficient resources to maintain the congregation, the presbytery will consider dissolving the congregation. Following due process, the presbytery proceeds with the dissolution. The property will then vest with the Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Trustee Board normally gives priority to other Christian churches in offering church properties for sale (Book of Forms section 200.11.1). Working with a presbytery, the Trustee Board could be alerted to the fact that a fellowship (or new congregation outside of The Presbyterian Church in Canada) made up of former members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada would like to purchase the building the previous congregation owned. Such a sale could be given priority and would therefore meet the fiduciary requirements of the Trustee Board and the desire of a group of former members to re-own, if not retain, their property.

The Clerks of Assembly are disinclined to create a process for congregations to withdraw from The Presbyterian Church in Canada. To do so would require changes to our civil legislation both federal and provincial. The current provisions of the church for members and ministers to leave if they feel constrained by conscience to do so, is available, even with the consequence that church property remains with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. If this happens, there will always be room for gracious action, and loving respect on the part of those leaving, those remaining, their presbyteries and the Trustee Board. By God’s grace, we remain brothers and sisters in Christ.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above be the response to Overture No. 37, 2015 and Overture Nos. 4, 5 and 7, 2016 re request for process for a congregation leaving the denomination.

MEMORIAL NO. 1, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 611–12, 249, 17)

Re: Process re changes to church's teaching on human sexuality

Definition of scope and purpose of a Declaratory Act

This memorial was referred to the Clerks of Assembly by the 2015 General Assembly with the request that that the Clerks provide a definition of the scope and purpose of a Declaratory Act.

The memorial itself quotes the pertinent legislation regarding a Declaratory Act:

293. The Assembly may pass a Declaratory Act affirming what it understands to be the law of the church regarding any particular matter; and such act may be passed without submission to presbyteries. But any action contemplating a change in the law of the church must be dealt with according to the provisions of the Barrier Act (A&P 1877) that are as follows:

293.1 No prepared law or rule relative to matters of doctrine, discipline, government or worship, shall become a permanent enactment until the same has been submitted to presbyteries for consideration...

The plain reading of section 293 is quite clear that a Declaratory Act is an affirmation by the General Assembly of its understanding of church law on any particular matter. The Clerks of Assembly take this to mean that a Declaratory Act does not change the law, but states an understanding, or an interpretation of church law. By stating an understanding, or giving an interpretation of a particular law, that law would therefore be clarified for those that need to apply it. This understating is supported by the legislation around the Barrier Act, which is the process our church has to change church law, doctrine, or government.

The Clerks, by reviewing the past 15 Declaratory Acts passed by General Assemblies (since 1992), have been able to assess the last 23 years of decisions in this regard.

Most Declaratory Acts in this period represent well the plain understanding of section 293.

A 2014 Declaratory Act clarifies that ministers must retire in order to receive a church pension. In 2008, an Act describes what qualifies as an 'audit' of church financial statements. This was to make it clear that there is distinction between the technical meaning in financial circles and the expected practice within the church.

In 2001 a Declaratory Act clarified how a motion to refer should be dealt with.

In 1998, a Declaratory Act stipulated that a 75% majority is necessary to made the decision for a synod to function by commission. One could argue that instead of affirming an understanding of the law, this amended existing legislation, since, in the absence of any exceptional legislation, decisions of church courts can always be passed by a simple majority vote. This is an example of a Declaratory Act amending, to an extent, an existing law. In the absence of this Declaratory Act, the law of the church would still be that a simple majority would be sufficient. This, in the view of the Clerks of Assembly, is not a good application of a Declaratory Act. An addition to legislation would have been preferred.

In 1993, a Declaratory Act clarified that both active and inactive members of the Order of Diaconal ministers are eligible to be on the roll of a presbytery, and in 1992, an Act clarified that such ministers are to be on the rotation as commissioners to General Assembly. This, in the view of the Clerks of Assembly is another good example of a Declaratory Act since the legislation had already been passed making members of the Order members of church courts.

One anomaly in this 23 year history of Declaratory Acts, at least in the view of the Clerks of Assembly, is the Declaratory Act passed in 2001 regarding the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Pope, in which the church distanced itself from derogatory theology applied to the pope in the Westminster Confession. While it was an utterly appropriate distancing for our church to make, it is hard to argue that it does not change the doctrine of a subordinate standard, even if that doctrine was not held by the vast majority of our ministers and elders. The Clerks of Assembly see this as a convenient, but not particularly appropriate, use of a Declaratory Act.

Conclusion

While past General Assemblies seem to have occasionally passed Declaratory Acts that may have verged on changing doctrine or law rather than simply interpreting it, the Clerks of Assembly stand by a plain interpretation of section 293, namely that a Declaratory Act ‘affirms what a General Assembly understands to be the law of the church regarding any particular matter’. The Clerks of Assembly would advise this and future Assemblies against passing Declaratory Acts that introduce new or revised legislation or doctrine into the life of the church.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above definition of the scope and purpose of a Declaratory Act be the response to Memorial No. 1, 2015.

OVERTURE NO. 3, 2016 (p. 28.1.1–2)**Re: Barrier Act and an individual’s dissent**

The Barrier Act has been used as a method of discernment by The Presbyterian Church in Canada since 1877. The purpose of the Barrier Act is to prevent a sudden alteration to the doctrine, worship, discipline or government of the church. It is also meant to encourage prayer, reflection and discussion before a significant change is made to any of these fundamental aspects of the life of the church.

The Barrier Act requires the approval of two General Assemblies and the majority of presbyteries, provided those replying constitute a majority of ministers, members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries and representative elders. The first Assembly remits a matter to the presbyteries for consideration. Presbyteries either express approval or disapproval. The approval or disapproval response from each presbytery is sent to the General Assembly Office accompanied by the total number of presbyters on the constituent roll of the presbytery. Presbytery responses are tallied and reported to the second General Assembly. If the majority of presbyteries express approval, that second General Assembly may adopt the proposal so that it becomes part of the life of the church. If the majority of presbyteries express disapproval, the second General Assembly must reject the proposal but may remit it, or an amended version, again to the presbyteries. (Book of Forms section 293.3)

Overture No. 3, 2016 accurately notes that if a member of presbytery votes against approving a remit, that presbyter may ask to have his or her dissent recorded in the presbytery minutes. The overture goes on to express concern that even though the member expresses dissent, that member is included in the total number on the roll of the presbytery that supports the overture.

It is important to understand that counting the constituent membership of a presbytery is not a means of determining how many individuals approve or disapprove a particular remit during the Barrier Act process. It is a way of ensuring that at least half of all members of all the presbyteries are represented in the vote on a particular proposal. An individual’s dissent to a specific decision is intended to be handled by the court in which the vote was held.

While it is important for a presbytery to honour the right of a presbyter to record dissent, that dissent does not figure into the calculation of support for a remit at that point in the process. Since the Barrier Act process is based on the vote of the presbytery and not the individual, the Clerks are of the opinion that it is unnecessary to amend the legislation.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Overture No. 3, 2016 re Barrier Act and an individual’s dissent be answered by the above response.

DECLARATORY ACT**MINISTER OF WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES PRESIDING AT THE LORD’S TABLE**

In response to Overture No. 4, 2014 and on a recommendation of the Committee on Church Doctrine, the 2015 General Assembly affirmed that ‘...ordained ministers of churches which are members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches are permitted to preside at the Lord’s Table at the discretion of the moderator and interim moderator of the relevant session’. (A&P 2015, p. 255)

Because the Assembly agreed that this is an affirmation of existing law and practice and not a new piece of legislation that would require being sent to presbyteries under the Barrier Act, the Clerks of Assembly believe it is an appropriate matter to be the subject of a Declaratory Act (see p. 7.1.5–6 re the scope and purpose of a Declaratory Act). By adopting a Declaratory Act on this issue, it can be easily referenced in the Book of Forms whenever the question of who can preside at the Lord's Table arises.

The pertinent legislation regarding the regulation of presiding at the Lord's Table is found at Book of Forms section 198.1:

198.1 It belongs to the presbytery to regulate matters concerning the performance of public worship and the administration of the sacraments, within its bounds. It must take cognizance of practices inconsistent with the laws and settled usage of the church. It should enjoin the discontinuance of novel practices calculated to cause division or strife in any congregation.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the following Declaratory Act regarding the eligibility of ministers of member churches of The World Communion of Reformed Churches to preside at the Lord's Table be added to Book of Forms section 198.1.

Ordained ministers of churches that are members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches are permitted to preside at the Lord's Table at the discretion of the moderator or interim moderator of the relevant session. (A&P 2015, p. 255)

BOOK OF FORMS PROPOSALS

BOOK OF FORMS SECTION 12.1

Dissent when absent from the court – deletion

Book of Forms section 12, states that a member of a court (session, presbytery, synod or General Assembly) is not to withdraw from attendance without the permission of the court. Subsection 12.1, explains that if the member leaves the court without permission, the member is not permitted to dissent from any decision arrived at while absent.

12. A member of the court ought not to withdraw from attendance without leave.

12.1 If he/she does so, he/she cannot dissent from any decision of the court arrived at in his/her absence.

The Clerks of Assembly believe section 12.1 should be deleted from the Book of Forms because it is inconsistent with the legislation on dissent as found in section 91.

91. Any member of a court who has voted on a question and is not satisfied with the decision is entitled to have his/her dissent recorded. By so doing he/she relieves himself/herself from responsibility for the decision and saves himself/herself from censure on account of it. The dissent must be given in when the decision is announced. Reasons for dissent may be given in at that time or within ten days. If in proper language, they are entered in the minutes. When deemed necessary the court prepares answers that are disposed of by being entered in the appropriate minutes.

Section 91 states that only a person who has voted on a question is entitled to have a dissent recorded and the dissent must be given when the decision is announced. If a person is absent from the court when the decision is made and announced, the person could not have voted on the matter nor submit a dissent. This is consistent with the church's belief that God's spirit speaks to us in community. We pray, think, speak and listen together as a way of discerning the mind of Christ for the church. It stands to reason that a person ought to be aware of the discussion that has gone into a decision before the person can offer dissent.

The Clerks are of the opinion that the reasons for the deletion of section 12.1 are self evident and does not require the time and attention of the church to study the matter further and report back to a future Assembly. Therefore, the Clerks make the following recommendation.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Book of Forms section 12.1 be deleted.

BOOK OF FORMS SECTIONS 65–80.2**Petitions, Memorials and Overtures – revision**

The Clerks of Assembly reported to the 2015 General Assembly that there is some confusion in the church regarding the meaning and use of overtures, petitions and memorials. The confusion mostly relates to petitions and memorials but also stems from the somewhat disorganized manner in which this section of the Book of Form is set out. The Clerks of Assembly were granted permission to circulate proposed legislation designed to simplify and clarify this portion of the church's governance.

The proposed legislation describes the overture in four paragraphs.

1. The definition of an overture.
2. Who may initiate an overture.
3. The information an overture should include.
4. How an overture is transmitted from one court to another.

The legislation provides the same information for a petition.

By way of a reminder, an overture is a formal proposal to a church court requesting a change in legislation, doctrine, policy or another action that is of general interest. A petition is a formal request made to a church court initiating specific business concerning the petitioners.

Because a memorial, which is a submission of facts presented to a court, is rarely used and its purpose can easily be fulfilled by either an overture or a petition, the Clerks of Assembly are of the view that no harm would be done, and greater clarity gained, if the church discontinued the use of memorials in the Book of Forms.

The legislation was sent to the church for its consideration. Feedback was encouraged. A total of 17 presbyteries and 13 sessions offered comments. One presbytery noted, "The proposed changes would clarify and simplify the rules regarding the courts of the church use of these two important vehicles for change." Fourteen (14) other presbyteries and all the sessions echoed this opinion. Only two presbyteries indicated a concern about the removal of memorials.

The Clerks believe nothing of the original legislation is lost in this proposal and significant clarity is gained. In view of the enthusiastic support of 28 of 30 responses, no changes have been made this year to the proposed legislation.

Current Book of Forms section 80.2 reads as follows:

80.2 The Clerks of Assembly and other agencies, committees and task forces of the Assembly are instructed to ensure that all study papers, referrals and questionnaires addressed to presbyteries and/or sessions are in the hands of the respective clerks three full months in advance of the deadline for response back to the agency, committee or task force of General Assembly. (see Appendix A–6)

(Note for information: Appendix A–6 is a template for a presbytery response to a General Assembly referral. Appendix A–7 will be revised to provide overture and petition templates for the use of the church.)

Since this section relates to a broad range of papers that may be submitted to the General Assembly, and not just overtures and petitions, the Clerks recommend that it become a new section 300 in the General Assembly chapter of the Book of forms.

Recommendation No. 7 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the following revision of Book of Forms sections 65–80.2, regarding overtures and petitions, be approved and remitted to presbyteries under the Barrier Act.

OVERTURES**Definition**

65. An overture is a formal proposal to a church court requesting a change in legislation, doctrine, policy or another action that is of general interest. It cannot be used in place of judicial process. The request, if granted, must be within the jurisdiction of the court to which it is addressed, and would be binding on all within the jurisdiction of that court.

Initiation

66. Anyone may prepare an overture, but it must be adopted by a court of the church in order for it to be considered by the court to which it is addressed.

Form

67. An overture must be in respectful language and it should contain: the name of the court to which it is addressed, the rationale for the proposal and the proposal itself. If addressed to the General Assembly, the overture may also contain a request that it be referred to a particular standing committee for consideration in advance of the next General Assembly. The General Assembly may change the referral.

Transmission

68. Once a court has adopted an overture, a motion must be adopted to transmit it to the court to which it is addressed. This is normally the General Assembly. Overtures from presbyteries and synods may be transmitted directly to the General Assembly. Session overtures must be transmitted through the presbytery. The presbytery transmits the overture with one of the following designations: with approval, with disapproval or without comment. If the transmission is refused on grounds of not being in proper form the overture shall receive no further consideration unless those presenting the overture amend it for resubmission or commence a corrective case (see sections 381ff).

69. An overture intended for the General Assembly that contains a request for referral is to be sent by the clerk of the lower court to be received by the Clerks of Assembly by February 1 so that the committee to which it is referred has time to consider it before its report to the General Assembly is due. If no referral is requested it must be received prior to April 1 and the General Assembly will determine how it shall be considered or where it shall be referred.

70. An overture received by the Clerks of Assembly after April 1 will be held for the next General Assembly with the provision that the court initiating the overture may request that it be referred to a standing committee in the meantime.

PETITIONS

Definition

71. A petition is a formal request made to a church court initiating specific business concerning the petitioners. A petition is one of the primary ways that members of the church have access to the courts of the church. A petition may begin, but not replace judicial process (see sections 324–392).

Initiation

72. A petition may be made by a lower court, or by one or more church members. A petition must be presented to the lowest court that has oversight of the petitioners and a petition by members of the church must first be presented to their session.

Form

73. A petition must be in respectful language and it should contain: the name of the court to which it is addressed, the rationale for the request and the specific request. The petition may include a request that it be transmitted to a higher court provided that court has jurisdiction in the matter raised in the petition.

74. A petition may not be used to bring the proceedings of a lower court under the review of a higher court. Corrective cases and appeals are used for that purpose.

Reception and Transmission

75. The court to which a petition is presented decides whether to receive or not receive it based on whether or not it is in proper form. If there is no request for further transmission, the court shall decide what action is to be taken. If the petition is received with a request that it be transmitted to a higher court, it shall be sent on with one of the following designations: with approval, with disapproval, or without comment.

76. A petitioner may be given the opportunity to speak in advance of the decision whether or not to receive it and must be given the opportunity to speak to the petition at any court that agrees to receive it.

77. If a court decides to not receive a petition it shall be returned to the petitioner and the matter ends unless the petitioner chooses to amend and resubmit the petition. The petitioner, subject to section 383 regarding standing, may commence a corrective case, but only based on the court's refusal to receive the petition. A petition may be presented directly to a higher court, but only if the lower court refuses to consider the corrective case. The higher court must hear from the lower court before deciding whether or not to receive the petition.

78. Petitions to the General Assembly must be received by the Clerks of Assembly prior to February 1.

79. When considering how to act on a petition, a court may give any who might be affected by the petition the opportunity to be present.

80. Deleted

80.1 Deleted

80.2 Added to section 300.

Recommendation No. 8 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Book of Forms section 80.2 become the new section 300 as follows:

300. The Clerks of Assembly and other agencies, committees and task forces of the Assembly are instructed to ensure that all study papers, referrals and questionnaires addressed to presbyteries and/or sessions are in the hands of the respective clerks three full months in advance of the deadline for response back to the agency, committee or task force of General Assembly. (see Appendix A-6)

BOOK OF FORMS SECTION 312

Distribution of Acts and Proceedings – amendment

In a spirit of careful stewardship, following the 2015 Assembly, paper copies of the Acts and Proceedings were only provided to those who purchased them.

Compact disks, containing the complete Acts and Proceedings since 1980 and General Assembly minutes from 1925 to 1979, the Book of Forms, Living Faith (English, French and Korean) and the Social Action Handbook are sent to ministers, members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries, others on the constituent roll and to each congregation. Additional disks are available upon request. While relatively inexpensive, this method of circulating the Acts and Proceedings is becoming obsolete as many new computers do not include CD drives.

It is possible for the Acts and Proceedings to be stored on a jump drive (also known as a flash drive, USB drive, memory stick). This method of production and distribution would naturally involve some expense. No decision on this option has been made to date.

The easiest and least expensive way to access the Acts and Proceedings is by downloading it from Presbyterian.ca. The Acts and Proceedings from 1990 to the present are available online. All the other resources, included on the compact disk mentioned above, are also available online.

The current legislation related to the distribution of the Acts and Proceedings states that one copy of the General Assembly minutes will be “sent by mail” to specific recipients as stated below.

312. One copy of the minutes shall be sent by mail, when issued, to each minister and member of the Order of Diaconal Ministries, and to each retired minister, also to each session in all congregations that have contributed to the Assembly fund during the year then preceding.

In order for the legislation to match the current and future reality of distribution, the Clerks of Assembly propose a revision to section 312. Since this is an administrative issue and not a fundamental change in the law of the church, the Clerks are of the opinion this decision can be made by this Assembly.

Recommendation No. 9 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Book of Forms section 312 be amended to read as follows:

312. The Clerks of Assembly shall be responsible for producing the minutes of the General Assembly and making them available to the church.

BOOK OF FORMS APPENDIX K – ADDED

The Special Committee re the Optional Elimination of Synods reported to the 2015 General Assembly. The recommendations of that committee were adopted. One of those recommendations stated that if the legislation found in Remit B, 2015 (see p. 19.1.1–2) is adopted by the 2016 General Assembly, then Appendix K will be added to the Book of forms. Appendix K outlines an orderly process for considering and achieving the dissolution of a synod.

Appendix K was included in the committee's report to the 2015 General Assembly. During the intervening year, the Clerks noted that section 3 of the appendix could be improved. Formerly, it read:

3. Synod forwards the presbytery approved dissolution plan to General Assembly for final approval.

The Clerks have amended the sentence as follows:

3. Synod reviews the dissolution plan and, if necessary, amends it. The synod then forwards the plan to the General Assembly, through the Committee on Bills and Overtures, for final approval.

Therefore, if Remit B, 2015, is approved by this Assembly, the following, slightly amended Appendix K will be added to the Book of Forms.

APPENDIX K**PROCEDURES FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF A SYNOD**

1. Synod prepares a dissolution plan including but not limited to:
 - A. Preamble summarizing the process followed by the synod leading to the decision to seek dissolution.
 - B. Transfer of all assets or liabilities under its control to a presbytery or presbyteries within its bounds.
 - C. Transfer of responsibility for staff, property and collaboration on any current or proposed programs to a presbytery or presbyteries within its bounds.
 - D. Transfer of all necessary synod budget items to a presbytery or presbyteries within its bounds.
 - E. A plan for the annual inter-presbytery attestation of minutes (Book of Forms section 32).
 - F. A formula for redistributing synod appointments to Assembly Council from among the presbyteries within its bounds.
 - G. A formula for redistributing synod appointments to the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees (Book of Forms section 288.1)
 - H. Consultation with the Life and Mission Agency on funding for the synod's regional staff or other synod grants.
 - I. A formula for collaboration among the presbyteries on future requests for amendment to the plan by General Assembly.
 - J. Any other matters deemed necessary.
2. Synod forwards the plan to the presbyteries within its bounds for consideration. Presbyteries will report back to the synod indicating approval, requested amendments, or disapproval after consulting with the congregations within their bounds.
3. Synod reviews and amends the dissolution plan and forwards it to the General Assembly, through the Committee on Bills and Overtures, for final approval.
4. General Assembly considers the dissolution plan and may grant dissolution with a specific date to become effective or refer the plan back to the synod.
5. Following the approval by the General Assembly, the synod shall, through signing officers, effect the necessary transfers and proceed with closing bank accounts, removing signing officers, revoking charitable status (if in place) and any other legal matters that need to be brought to conclusion.

6. Synod minutes and official reports shall be transferred to the Archives of The Presbyterian church in Canada and any legal documents transferred to the body accepting responsibility.

BOOK OF FORMS SECTIONS 252 AND 373

When the Special Commission re Appeal No. 1, 2015 rendered its judgment on March 21, 2016 (see p. 20.1.1–6), the commission made the following observation in the analysis portion of its report. “The commission notes that the two sections of the Book of Forms which deal with deposition, 252 and 373, are not consistent in terms of the grounds which are cited...The commission would suggest that these sections should be examined by the Clerks of Assembly with a view towards obtaining consistency between them.”

The Clerks appreciate the careful attention of the commission. They will consider this suggestion with a view to offering a recommendation on the matter to the 2017 General Assembly.

CONSULTATIONS

The Clerks of Assembly, as directed by the General Assembly, have consulted with the authors of the following reports.

2015 General Assembly Special Commission

Appeal No. 1, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 612, 249, 17) re appeal against the actions and censure of the Presbytery of Brampton against the Rev. Edward Dowdles. See report p. 20.1.1–6.

Assembly Council – Overture No. 3, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 573, 216, 24).

Re: Committee re General Assembly budget and arrangements. See report p. 2.1.26.

Assembly Council – Overture No. 2, 2016 (A&P 2016, p. 28.1.1)

Re: Timeline regarding overtures relating to human sexuality

Referred to Assembly Council to consult with Clerks of Assembly. See report p. 2.1.29–31.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CLERKS OF ASSEMBLY

The Clerks of Assembly are deeply involved in each General Assembly. Before the Assembly, the Clerks assist with the collection and distribution of reports to be considered by the Assembly and set the provisional agenda. During each business session (sederunt), they record minutes and advise the Moderator on procedure. After each sederunt, they prepare draft minutes that are distributed to commissioners. Once the Assembly is dissolved, the Clerks complete The Acts and Proceedings and review evaluations. The Acts and Proceedings contains the minutes of Assembly, reports to the Assembly, field reports from staff of International Ministries and Canadian Ministries, statistical information regarding congregations, presbyteries and synods, the names and addresses of professional church workers, and contact information for congregations and camps. As of 2014, paper copies of the Acts and Proceedings are not automatically distributed to presbyteries but may be purchased through the national office Resource Centre. The Acts and Proceedings are available online at presbyterian.ca. An annually produced CD-ROM contains the full Acts and Proceedings from 1980 to the present, the minutes of each General Assembly from 1925 through to 1979, along with the current version of the Book of Forms, Living Faith (English, French and Korean) and the Social Action Handbook. Following the Assembly, the Principal Clerk informs the lower courts of matters referred to them by the General Assembly.

Orientation for Commissioners and Young Adult Representatives

Resources are available from the General Assembly Office to help presbyteries prepare commissioners for the General Assembly. Mr. Muir sends orientation resources directly to first-time commissioners prior to the Assembly and, during the Assembly, he and Ms. Terrie-Lee Hamilton, Senior Administrator in the Assembly Office, co-host a question-and-answer meal for first-time commissioners. Prior to the Assembly, they also led a webinar for commissioners, hosted by the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart of St. Andrew’s Hall. The Principal Clerk provides procedural orientation sessions for commissioners during one of the first sederunts. The Clerks of Assembly also meet with the Young Adult Observers to discuss what they might experience at the Assembly.

Support to Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods

The General Assembly Office serves all the courts of the church, and provides support for standing committees and special commissions of the General Assembly. Sessions are served by *Equipping For... Eldership*. This resource is

sent to congregations three times annually in the PCPak. Copies of issues dating back to February 2002 are available on The Presbyterian Church in Canada website (presbyterian.ca). Presbyteries and synods are served by the Clerks' Corner, an online source of frequently requested resources, as well as by workshops led by the Clerks as time permits. Every two years, the Clerks of Assembly invite all clerks of presbytery and synod to a consultation. The consultation affords an opportunity for clerks from across Canada to worship, exchange ideas, discuss governance matters, receive updates on church policies, and meet national office staff in an unhurried retreat atmosphere.

COMMISSION RE MATTERS LEFT UNCARED FOR OR OMITTED

Special Committee re Pension Solvency Funding

The commission met by correspondence on Monday, September 21, 2015 and approved two requests from the 2015 General Assembly's Special Committee re Pension Solvency Funding. The first request was to permit appointee, Mr. Ken Heckbert, to participate on this committee by correspondence. The second was to add Ms. Joyce Harrison to the committee.

Synod of British Columbia – Minutes

The minutes of the 2012 and 2013 Synod of British Columbia meetings were not presented to the General Assembly for attestation. The 2015 General Assembly agreed that these minutes be submitted for attestation to this commission. (A&P 2015, p. 45, Committee to Examine the Records, Rec. No. 3). The commission met by correspondence on Thursday, April 7, 2016 and the minutes were attested as neatly and correctly kept.

The commission is made up of the Clerks of Assembly and the Moderator of the 2015 General Assembly. (A&P 2015, p.45)

Stephen Kendall, Don Muir, Tony Plomp
Clerks of Assembly

ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

That Recommendation No. 1 (identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 1

That the prayer of the Commissioner's Overture be answered by the above response. (see p. 8.1.6)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee met in Toronto in October 2015, and then by conference call in February 2016. Our agenda included the ongoing facilitation of relationships between The Presbyterian Church in Canada and various national and international ecumenical councils and interfaith groups, as well as preparing a response to a Commissioner's Overture re public prayer and making a contribution to the denomination's discernment around human sexuality.

COMMISSIONER'S OVERTURE RE PUBLIC PRAYER (A&P 2015, p. 23)

The Commissioner's Overture re public prayer asks two things. It asks the committee to look into "the effects of the Supreme Court's decision as it impacts city councils, government at all levels and our own public prayers." Secondly, the overture asks that, "we enter into conversation with religious leaders of other faiths who share our belief that public prayer adds to civil society and the wellbeing of communities."

Firstly, the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee would like to point out an important distinction between the case of public prayer in worship and the place of public prayers in government meetings. The preamble to the overture can be read that they are one and the same. This is, perhaps understandable as there seems to be a growing anxiety among some groups of Christians that, as our Canadian culture becomes more secularized, older community traditions of which familiar Christian traditions are a part, are challenged and changed. As that changing reality grows, so may the anxiety of losing what we once held as an essential part of our cultural and religious identity. Where will it stop? Might public worship one day be outlawed?

The freedom of conscience and religion is protected under the Charter of Rights, a protection which extends to public worship. That raises the question of what happened in the City of Saguenay. The overture suggests that "prayers have been banned...", but a review of the case will show that the practice of reciting a particular prayer before the council meetings performed by elected officials with the intent of showing preference for one religion over another was ruled discriminatory and a breach of state neutrality. The practice surrounding the prayer had to stop but that does not enable us to jump to the conclusion that public prayer was banned everywhere in the City of Saguenay. Nor does it mean that non-discriminatory prayers that do not breach the state's neutrality are impossible.

Two issues stand out. The Supreme Court's decision is an attempt to apply and interpret the guarantee of the freedom of conscience and religion in our provincial and federal Charter. The issues of discrimination with respect to freedom of conscience and religion are important and have to be assessed within the context that the alleged discrimination occurred. Discrimination has to be proved.

The Quebec Human Rights Tribunal is a specialized administrative tribunal whose expertise relates mainly to cases involving discrimination. It is not a court but acts like one and it has been empowered with the legal right to rule on matters of discrimination. The issue of deference to a specialized Tribunal's ruling raises the question of which standard of review is appropriate to use. Should the Tribunal's powers and abilities be respected and the standard of reasonableness be used or should the standard of correctness be applied to the Tribunal's decision as if had the function of a lower court? The Supreme Court of Canada overruled the Quebec Court of Appeal on this question.

The decision of the Supreme Court along with the underlying issues need to be understood in order to explore the effect the judgement has on the prayers written and used by Presbyterians and other levels of government in Canada. One must not separate the process from the final decision. Indeed, the case against the City of Saguenay and its journey from the municipal chambers where it began to the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la

jeunesse, to the Quebec Human Rights Tribunal through the Quebec Court of Appeal ending up at the Supreme Court of Canada may prove to be an important study and example for Presbyterian communities in Canada when they expect to hear public prayers recited by publically elected officials or others in public places outside of their own places of worship.

The Case

The municipality of Saguenay resulted from an amalgamation of seven smaller communities in 2002. The current mayor had been mayor since that time. Prior to the amalgamation, not all the communities engaged in a prayer before a public meeting. The form and practice of prayer was introduced by its current mayor. From Facts cited in the Reasons for Judgement, it was recorded,

At the start of each meeting, the mayor and councillors would be standing. The mayor, using a microphone, would then recite a prayer after making the sign of the cross while saying [translation] “[i]n the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”. The prayer also ended with the sign of the cross and the same words. Other councillors and municipal officials would cross themselves at the beginning and end of the prayer as well. In the Chicoutimi council chamber, there was a Sacred Heart statue fitted with a red electric votive light. In the council chamber in La Baie, there was a crucifix hanging on the wall.

From 2002 to 2008 there was no by-law governing the prayer. At the time, the prayer read as follows:

O God, eternal and almighty, from Whom all power and wisdom flow, we are assembled here in Your presence to ensure the good of our city and its prosperity. We beseech You to grant us the enlightenment and energy necessary for our deliberations to promote the honour and glory of Your holy name and the spiritual and material [well-being] of our city. Amen.

In 2006, the mayor was approached by a resident of Saguenay who calls himself an atheist and who on account of his interest in municipal politics regularly attended the municipal council’s public meetings. He felt uncomfortable with the display which he considered religious and asked the mayor to stop the practice. When the mayor refused the complaint process began. A complaint was filed with the Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse in 2007.

Judicial History

In May 2008, the Commission said, “that it considered the evidence with respect to the prayer to be sufficient to submit it to the Tribunal.”

In the submission to the Tribunal, the appellant, “asked the Tribunal to order the City and its mayor to cease the recitation of the prayer and to remove all religious symbols from the chambers in which the council’s meetings were held.” Later that year the city adopted a by-law that regulated the recitation of the prayer. It changed the wording of the prayer and the official opening of council meetings. It also provided for a two-minute delay between the end of the prayer and the official opening of the council meetings. From the Facts cited in the Reasons for Judgement, it was recorded,

WHEREAS there exists within the City of Saguenay a tradition to the effect that Council meetings are preceded by the recitation of a prayer, the text of which is reproduced below;

WHEREAS the purpose of this tradition is to ensure decorum and highlight the importance of the work of the councillors;

WHEREAS the members of Council, unanimously, want this tradition to continue and wish to pursue it on the basis of their individual rights and freedoms, in particular their rights to freedom of expression, conscience and religion;

WHEREAS it is important to specify that the Council members and the public are in no way obligated to recite this prayer or attend its recitation;

WHEREAS It is important to ensure that members of the Council and of the public who do not wish to attend the recitation of this prayer may nevertheless attend the Council session in its entirety;

NOW THEREFORE, it is enacted as follows:

SECTION 2 – Bylaw VS-2002-39 is amended to add section 16.1 which provides the following:

SECTION 16.1 – Once the chairperson of the meeting enters the Council deliberation room, the Council members who wish to do so may rise to recite the traditional prayer, the text of which is reproduced below.

Almighty God, we thank you for the great blessings that You have given to Saguenay and its citizens, including freedom, opportunities for development and peace. Guide us in our deliberations as City Council members and help us to be aware of our duties and responsibilities. Grant us the wisdom, knowledge and understanding to allow us to preserve the benefits enjoyed by our City for all to enjoy so that we may make wise decisions. Amen.

To allow Council members and the public who do not wish to attend the recitation of the prayer to take their places in the room, the chairperson of the meeting will declare the Council session open two minutes after the end of the recitation of the prayer.

After the by-law was adopted, the complainants amended their motion to ask the Tribunal to “declare that the By-law be inoperative....”

The Supreme Court summary of the Case History records that the Tribunal “stated that the case ultimately raises three questions (para 193):

(1) Do the By-Law, the recitation of the prayer and the exhibiting of religious symbols interfere with the Appellant’s right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his freedom of conscience and religion without discrimination based on religion, contrary to ss 3,4,10,11,15 of the *Quebec Charter*? (2) If so, did the City and its mayor establish a defense consistent with the *Quebec Charter*? (3) If there are unjustified discriminatory interference, what remedies are appropriate?

The Supreme Court summary noted that to answer these questions, the Tribunal “considered the right to equal exercise of freedom of conscience and religion, the purpose and scope of that freedom, and the state’s duty of neutrality that flows from it.”

The Tribunal found that the prayer was “when considered in light of its context, religious in nature (para. 228) and that the respondents, by having it recited, were showing a preference for one religion to the detriment of others. Such a practice was therefore in breach of the state’s duty of neutrality (para.250).” The Tribunal declared the by-law “inoperative and invalid.” The respondents were ordered to cease the recitation of prayer and to remove all religious symbols from the rooms where the council meetings were held.

The Quebec Court of Appeal ruled against the Tribunal. “The standard of review of correctness” was applied in reaching its decision. The appeal commented on the witness, the central question concerning the neutrality of the state and the prayer. In consideration of the expert witness the Court of Appeal found that the Tribunal had made “a palpable and overriding error” in accepting the expert’s opinion.

It endorsed the idea of “benevolent neutrality: to comply with this duty, the state must neither encourage nor discourage any belief or non-belief.” Further, “the concept of neutrality does not require the state to abstain from involvement in religious matters.” And, “the duty of neutrality must be complied with in a manner that is consistent with the society’s heritage and traditions, and with the state’s duty to preserve its history.” Finally, “protection of the diversity of beliefs must be reconciled with the cultural reality of society, which includes its religious heritage.”

Concerning the prayer, the Court of Appeal “found that the prayer expressed universal values and could not be identified with any particular religion.” And “the principle of the religious neutrality of the state is intended to promote tolerance and openness, not to exclude from a society all references to its religious history.” The Court ruled that the Appellant “had not been discriminated against on the ground of freedom of conscience and religion,” and that the irritants felt by him “did not amount to injuries that would be sufficient to offend the principle of substantive equality.”

The Court of Appeal was clear that on the issue of the religious symbols, neither it nor the Tribunal could comment on them because they were not part of the Commission’s investigation. However, one opinion was expressed that “the Sacred Heart statue and the crucifix were works of art and were devoid of religious connotation and did not affect the state’s neutrality.” Opposite that view was the insistence that the Court of Appeal not rule on the matter but, “noted that it would still be open to the parties to bring an action in the Superior Court in order to obtain remedies that the Tribunal could not grant them.”

The Supreme Court Issue

The main question raised by the appeal, “is whether the prayer cited at the start of the City’s public meeting and the by-law regulating its recitation constituted interference with Mr. S.’s freedom of conscience and religion, contrary to sections 3 and 10 of the Quebec Charter.” To answer that question, the Supreme Court needed to “identify the standard of review applicable on an appeal from a final decision of the Tribunal and to determine whether the Tribunal had jurisdiction to rule on the issue of religious symbols.” Additionally, it needed to “define the scope of the state’s duty of religious neutrality that flows from the freedom of conscience and religion protected by the Quebec Charter.”

Concerning the standard of review, the Supreme Court felt that the Court of Appeal erred using a “confusing conceptual hybrid” standard in reviewing the Tribunal’s case. The standards used in reviewing the Tribunal’s decision were not consistent with the statute set out for use by the Court of Appeal. Though it supported the use of the correctness standard with respect to the Court of Appeals preference of the more nuanced idea of “benevolent neutrality” to neutrality, the Supreme Court concluded that the Tribunal was “entitled to deference” in relation to the decision of discrimination. “The Court of Appeal was required to show deference and could not therefore substitute its own opinion on the facts.”

The Supreme Court agreed that it was not open for the Tribunal to consider the question of the religious symbols because the Tribunal’s jurisdiction is circumscribed by the work of the Commission. Further it felt that the Court of Appeal erred in speaking to the question of the religious symbols on account of the insistence of certain parties to do so. The contradiction in recognizing that the Tribunal lacked the jurisdiction and assuming that jurisdiction for the Court of appeal is, “difficult to justify.” However, the Tribunal could have admitted evidence that was useful and relevant to the determination of the case and the Supreme Court suggested that the presence of religious symbols formed part of that context.

In response to the appellant’s claim that the practice and the by-law interfered with Mr. S.’s freedom of conscience and religion under section 10 of the Quebec Charter, the respondents countered that “the authority for recitation of the prayer such as this at council meetings and for regulating it by means of the by-law lies in the right of the city’s officials to freedom of conscience and religion, and that Mr. S.’s right is therefore not impaired.” The Supreme Court ruled that the appellant’s claim must prevail. Some of the supporting reasons are summarized here.

State neutrality means “that the state must neither encourage nor discourage any form of religious conviction whatever. If the state adheres to a form of religious expression under the guise of cultural or historical reality or heritage, it breaches its duty of neutrality. If that religious expression also creates distinction, exclusion or preference that has the effect of nullifying or impairing the right to full and equal recognition and exercise of freedom of conscience and religion, there is discrimination.” The court also pointed out there is provision under the Quebec Charter for the state to breach its duty of neutrality. It requires “1) that the legislative objective is of sufficient importance in the sense that it relates to pressing and substantial concerns and 2) that the means chosen to achieve the objective are proportional.”

The position of each party was as follows. The appellants insisted that the words of the prayer and context in which the prayer was recited, the actions of the mayor and councillors, the religious symbols in the council chambers and the overall context contributed to the fact that the prayer was eminently religious. The respondents countered that the context should be dismissed because the appeal concerns only the prayer. They insisted that the prayer was non-denominational and could be identified with no particular religion, though they conceded that a non-denominational prayer is religious in nature. They also submitted “that to prevent the city from expressing its belief would be to give atheism and agnosticism precedence over religions.” They add that a religious prayer “is valid because the theism of the Canadian state is entrenched in the Constitution by the reference to the supremacy of God in the preamble of the Canadian Charter. They also point out that the prayer in the by-law is copied from the one recited by the Speaker of the House of Commons before the body commences its meetings.”

In considering the alleged discrimination, public statements from the mayor were quoted “revealing of the true function of the council’s practice: I am in this battle because I worship Christ. When I get to the hereafter, I’m going to be a little proud. I’ll be able to say to Him: ‘I fought for You; I even went to trial for You. There’s no better argument.’” And “I said those things. It’s true we place much emphasis on that because we have faith. And because we want to show it. The entire municipal council is behind me. Of course, it isn’t a strictly personal fight. It’s the whole council. I am mandated.” The court concluded:

These comments confirm that the recitation of the prayer at the council’s meetings was above all else a use by the council of public powers to manifest and profess one religion to the exclusion of

all others. It was much more than the simple expression of a cultural tradition. It was a practice by which the state, actively, and with full knowledge of what it was doing, professed a theistic faith. What the respondents are defending is not a tradition, but the municipality's right to manifest its own faith. A sure sign of this is the respondent's statement in this Court that the appellants were attempting to prevent the municipality 'from expressing its belief.' In my opinion, nothing could conflict more with the state's neutrality. Tradition cannot be used to justify such a use of public powers.

In considering the respondent's submission that the city's prayer is valid because it is similar to the one recited by the Speaker of the House of Commons, three things were noted. "First, there is no evidence before us on the purpose of the prayer of the House of Commons. Second, the circumstances of the recitation of the two prayers are different. Third, it is possible that the House's prayer is subject to parliamentary privilege, as certain courts have suggested." It was considered inappropriate for the Court to discuss the content of the prayer from the House of Commons without "detailed evidence" surrounding the details of its use, "or to use it for support that the city's prayer is valid."

In relation to the supremacy of God mentioned in the preamble to the Charter, the respondents claimed that it established the "moral source" of the values that the Charter protects. "A prayer that refers to that same source cannot, in itself, interfere with anyone's freedom of conscience and religion." However, the Court noted to view it in this way is to "truncate" and "limit" the scope of freedom of conscience and religion. Quoting from Professor L. Sossi from "The 'Supremacy of God', *Human Dignity and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms*" (2003)

The reference to the supremacy of God in the Charter should not be construed so as to suggest one religion is favoured over another in Canada, or that monotheism is more desirable than polytheism, nor that the God-fearing are entitled to greater rights and privileges than atheists or agnostics. Any of these interpretations would be at odds with the purpose and orientation of the Charter.

The Court's Conclusion

"None of the arguments advanced by the respondents can refute the inescapable conclusion that, in the instant case, the By-Law and the City's practice with respect to the prayer are incompatible with the state's duty of neutrality. The Tribunal's findings of fact on the religious and discriminatory nature of the By-law and of the practice were not unreasonable; quite the contrary." The Court held up the Tribunal's decisions, that the by-law was declared inoperative and invalid and that the respondents be ordered to cease the recitation of the prayer in the chambers where the council meets. They were also ordered to pay compensatory and punitive damages to the appellant.

What we learned

1. That members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada should understand more clearly the freedom of religion and conscience which is protected for everyone under the Charter of Rights. It ensures that we have the right to public places of worship where our religious practices are of our own design. Transferring those practices to the public sphere, however, like prayer at the beginning of a municipal meeting, have a different context and reality. In the public sphere where we may encounter people of other faiths or of no faith, the use of particular religious practices that could be viewed as preferential could be challenging. Awareness should lead to dialogue.
2. That this case is about a violation of an individual's right to "equal exercise of freedom of conscience and religion" and about the kind of discrimination that may arise when a group in power feels the scales of equality tip in their favour. It must be recognized how difficult it is to be objective about the provisions of, in this case, the Quebec Charter of Rights when issues of identity, like religious practices, are involved. The Canadian Charter of Rights, also, protects an individual's legal right to pray publicly. Under the Charter of Rights, Canadians have the freedom of conscience and religion. Under the right of freedom of religion falls the right to do things like assemble, worship, print and disseminate literature and to pray. Public prayer generally cannot and has not been outlawed.
3. On account of the fact that this case is about a violation of that freedom of conscience and religion, the content of the prayer is less of an issue that the context in which the prayer was used and/or imposed on those present. From the Reasons Concurring in Part One of the Justices noted that state neutrality is about what the role of the state is in protecting freedom of religion, part of the inquiry into freedom of religion necessarily engages the question of state neutrality." Moreover, "as the majority reasons themselves state, the duty of state religious neutrality 'flows from freedom of conscience and religion'. Like freedom of

conscience and religion, its application depends on the context.” The importance of context underlines the need for individuals and groups within communities to engage their councillors in dialogue about the place of public prayer if that is an issue for them.

4. That an elected public official should not be encouraged or expected to lead a prayer at public meetings. Perhaps that means the door is open for the wider faith community to dialogue concerning what appropriate interfaith support of the common good and civil well-being entails. Some of the members of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee have been engaged in these conversations. The support for public displays of religious practice range from the total separation of church and state to the development and inclusion of some appropriate non-discriminatory practices.
5. That discernment and negotiation of what can and cannot be done in public meetings needs to happen in the communities where this is a concern. Those moved and passionate for the ways that prayer adds to civil society and the well-being of communities should join with other passionate citizens and religious leaders along with civic leaders in their community to talk about and discern practices that are not felt as an infringement of an individual’s rights under the Charter and that are not discriminatory.

The effects of the Supreme Court’s decision on prayers in Presbyterian churches

As noted at the beginning, the Supreme Court’s decision against the City of Saguenay has no implication or effect on the prayers in public worship in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It remains with the presbytery to ensure that the form of worship is decent and in order.

When it comes to public prayers in government meetings, care must be taken to ensure that rights protected under the Charter of Rights are not violated. It may mean that municipalities do not legislate the form and content of prayer or that there will be no prayer. It may mean that publicly elected officials are the wrong people to recite prayer whatever form it takes. It does mean that openness and dialogue are required which address the second request of the overture.

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee would like to encourage the members and leaders of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to engage in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue with people of other faiths and of no faith in their communities.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the prayer of the Commissioner’s Overture be answered by the above response.

HUMAN SEXUALITY

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee discussed the issue of human sexuality currently under consideration in The Presbyterian Church in Canada at both of our meetings. Not only was the study document, *Body, Mind and Soul* referred to all the standing committees of the General Assembly, but our committee believes that these issues have significant implications for our relationships with other Christian churches, other faith groups, and unity of The Presbyterian Church in Canada itself.

The committee encourages the church to consider whether and how a change in the policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada regarding the ordination of LGBTQ individuals (who have not chosen to remain celibate) and/or same-sex marriage might affect our relationships with other Christian churches with whom we are in multi-lateral or bilateral relationships. Openness with our partner churches regarding our current discussion and discernment will be important for maintaining good relationships, and may also provide us with the opportunity to learn from other churches’ experiences of grappling with the same questions. Members of our committee have taken the opportunity to share about our church’s current deliberations with our dialogue partners in the Christian Reformed Church in America, as well as with the Governing Board of the Canadian Council of Churches.

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee is concerned not only with our church’s growing unity with other Christian churches, but also with our own internal unity. It has been widely acknowledged that issues related to human sexuality are divisive within our church, and a great concern has been expressed across the church that whatever decision we make, a large portion of our members and congregations might consider leaving the denomination. Our committee was encouraged by the section of *Body, Mind and Soul* that acknowledged the fact that it is extremely unlikely that the whole church will come to agreement, and invited us to think creatively about how we might stay

together in spite of differing convictions on this issue. If we cannot come to agreement, we must move away from strategies of argument and debate towards determined efforts to maintain unity in spite of disagreement.

GLOBAL AND NATIONAL COMMUNIONS

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a church that connects ecumenically both in Canada and around the globe. The Rev. Stephen Kendall represents the denomination as our ecumenical officer, along with a number of committed volunteers who serve on various councils, commissions and committees.

World Council of Churches (WCC)

The World Council of Churches is a worldwide fellowship of churches seeking unity, a common witness, and Christian service. The website, oikoumene.org, contains information about the council's ongoing work along with reports and numerous resources, such as the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle. This website also contains all of the official WCC documents and statements.

Since the 10th Assembly, held in Busan, South Korea in 2013, the work of the WCC has been organized around a strategic plan that focuses on the theme of "Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace". This is an initiative for the WCC member churches "to work together in a common quest, renewing the true vocation of the church through collaborative engagement with the most important issues of justice and peace, healing a world filled with conflict, injustice and pain." It calls on all people of good will to engage their God given gifts in transformative actions. Katherine Masterton and Stephen Allen of Justice Ministries have gathered material that reflects The Presbyterian Church in Canada's involvement with this pilgrimage. (See pilgrimage of justice and peace at presbyterian.ca/eirc.)

Two important documents from The World Council of Churches have been circulated throughout our church for study and comment over the last two years: *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* was prepared by the Faith and Order Commission and is the fruit of many years of work ecumenically on ecclesiology, and *Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* is the product of a similarly broad ecumenical and global initiative. Our committee is grateful to the presbyteries, sessions and individuals who took time to review the documents and send us their responses. We prepared and submitted a summary of the responses to the WCC in 2015, but hope that our churches will continue to study and make use of these documents in the coming years. Study guides, prepared by the Rev. Dr. Ron Wallace, will assist congregations in using these documents for special studies, workshops, or events. They can be found at presbyterian.ca/2014/10/24/two-new-study-guides/. We encourage Presbyterians to consider getting together with other Christian churches in your neighbourhoods to discuss what it means to be the church and/or our call to mission and evangelism in changing landscapes.

World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)

The World Communion of Reformed Churches is comprised of 80 million Christians in Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed, United, Uniting and Waldensian churches. The WCRC, working with its 225+ member churches, is active in supporting theology, justice, church unity and mission in over 100 countries. Information about the council's work may be found at wcrch.ch.

In 2015, the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee was pleased to note correspondence from our denomination to the WCRC to inform the Communion of our 2015 General Assembly's decision to welcome ministers of Reformed churches to celebrate communion in our churches. We would like to encourage Presbyterian congregations to take opportunities to pray and worship together with other Christian churches, and to share in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper where possible. A list of denominations that are members of the WCRC is located on its website: wcrch.ch/members.

The 26th General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches will be held in Leipzig, Germany from June 29 to July 7, 2017. The WCRC is returning to the birthplace of the 16th-century Reformation to demonstrate that this event belongs to Christians around the world. This marks the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of his 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Wittenberg, along with other historic Reformation sites, will play an important part in the General Council, and the theme will be: *Living God, renew and transform us*. Thanks to those presbyteries that made excellent nominations for our three delegates to attend the General Council. Hilary Hagar, Robert Murray, and Stephen Kendall will be our delegates, with Susan Mattinson as an alternate.

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee is very excited to report that the WCRC is currently engaged in a process of affirming our fundamental doctrinal agreement with the teaching expressed in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification. The WCRC's draft statement affirming the Joint Declaration begins with this helpful explanation:

By way of a new ecumenical consensus, the doctrine of justification by faith represents the heart of the Gospel. Agreement about what the doctrine means is therefore of the highest importance.... In 1999, after many years of painstaking dialogue, The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification was signed by the Catholics and the Lutherans. It was then ratified by the Methodists in 2006. The mutual anathemas of the 16th century, while still accepted as salutary warnings, have been laid aside as not applying to the present. We, the Reformed Churches of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, are ready to join in this ecumenical concord. We express our joy and gratitude for the great gains that have been made....

Our committee reviewed the draft statement from the WCRC, and offered some comments for consideration as the final text of the statement is developed.

The Rev. Mary Fontaine of Vancouver is a member of the WCRC Executive Committee.

Canadian Council of Churches (CCC)

The Canadian Council of Churches is the broadest and most inclusive ecumenical body in Canada, bringing together representatives from Anglican, Evangelical, Free Church, Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic member denominations. The purpose of the CCC is to serve God's mission in the world, to give expression to the unity which is offered to the world through Jesus Christ, to witness to the continuing renewal of the Church by the Holy Spirit, to promote the growth of ecumenical and missionary obedience among all Christians, and to facilitate common action by the member churches.

In 2015, the CCC welcomed a new President, Canon Dr. Alyson Barnett-Cowan of the Anglican Church of Canada. Barnett-Cowan has set two presidential priorities for her term which are to visit each denominational head office, and to support member denominations in responding to the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

At the November 2015 meeting of the Governing Board of the CCC, representatives of the member churches shared the practices, commonalities and tensions experienced in the areas of mission, evangelism and culture in a session led by the Canadian Churches' Forum, and then compared the insights of three documents on these topics: *Capetown Commitment* (Lausanne), *Together Towards Life* (WCC), and *Evangelii Gaudium* (Pope Francis).

The November meeting included praying together in the Anglican, Baptist, and Mar Thoma Christian traditions, and experiencing for the first time the 2016 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity theme of *Called to Proclaim the Mighty Acts of God*, prepared this year by the churches of Latvia. Members of the Governing Board engaged with the latest news and experiences in Canada of the Middle East Refugee crisis, and sent a pastoral letter to all member denominations on welcoming refugees, particularly Syrians, to Canada. They also wrote to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to request the Supreme Court of Canada to extend for a reasonable period of time the suspension of the implementation of its ruling in *Carter v. Canada* on physician assisted death in order to allow for a full and thorough public discussion.

The Canadian Council of Churches uses the "Forum" model of ecumenical engagement and cooperation. This means that decisions of the CCC are not made through motions, debate and vote. Instead, the forum enables and facilitates the churches in sharing and exchanging, in understanding better each other's perspectives and, if there is consensus in such sharing and exchange, in searching for appropriate ways to witness in common to the unity we already share, while also identifying ways to deepen that unity. This year, the Governing Board spent some time deeply reflecting together on "Forum" and the Lund Principle of ecumenism (doing everything together except that which conscious requires that we do separately).

The May meeting of the CCC Governing Board will be in Ottawa, and the agenda will include attendance at the 51st Annual National Prayer Breakfast, an ecumenical gathering by Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons to be held on May 19 at Westin Ottawa Hotel. The Rev. Amanda Currie and the Rev. Stephen Kendall are our representatives on the Governing Board, with Stephen serving as one of the vice-presidents for this triennium (2015–2018).

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has representatives on a various CCC committees including the Rev. Dr. Andrew Johnston who is our new representative on the Interfaith Reference Group, and Mr. Stephen Allen who serves on the Commission on Justice and Peace.

Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC)

The “Council of Presidents” of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada met in Winnipeg on October 22, 2015 with a Denominational Leaders meeting on the following day. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has observer status in the EFC, and our representative, the Rev. Dr. Dan Scott, was in attendance. A new mission statement has been adopted: “Uniting evangelicals to bless Canada in the name of Jesus,” and the meeting included discussion of a proposed statement on “The Church in Mission.” A practical outworking of this statement is a new discipleship training initiative of the EFC for young people entitled, “The Love Movement” that uses social media to engage youth. The annual meeting also included an excellent panel presentation on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Recommendations to Faith Groups. More information about the EFC may be found at evangelicalfellowship.ca.

DIALOGUES

Canadian Christian-Jewish Consultation

The Canadian Christian-Jewish Consultation continues to be in abeyance because the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs had withdrawn from the consultation due to a resolution adopted by the United Church of Canada. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) is meeting bi-laterally with the Canadian Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CCIIA).

Christian Reformed Church of North America – The Presbyterian Church in Canada

The Christian Reformed Church of North America and The Presbyterian Church in Canada met twice this past year. Some items being addressed by the dialogue include: a joint presbytery-classis event in Southern Alberta, cooperative initiatives such as sharing web-based resources, connecting with Reformed Churches in Quebec, and an invitation to attend the CRC annual Synod. A joint project to prepare worship resources for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation has been slow in getting started in coordination with the CRC, but the intention is to prepared worship resources for marking the 500th Anniversary in 2017.

PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD’S RELIGIONS

The Parliament of the World’s Religions met in Salt Lake City from October 15–29, 2015, and one of our committee members, the Rev. Mark Tremblay, was able to attend. The theme of the Parliament was *Reclaiming the Heart of our Humanity: Working together for a world of compassion, peace, justice, and sustainability*. There were over 9,500 participants from over 70 countries, representing 50 different religious and spiritual traditions. In addition to six plenary addresses, there were 1,200 workshops on the six main themes: focus on women; spotlight on emerging leaders; spotlight on income inequality; focus on war, violence, and hate speech; focus on climate change; and spotlight on Indigenous Peoples.

Our committee was interested to learn about the 1993 declaration, *Toward a Global Ethic*, which invites all people to affirm the common core of our religious beliefs and work together for human dignity, compassion, equality, non-violence, just economics, and care of the earth. We encourage congregations and individuals within The Presbyterian Church in Canada to read and consider it at parliamentofreligions.org.

The Parliament also gives various awards that recognize the promotion of compassion and interfaith work in different communities. This year the Ahimsa award was given to the Charter for Compassion. (Ahimsa in Indic languages means non-violence.) The Charter for Compassion was a project that grew out of a financial award to Karen Armstrong in 2008. It brought together individuals from around the globe to produce a statement based on the golden rule, which is found in all religious traditions. Both individuals and communities have been supporting the charter and working to make their lives and communities more compassionate. The charter, the video, and its program of compassionate cities can be found at charterforcompassion.org.

Amanda Currie
Convener

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

ECUMENICAL/INTERFAITH/INTERNATIONAL GUESTS

CANON DR. ALYSON BARNETT-COWAN

Canon Dr. Alyson Barnett-Cowan is the President of the Canadian Council of Church, a forum of 25 member denominations representing 85% of Christians in Canada. Until the end of January 2015, she was the Director for Unity Faith and Order for the Anglican Communion, based in London, England. In this capacity she staffed the Inter-Anglican Commission for Unity Faith and Order, which addresses issues of doctrine and communion life. She was the lead staff for the ecumenical dialogues of the Anglican Communion, including conversations with the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church, the Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Methodist World Council and the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

During the first months of 2015 Alyson served as Interim Secretary General of the Anglican Communion.

Before her appointment to the Anglican Communion Office, Alyson was the Director of the Faith Worship and Ministry Department of the Anglican Church of Canada, where she staffed its theological and ecumenical work. She has been a member of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches and a Vice-President of the Canadian Council of Churches.

Alyson is a Canon of the Diocese of Brandon, where, with her husband Bruce, she was co-president of the Henry Budd College for Ministry in the 1980s. They have 3 adult children and 3 small grandchildren.

Alyson is a graduate of Trinity College, University of Toronto (B.A., M.Div., M.Th.). She has been awarded honorary doctorates by Montreal Diocesan College, Trinity College, Lutheran Seminary in Saskatoon and the Atlantic School of Theology.

DR. GERALD FILSON

Dr. Gerald Filson has been the Director of Public Affairs, Bahá'í Community of Canada since 1993. He is currently a member of the Baha'i national governing council, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Canada.

Dr. Filson has degrees in mathematics (Saskatchewan), educational technology (Concordia) and philosophy of education (Toronto). He was the Chair of the Canadian Network on International Human Rights, a coalition of 40 human rights organizations, from 1998–2002, Co-chaired the Mosaic Management Group of VisionTV in the 1990s, was on the Board of Directors of the Couchiching Institute on Public Affairs for six years and Chaired its National Conference in 2006 and 2007. He was the Chair of the Canadian Interfaith Conversation, a national interfaith organization of some 30 organizations, 2012–2016.

Raised in Saskatchewan, Dr. Filson taught school on the Magdalen Islands in Quebec for six years, travelled widely for a number of international projects over the years, including 15 trips to India from 1996 to 2010, and is currently working closely with colleagues in Santiago, Chile in preparation for the Dedication in October, 2016 of the award-winning Baha'i House of Worship in Santiago, Chile. He is married with three children and one grandchild.

THE RT. REV. BÉLA KATÓ

The Rt. Rev. Béla Kató is Bishop of the Transylvanian District of the Reformed Church in Romania, a position he was elected to in 2013. Bishop Kató is a graduate of the Protestant Theological Institute in Kolozsvár (Cluj), and was ordained in 1981. The seminary is a partner institution of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Among his many accomplishments, Bishop Kató founded the Christian Youth and Diaconal Center and the Rural and Regional Development Foundation. In 2004, he received the Republic of Hungary's Presidential Merit Award, for his many achievements within both the church and society. His colleague describes him as a brilliant mind, who is using his many God-given gifts in the areas of education, health care and community development, for the sake of all God's people.

THE REV. TIBOR KISS

The Rev. Tibor Kiss is Counselor, Department of International Relations of the Transylvanian District of the Reformed Church in Romania. He has held this position since 2012, having served numerous congregations since his ordination in 1986. A graduate of the Protestant Theological Institute in Kolozsvár, he obtained a Master of Divinity at McCormack Theological Seminary in Chicago (1992), and a certificate from Westhill College in Birmingham, UK (2005). He says the words of James inspire him in his work: “Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself“. (James 2:17)

Bishop Kató and the Rev. Kiss warmly received the Moderator of the 141st General Assembly, the Rev. Karen Horst and her delegation, as she visited Romania in September 2015.

DR. BERNARD SABELLA

Dr. Bernard Sabella, recipient of The Dr. E.H. Johnson Memorial Fund 2016 Award for “The Cutting Edge of Mission”, is the Executive Secretary of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) in Jerusalem. He is a sociologist, formerly on the faculty of Bethlehem University in Bethlehem. Presently Dr. Sabella, a Catholic and a leading member of the Palestinian Christian community, sits as a Fatah member of the Palestinian Assembly, occupying one of the two seats set aside for Christian representatives. Fluent in several languages including English, he completed graduate work in the United States. He has been gathering statistics on the shrinking population of Palestinian Christians in the Holy Land and is regarded as an authority in his community. DSPR is an agency established by the churches in the years immediately following the creation of the state of Israel to provide services to Palestinian refugees in the West Bank and Gaza, in Jordan and in Lebanon. Its vision is the development of a pluralistic society which guarantees equal opportunities for all its citizens, based on the ideals of justice, equality of rights, opportunities and freedoms. Dr. Sabella speaks to these issues with compelling clarity and authority. His perspective is as a Palestinian and also as a Christian. He is a leader, calling for the resolution of conflict based on Christian values – a respect for justice, opposition to violence and love of enemies. DSPR receives support from *Presbyterians Sharing* and Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D).

HISTORY, COMMITTEE ON

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

That Recommendation Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 (identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 1

That the congregations be encouraged to celebrate Heritage Sunday on February 19, 2017, or on another Sunday, as a means of celebrating the unique faith journey and heritage we enjoy as Presbyterians. (see p. 10.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 2

That the Assembly recognize the 2016 winners of the history prizes:

- Academic: *Still Voices – Still Heard* launched a biographical history on October 31, 2015, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Presbyterian College, Montreal,
- Memoir: *Sunsets and Gentle Breezes* is a memoir of life as I found it by Margaret Jean Taylor.
- Congregational: *Congregational History* for Haney Church, Maple Ridge, British Columbia.
(see p. 10.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 3

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church actively promote the “Solus Christus” event to take place in Winnipeg, Manitoba on October 29, 2016, and encourage their members to either attend this event or to join via internet. (see p. 10.1.3)

► Recommendation No. 4

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church promote the “Soli Deo Gloria” event in celebration of the 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation to take place at Knox College in Toronto on Saturday, October 28, 2017, and encourage their members to attend. (see p. 10.1.3)

► Recommendation No. 5

That the congregations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada be encouraged to contribute to the National Presbyterian Museum and that they be assessed \$50 by their respective presbyteries to this end. (see p. 10.1.4)

► Recommendation No. 6

That with thanks to God and in celebration of the clergy and church workers who have retired in 2015, the 2016 General Assembly, on behalf of our entire denomination, includes a moment of recognition for these faithful representatives of Jesus Christ and diligent servants of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (see p. 10.1.4)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Committee on History firmly believes in the importance of preserving Presbyterian history right across the country. We know, as well, that preservation of church records is a legal requirement of our denomination. Our history is alive in the buildings in which we worship, in the beauty of our stained glass windows, in our books, records and other artifacts. Preserving them is another way in which we Presbyterians can be good stewards, standing behind our faith and ready to pass all of these things on to the generations who will follow us. The Committee on History is one of the older committees of the General Assembly. First established on the 21st of June 1879, the committee has been in continuous existence ever since.

The committee is responsible for reporting on the National Presbyterian Museum and highlighting the work of the Archives. It meets twice a year (usually in November and February) and is fortunate to have members from across Canada who provide a balanced and insightful regional perspective. The committee includes: Dr. Kenneth Munro from western Canada; the Rev. Anita Van Nest, the Rev. John Vaudry and Ms. Marilyn Repchuck from central Canada. The committee also enjoys the support of the Rev. Dr. Stuart Macdonald (Knox College representative), and the Rev. Dr. Barry Mack (Presbyterian College representative), the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart (VST representative), as well as Ms. Kim Arnold (Archivist), Mr. Bob Anger (Assistant Archivist), and the Rev. R. Ritchie Robinson (member by correspondence) from the east coast. The Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod (President of the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History), and the Rev. Angus Sutherland (convener of the National

Presbyterian Museum Advisory Committee) also attend meetings of the committee. The Rev. Peter Bush, a previous member, continues his important role in the Reformation @ 500 Project and as editor of *Presbyterian History*. We are thankful for his ongoing involvement and service to the committee. The convener gratefully acknowledges the participation, and insights of all members. At this time we wish to express our thanks and gratitude to the secretary, Mr. Barry Cahill, for his diligence. Unfortunately, we regret that Mr. Cahill recently resigned and we welcomed Dr. Kenneth Munro to this role.

HERITAGE SUNDAY

Many congregations have designated a “Heritage Sunday” to celebrate the vibrant and dynamic faith legacy that is ours within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The committee enjoyed hearing various ways congregations commemorated Heritage Sunday. Some celebrated past events and individuals within their own church family, while others profiled the ministries of missionaries or church activities outside of their own congregation. The committee suggests February 19 as the date for Heritage Sunday in 2017, but congregations are encouraged to choose an anniversary Sunday or other date that is most appropriate for their own needs.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the congregations be encouraged to celebrate Heritage Sunday on February 19, 2017, or on another Sunday, as a means of celebrating the unique faith journey and heritage we enjoy as Presbyterians.

HISTORY PRIZES

Every year the committee awards history prizes in three categories: congregational, academic and memoirs. This year we have three submissions. There also is special mention of a book recently published, written in Chinese: *North China Theological Seminary in the light and shadow of history* (China International Culture Press) researched by Dr. A. Donald MacLeod. Congregations and individuals are encouraged to submit publications for consideration. Submission should be sent to the Prize Committee, Presbyterian Church Archives by December 31, 2016, to be considered for the 2017 history prizes.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Assembly recognize the 2016 winners of the history prizes:

- Academic: *Still Voices – Still Heard* launched a biographical history on October 31, 2015, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Presbyterian College, Montreal,
- Memoir: *Sunsets and Gentle Breezes* is a memoir of life as I found it by Margaret Jean Taylor.
- Congregational: *Congregational History* for Haney Church, Maple Ridge, British Columbia.

REFORMATION @ 500 ANNIVERSARY PROJECT

The Committee on History was entrusted with oversight of five events or “Solas” to mark the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. (see A&P 2011, p. 271–72, 28). The 2012 General Assembly approved the proposed dates and themes:

2013 Sola Gratia	(Grace Alone)
2014 Sola Fide	(Faith Alone)
2015 Sola Scriptura	(Scripture Alone)
2016 Solus Christus	(Christ Alone)
2017 Sola Deo Gloria	(For God’s Glory Alone)

A sub-committee of the Rev. Peter Bush, convener, Dr. Ken Munro, and Mr. Bob Anger, has been entrusted with oversight of the Reformation Anniversary Project. This project is supported by a bequest to The Presbyterian Church in Canada and a grant from the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education.

The first Sola “Grace Alone” took place on November 3, 2013, in Vancouver at St. Andrew’s Hall, VST. Dr. Paul Stevens and the Rev. Frances Savill were the keynote speakers. The panelists were the Rev. Mary Fontaine, Dr. Diane Stinton and the Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris. The event was coordinated and chaired by the Rev. Peter Bush. A summary of the event was featured in the April 2014 issue of the *Presbyterian Record* and a discussion guide was produced at presbyterian.ca/2014/05/13/grace-alone-study-guide/.

In 2014 Sola “Faith Alone” took place on November 1, 2014, at St. Columba Chapel, Atlantic School of Theology, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The keynote speakers were the Rev. Tim Archibald, and Dr. Anna Robbins. The panelists

were the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Chenard, the Rev. Dr. Laurence DeWolfe, the Rev. Charles Cook, and Dr. Anne Marie Dalton. A discussion guide picking up on themes from the 2014 event has been distributed.

The 2015 event was “Sola Scriptura” which took place on October 31, 2015, at Presbyterian College in Montreal. The Saturday event was twinned with a Friday, October 30 event sponsored by Presbyterian College. On Friday, Dr. Edith Humphrey of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary spoke on the theme of scripture. The speakers on October 31 in the morning were the Rev. Dr. Roland DeVries and the Rev. Jennifer Cameron. The afternoon’s presenters were the Rev. Sybil Mosely (Livingstone Church, Montreal); the Rev. Dr. Kay Diviney (Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul); Dr. Hillary Kaell (Concordia); and Dr. Jason Zuidema (Institut Farel). Audio/visual recordings of the lectures are on the website, centre4leadership.ca/index.php/2015/11/14/sola-scriptura-lectures-video/.

The Rev. John Vaudry, a member of our committee reports:

Saturday, October 31st began with a lecture on Sola Scriptura: A Baptismal Defense by Dr. Roland De Vries, the newly installed Director of Pastoral Studies of the Presbyterian College. He focused on baptism as union with Christ, and explored the way that our experience of baptism drives us to seek understanding of our identity in Christ. Our baptism precedes our engagement with the scriptures and sends us to the scriptures to answer that age-old question: “Who am I?”

The Rev. Jennifer Cameron of St. Columba Presbyterian Church, Belleville, Ontario then spoke on the authority of the Bible in the life of the Christian and in the church. It was refreshing to hear this often academically treated subject discussed from a purely pastoral perspective.

A thought-provoking panel discussion was included in the program, featuring pastors and scholars from the Montreal area who represented several different traditions. This panel provided an illuminating mix of academic and pastoral perspectives on Scripture, as well as moving personal testimonies to God feeding his people through his Word.

The 2016 event will be “Solus Christus” which will take place on Saturday, October 29, 2016, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Keynote speakers will be Dr. Wendy Peterson, board member of NAIITS and the Rev. Peter Bush, Westwood Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Panelists include the Rev. Brad Childs of First Presbyterian, Regina, Saskatchewan; Dr. Irma Fast Dueck of Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Dr. Patrick Franklin of Providence Seminary, Otterburne, Manitoba; and the Rev. Germaine Lovelace of First Church, Kenora, Ontario. To join via internet, e-mail: five.solas@live.com for instructions. This event is being linked to a synod gathering taking place on Friday, October 28, 2016.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church actively promote the “Solus Christus” event to take place in Winnipeg, Manitoba on October 29, 2016, and encourage their members to either attend this event or to join via internet.

We are grateful to Knox College who will be hosting the fifth Sola celebration on Saturday, October 28, 2017. This event will be the finale to the five Solas and take place in the 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church promote the “Soli Deo Gloria” event in celebration of the 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation to take place at Knox College in Toronto on Saturday, October 28, 2017, and encourage their members to attend.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN 2016

The Committee on History recognizes and honours the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of women in The Presbyterian Church in Canada this year.

BIRTHDAY OF CANADA IN 2017

The Committee on History looks forward to marking the 150th birthday of Canada in a special way in 2017.

NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN MUSEUM

The National Presbyterian Museum is located within St. John’s Church, 415 Broadview Avenue, Toronto. It contains a vast collection of interesting and informative items. From rare communion tokens to items sent by

missionaries from around the world, to the largest collection of church plates in our country, as well as some of the oldest books ever used in seminary education in Canada, to the opportunity to walk into a pioneer chapel, the museum is a treasure waiting to be explored by its guests. After touring the museum, visitors are extremely positive in their comments and often remark that they wish they had known about it years earlier. It is hoped that awareness of the museum will continue to grow in our denomination. Both residents of, and visitors to, the Greater Toronto Area should make a visit to the museum a priority. The museum welcomes visits from individuals, families as well as church groups. Guided tours are available by contacting Ian Mason or Al Clarkson at 416-469-1345 or museum@presbyterian.ca. Operating and promoting the museum has occurred because of many selfless and hard-working individuals. Mr. Ian Mason and Mr. Al Clarkson are the “front line” workers at the museum. Their dedication and enthusiasm for the museum is essential and contagious.

The Museum Advisory Committee consists of Ms. Kim Arnold, Mr. Al Clarkson, the Rev. Duncan Jeffery, Mr. Ian Mason, Ms. Barbara Nawratil, Ms. Marilyn Repchuck (convener of the Committee on History), the Rev. Maureen Walter (minister of St. John’s Church where the Museum is located) and the Rev. Angus Sutherland (convener). The committee is aware of discussions presently regarding options for the future of St. John’s Church in Toronto. Within the next 3–5 years we may need to find a new home for the museum.

During the past year, the museum has been delighted to host visitors, including a delegation from Taiwan, who not only enjoyed their visit, but helped to identify some objects that had previously been uncertain. The museum also went out to various locations on ten separate occasions providing a small sampling of what might be seen in a visit to our site. On one of these outings, we hosted an organ concert and hymn sing harking back to the year 1900, using the 1897 Book of Praise. This took place at the former St. James Church in Thamesville, Ontario. The museum was delighted to receive some important new artefacts relating to Presbyterian history, including items from the life and ministry of the Rev. Donald Walker MacKay, dies for a Scottish communion token, some communion cards, an 1850s communion table, items from the Boy’s Brigade, a precentor’s chair from Saint Gabriel Street Church, Montreal, and many others. We value the items churches and individuals offer us and are pleased to commemorate closing churches by including items from their buildings in our collection.

Although it is the National Museum for The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the museum receives no annual funding through the church. Its operating revenue is completely dependent upon the modest interest from the Dr. John Johnston Memorial Fund, and donations from visitors to the museum. Securing an ongoing basis of financial support is absolutely vital if the museum is to continue. We are deeply thankful to those congregations that have been willing to contribute \$50 each year from their budgets to support the museum. We are the repository of memories and artefacts relating to the past activities of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and we seek to enable the church to remember all congregations that have closed. We cannot do this without the financial support of the church.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the congregations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada be encouraged to contribute to the National Presbyterian Museum and that they be assessed \$50 by their respective presbyteries to this end.

Please note that the mailing and email addresses for the Museum are:

National Presbyterian Museum
180 Danforth Ave
PO Box 35007, Ellerbeck Postal Outlet
Toronto ON M4K 3P5

presbyterianmuseum.ca

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING CLERGY

In thanks and celebration for those who have provided many years and often an entire career of faithful service to The Presbyterian Church in Canada, it is our hope and desire that future General Assemblies will continue this action.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That with thanks to God and in celebration of the clergy and church workers who have retired in 2015, the 2016 General Assembly, on behalf of our entire denomination, includes a moment of recognition for these faithful representatives of Jesus Christ and diligent servants of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

THE ORAL AND VISUAL HISTORY PROJECT

The mandate of the project is: To celebrate and learn from the faith and polity of our church's ministerial and lay leaders, "The Oral and Visual History Project" will create a permanent, ongoing, oral and visual record. Based on the digital video recordings from individual interviews, the ultimate goal of the project is to provide access that is both archival and web-based.

The project is being spearheaded by a sub-committee with three specific parts: 1) the collection of interviews; 2) the processing of the interviews; and 3) the presentation of the interviews in archival and web-based venues. Our goal is to have 80 interviews reflective of the gender, ethnic, and regional dynamics of our denomination. This work commenced in Vancouver at General Assembly, 2015 and will continue in 2016.

PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY

Two issues of *Presbyterian History* are published each year and go out in the PCPak in January and September. The January 2016 issue included an article by Chris Redmond from Waterloo, Ontario, *John Somerville and the Presbyterian Book of Praise* as well as *A Review Six Books on Human Sexuality* by Peter Bush.

Presbyterian History is well served through the conscientious and creative insight provided by its editor, the Rev. Peter Bush. He welcomes suggestions for topics as well as feedback. Articles can be submitted directly to him at peterwwpres@mts.net. Many of the articles can be accessed online at presbyterian.ca/newsletters.

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY

The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History (CSPH) met for its annual meeting on September 26, 2015, at Knox College. Thanks was extended to the Rev. Jeremy Bellsmith for his enthusiastic fulfillment of the duties of Secretary-Treasurer during this past year. Ms. Elizabeth Millar of Mount Allison University Library acted as the editor of the Society's papers since 2005 and edited over 45 papers during this term. Her resignation was regretfully received and she was thanked for her careful and diligent work.

Presenters for the day were as follows:

- Mr. Bob Anger: "Struggle to Achieve: Rev. James Nisbet and the Foreign Missions Committee of the Canada Presbyterian Church"
- Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod: "'Your ringing testimony to the cause of truth': Machen and the PCC's Andrew Grant in a 1925 Partnership to Save 'true evangelical Christianity'"
- Megan Baxter: "Now We Unite: Religion, Service and Ideal Womanhood in the CGIT in the Interwar Years" (Canadian Girls in Training)
- Student presenters (Knox College students and graduates):
 - Ian Marnoch: "Continuity and Discontinuity in the *Book of Praise* – 1997 edition"
 - Matthew Lingard: "The PCC and Two World Wars: Shifting Attitudes and Responses Toward Warfare"
 - *Jessica Cho: "The Re-examination of Kathleen Stewart's Ear Infection Treatment" (at the Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School, Kenora, Ontario) (*Knox College graduate)

The meeting this year will be held on September 24, 2016, at Knox College. A call for papers is being circulated. Suggested theme includes: the recognition that 2016 will be the 50th year of ordination of women within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A collection of papers presented in previous years can be found at csp.h.ca/papers.html

The Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod continues as president. The CSPH exists to serve the church, providing much needed perspective and insight so that the church may continue in the future to serve the cause of Christ in Canada.

ARCHIVES

As a denomination we are in an enviable position with our archives. The Archivist, Ms. Kim Arnold, and the Assistant Archivist, Mr. Bob Anger, continue to provide dependable, meticulous and hardworking service. The committee commends them for the exceptional service they provide to The Presbyterian Church in Canada! The Committee on History appreciate the help of volunteers. Mrs. Betty Arnold after 29 years of service as Archives volunteer has retired. Thank you so much Betty and we will miss you. The Rev. Dr. Robert Anderson continues to volunteer his service with us.

This has been another busy year in the Archives. In addition to the daily work of appraising, preserving, cataloguing and responding to church-related research requests, here are some of the highlights Archives staff has provided to the church during this reporting period: records management for the national office and congregations, assessing best practices for managing digital records, arranging for the ongoing microfilming/digitizing of congregational records, creating new resources regarding care of church records, revising and updating The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives website, networking with seminary students regarding their assignments on church history, applying for an annual government grant to host a summer photo cataloguing project.

Bob Anger completed a three week trip to Jobat, India to appraise and collect historic records for the Archives relating to the India-Presbyterian Church in Canada mission connection.

In April, 2016, Ms. Kim Arnold will be traveling to an Archives Conference in Dundee, Scotland where she will be speaking regarding The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives residential schools work and our connection to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. By sharing our story in this way it will help to fulfill the Presbyterian Church in Canada's responsibility to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report and their "94 Calls to Action".

CONCLUSION

The Committee on History is very grateful for the time, wisdom and assistance provided by The Rev. Stephen Kendall, Clerk of General Assembly; The Rev. Don Muir, Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly; Ms. Terrie-Lee Hamilton, Senior Administrator, General Assembly Office, as well as Mrs. Elizabeth Bartlett and Mrs. Frances Hogg, General Assembly Office.

The committee is excited about the activities and projects listed in this report. We invite Presbyterians from coast to coast to share in these initiatives, and we welcome your suggestions. We also encourage you and your churches as you preserve and celebrate your own unique Presbyterian Heritage. As The Presbyterian Church in Canada journeys into the future it is our desire that the church remember that prayer and intentional church development, blessed by committed people and the hand of Almighty God, can accomplish great things!

Marilyn Repchuck
Convener

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 1

That the Moderator write to the Rev. Byungho Kim, the General Secretary of the Korean Christian Church in Japan expressing the church's concern at the increasing xenophobia, hate speech and harassment directed at minorities in Japan and expressing our support to KCCJ's efforts to combat xenophobia and hate speech. (see p. 11.1.4)

Recommendation No. 2

That the Moderator write to the Prime Minister of Japan and the Japanese Ambassador to Canada expressing the church's concern at the increasing xenophobia, hate speech and harassment directed at minorities in Japan, and requesting the Government of Japan to reconsider its opposition to legislation that would criminalize both hate speech and hate crimes. (see p. 11.1.4)

Recommendation No. 3

That the Moderator write to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs expressing the church's concern at the increasing xenophobia, hate speech and harassment directed at minorities in Japan and expressing the church's hope that the Government of Canada will address these matters with Japanese officials. (see p. 11.1.4)

Recommendation No. 4

That the Moderator write to the Ambassador of the Dominican Republic expressing the church's concern about the treatment and the deportation of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic, and request the Government of the Dominican Republic discontinue revoking citizenship as a result of the 2013 decision of the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal which stripped Juliana Deguis Pierre of her citizenship. (see p. 11.1.5)

Recommendation No. 5

That the Moderator write to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs expressing the church's concern about the treatment and deportation of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic and particularly those impacted by the 2013 decision of the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal which stripped Juliana Deguis Pierre of her citizenship, and request that Canadian government officials raise these concerns with Dominican Republic government officials. (see p. 11.1.5)

Recommendation No. 6

That the Moderator write to Bishop Rev. Sandor Zán Fabian of the Reformed Church of sub-Carpathian Ukraine and the Bishop István Szabó of the Reformed Church in Hungary expressing the church's concern at the ongoing discrimination against the Roma and encouraging the Reformed Church of Sub-Carpathian Ukraine and the Reformed Church in Hungary in their mission and ministry with the Roma. (see p. 11.1.6)

Recommendation No. 7

That the Moderator write to the Maya-Mam Association of Research and Development and the Fraternidad of Maya Presbyterians to inquire if the Government of Guatemala's support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has resulted in improvements in the lives of Indigenous people and greater respect for their human rights. (see p. 11.1.7)

Recommendation No. 8

That the Moderator write to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs urging that Canada encourage the Government of Guatemala to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. (see p. 11.1.7)

Recommendation No. 9

The Moderator write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs encouraging the Government of Canada, to continue calling for an end to violence against LGBT people and for the respect of human rights of all people regardless of sexual orientation and/or gender identity in relevant international fora. (see p. 11.1.8)

Recommendation No. 10

That the Moderator write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting information on how the Government of Canada will ensure that military equipment sold to Saudi Arabia will not be used against civilians engaged in peaceful protest activities in Saudi Arabia or in other countries. (see p. 11.1.9)

Recommendation No. 11

That the Moderator write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting that the most recent report on human rights in Saudi Arabia be made available to the public. (see p. 11.1.9)

Recommendation No. 12

That the Moderator write to the Minister of International Development asking what the Government of Canada's plans are to increase ODA in the next three years. (see p. 11.1.10)

Recommendation No. 13

That the Moderator write to the Minister of International Development encouraging the Government of Canada to ensure that Canada's ODA policies are consistent with the values and goals of the SDGs. (see p. 11.1.10)

Recommendation No. 14

That congregations be encouraged to review the Sustainable Development Goals (2015–2030) as a means of evaluating the conduct of Canadian development priorities. (see p. 11.1.10)

Recommendation No. 15

That the Moderator write to AMMID, PWS&D's partner, asking 1) for its reflections on the impact the Marlin mine has had on communities in which AMMID has programs; and 2) whether AMMID has ongoing concerns regarding the mine after it is closed. (see p. 11.1.11)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

THE TREATMENT OF MINORITY AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

This year, the International Affairs Committee report considers the circumstances of minorities and Indigenous peoples who experience discrimination. Sometimes differences between groups of people become the basis of marginalization, disenfranchisement or conflict. And yet God blessed a minority group to be a light to all nations and instructed them to care for vulnerable people.

The Bible says: "When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." This advice is from Leviticus 19, more famously known for its law to "love your neighbour as yourself". Words have power. How we define 'alien', 'citizen', 'Indigenous', 'minority' and 'majority', 'ethnicity' and 'nationality' are scrutinized. Often the way we make decisions about how to treat people hinges on these definitions. Are you a terrorist or refugee? Are you Indigenous? Are you a citizen? Human relationships are often marked by xenophobia, bigotry, marginalization and hatred. But God's message of care leads us to offer sanctuary and to be concerned with healing broken relationships and upholding the dignity of all people.

Jesus was well acquainted with the holiness codes of the Levitical priests, and he often advised his followers to live beyond the 'letter of the law'. He taught us to go the extra mile, to turn the other cheek. Jesus reminded his disciples that we are commanded to love our neighbour, and even our enemies. He went further, explaining that love is not an emotion but an active way of life. When Jesus was admonished by a Syrophenician woman to extend God's grace to her and heal her daughter, he complied, and by doing so, taught us to love and serve the outsider as we would our own brother or sister, for we are all God's children. Above all, Christians are called to invite our neighbours into loving relationships. To love means to reach out and befriend the other. Commanded to love, we are called to respond whenever our neighbour is vulnerable.

Koreans in Japan

There is a significant Korean minority in Japan. Japan occupied and annexed Korea in 1910, incorporating the country and its people into an expanding Japanese Empire. Hundreds of thousands of Koreans immigrated to Japan to provide cheap labour in Japanese industries. During World War II hundreds of thousands more Koreans were

conscripted and forcibly taken to work in Japanese factories, mines and agriculture to support the Japanese war effort. By the war's end more than two million Koreans resided in Japan.

When the war ended, many returned to Korea. Koreans who repatriated could only take the possessions they could carry and a small amount of currency. Those who had acquired property or savings were motivated to stay in Japan to safeguard these painfully acquired assets. Approximately 600,000 stayed, though it became evident they were not welcome.

During the colonial period, Koreans were made citizens of the Japanese Empire. Universal male suffrage was established in Japan in 1925 and included Korean men in Japan. In 1947, one day before Japan's new postwar constitution came into effect, an imperial decree stripped citizenship of Koreans remaining in Japan and requiring them to register as aliens, essentially rendering them stateless.

Article 12 of the 1947 constitution prohibits any "discrimination in political, economic, or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status, or family origin". Stripping Korean residents of their citizenship and forcing them to register as aliens deliberately put them outside the protections afforded to Japanese citizens. This was done by linking human rights to citizenship and placing Koreans in Japan in the new status of resident foreigners, with no protection against discrimination in employment, housing, and educational opportunities and with no rights to social benefits such as welfare, medical insurance and pensions, benefits they contributed to through their taxes.

Throughout the postwar period, most Koreans in Japan have lived as invisible outsiders. To mitigate the worst forms of discrimination many hid their Korean identities. They continued to use in public the Japanese names they were required to take in the colonial period. The vast majority of the 600,000 Koreans in Japan today are second, third, fourth and fifth generation Koreans, born and educated in Japan, usually speaking little or no Korean, and, culturally speaking, much more Japanese than Korean.

Approximately 80% of Koreans in Japan whose roots go back to the colonial period intermarry with Japanese people. Since the 1990s more than 10,000 per year have acquired Japanese citizenship. More would probably do so if the process was less difficult. The main problem is that there is no distinction in Japan between citizenship as nationality and citizenship as ethnicity. Canadians have many different ethnicities, but share a common Canadian nationality. In Japan, there is no conception of nationality that does not require Japanese ethnicity. Japanese citizenship is granted only to those with a high degree of cultural assimilation. While many Koreans in Japan are highly assimilated into Japanese society, some are not willing to totally deny their Korean heritage.

Significant progress in ameliorating the situation of Korean residents in Japan has been made in the postwar period. The signing of the Japan-Republic of Korea Treaty in 1965 meant an end to statelessness for the vast majority of Koreans in Japan who were prepared to accept the offer of South Korean citizenship, without being required to return to South Korea. However, the minority of Koreans in Japan who continue to identify with North Korea remain stateless to this day.

Japan signed the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1979 and the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees in 1982. These actions led to a new status of "special permanent residence" for those Koreans (and their descendents) who came to Japan in the colonial period. As a result, Koreans in Japan became eligible for social benefits such as government medical insurance and national pensions, which they contributed to through taxes.

There is a significant minority of extreme, ultra-nationalist elements in Japanese society who dream of reviving the pre-1945 Japanese Imperial system. They portray foreign residents (particularly Koreans in Japan) as potentially subversive and, in the case of Koreans with ties to North Korea, as potential terrorists in order to agitate public opinion against those viewed as non-Japanese.

Prime Minister Shinzō Abe's government has ties to ultra-nationalist groups. This has emboldened them to harassment and intimidation through mass demonstrations in Korean areas of Japanese cities, using hate speech as a means of stoking xenophobia in the wider Japanese society. This has led to violence against Koreans, especially Korean schoolgirls, whose Korean school uniforms have been slashed with knives wielded by ultra-nationalist extremists.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has had a relationship with Koreans in Japan since 1927 when the Rev. Luther Young began a mission that led to the 1934 establishment of the Chosen Korean Church, the predecessor of the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ). The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues its partnership with KCCJ.

The KCCJ advocates and works for justice and human rights for Koreans and other foreigners living in Japan. The best known example is KCCJ's campaign against compulsory fingerprinting of all Korean residents of Japan, in which Presbyterian missionaries, the Rev. Jack and Mrs. Clarabeth McIntosh, played a prominent role.

The KCCJ organized an international conference on Minority Issues and Human Rights in Japan, in Tokyo in November 2015. The conference addressed xenophobia and hate speech and called on the Government of Japan to enact legislation against hate speech similar to Canadian legislation. The Presbyterian Church in Canada through International Ministries was a financial contributor and sent a Canadian Presbyterian delegation including the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams, Associate Secretary of International Ministries, the Rev. Dr. Ronald Wallace, Glynis' immediate predecessor and former missionary to Japan, and three young Presbyterians: Ms. Jackie Bannerman, Ms. Mary Kyei and Ms. Yeram Ryu. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is proud to stand with the KCCJ in this struggle against xenophobia and hate speech.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Rev. Byungho Kim, the General Secretary of the Korean Christian Church in Japan expressing the church's concern at the increasing xenophobia, hate speech and harassment directed at minorities in Japan and expressing our support to KCCJ's efforts to combat xenophobia and hate speech.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Prime Minister of Japan and the Japanese Ambassador to Canada expressing the church's concern at the increasing xenophobia, hate speech and harassment directed at minorities in Japan, and requesting the Government of Japan to reconsider its opposition to legislation that would criminalize both hate speech and hate crimes.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs expressing the church's concern at the increasing xenophobia, hate speech and harassment directed at minorities in Japan and expressing the church's hope that the Government of Canada will address these matters with Japanese officials.

Haitians in the Dominican Republic (D.R.)

The racial tensions in the Dominican Republic can be traced back to the nineteenth century, and particularly to Haiti's occupation of its territory between 1822 and 1845. Recent government measures have included the rounding-up and summary expulsion of undocumented Haitians and even Dominican citizens of Haitian descent, following a pattern of racism, arbitrariness and disregard for human rights by the Dominican Republic authorities.

The plight of Dominicans of Haitian descent gained international attention with the September 2013 ruling by the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal in a case brought against the Dominican Republic government by Juliana Deguis Pierre. Ms. Pierre was born in the Dominican Republic to Haitian parents who immigrated to work as cane cutters (without work visas) in a Dominican sugar-cane plantation. Her parents registered her at birth. Ms. Pierre was told by Dominican authorities that her birth certificate was invalid when, as an adult, she tried to register for an ID card, a requisite for both legal work status and for the registration of her own child, also born in the Dominican Republic.

The current constitution guarantees citizenship to anyone born and registered in the country. The only exception are children of parents who are "in transit," a provision that had always been narrowly understood to cover diplomatic personnel or tourists visiting the country. In its ruling, the Constitutional Tribunal reinterpreted and extended this exception to cover undocumented immigrants. As a consequence, the ruling by the Constitutional Tribunal revoked Ms. Pierre's citizenship, alleging her parents were "in transit" in the Dominican Republic. This decision was retroactively extended to include all children born in the D.R. to parents who were or are undocumented from 1929 or later. The retroactive element of the decision is disturbing. It broadens a previously narrow interpretation of the law and extends its reach to the children of Haitians and undocumented immigrants, stripping them of nationality, and condemning them to statelessness, potentially impacting 250,000 people.

The vulnerability of Dominican children born to Haitian parents without documentation does not occur anywhere else in the Americas. This decision follows a long history of prejudice against and systematic persecution of individuals of Haitian ancestry by the Government of the Dominican Republic.

The systematic nature of these abuses was confirmed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in a 2012 report. The IACHR concluded that the Dominican Republic violated the right to humane

treatment, the right to personal liberty, the right to property, freedom of movement and residence, the right to judicial protection under Dominican laws and the American Convention on Human Rights, to which the Dominican Republic is a signatory (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, March 2012). Dominican authorities are preventing Dominicans of Haitian descent from receiving proper identification documents. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (July 18, 2012) reports accounts of Dominican officials illegally destroying birth certificates and ID cards, denying those under detention the opportunity to prove their Dominican citizenship. Ms. Pierre's situation is not an exception but rather one more instance of discrimination against Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent.

The decision by the Constitutional Tribunal impacts hundreds of thousands of individuals. In response to questions from international media and human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, the Dominican government has claimed that it is trying to curb illegal immigration from Haiti. Under the terms of a 2014 law, those affected by the 2013 decision who have birth certificates, such as Ms. Pierre, can apply to receive their ID cards and passports. This represents approximately 24,000 people. Those born in the Dominican Republic before 2007 and who do not have a birth certificate must apply for regularization. Regularization has slowed to a trickle. The government poorly explained the process to the public. Even those with birth certificates had difficulty obtaining IDs. There are 150 documented cases in which Dominicans with certificates had their IDs denied by Dominican authorities. Only 8,755 (of 186,000) Dominicans of Haitian descent who lacked birth certificates managed to enroll in the regularization program by its deadline. The government refused to extend the deadline.

Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees the right to nationality, and that no person shall be arbitrarily deprived of his or her nationality.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Ambassador of the Dominican Republic expressing the church's concern about the treatment and the deportation of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic, and request the Government of the Dominican Republic discontinue revoking citizenship as a result of the 2013 decision of the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal which stripped Juliana Deguis Pierre of her citizenship.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs expressing the church's concern about the treatment and deportation of Haitians living in the Dominican Republic and particularly those impacted by the 2013 decision of the Dominican Constitutional Tribunal which stripped Juliana Deguis Pierre of her citizenship, and request that Canadian government officials raise these concerns with Dominican Republic government officials.

Roma in Hungary and the Ukraine

The "Roma" are a traditionally itinerant ethnic group originally from Northern India and the lands to its northwest who left that region between 500 and 1000 CE. "Roma" can refer to a number of different groups of people who identify themselves (or are identified by others) as Roma, Sinti, Kale, Romanichels, Boyash, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Travellers, Dom and Lom. They have been pejoratively called "gypsies". The Roma are the largest ethnic minority in the European Union. Most Roma live in Central and Eastern Europe.

Discrimination against the Roma is not a new phenomenon, but recent high-profile cases have drawn attention to the plight of this ethnic minority in countries such as Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. In Hungary, Roma populations have been openly discriminated against by state authorities and have been the target of extreme-right parties and neo-nazi groups. In Germany, Italy and France there is increased opposition from right-wing groups against the immigration of Roma from the eastern periphery of the European Union. In many cases, these Roma are citizens of European Union countries that are also members of the Schengen area which was created in 1995, abolishing passport and border control between countries inside its common border. Roma cannot be legally barred from entering other nations even though they lack proper documentation to work legally in their host countries.

Roma communities everywhere tend to suffer from similar problems: low living standards, poor housing, lack of, or poor access to, public services such as education and healthcare, and high levels of unemployment. Discrimination, forced evictions and segregation are normative in many European countries and 71% of Roma in Eastern Europe live in poverty. A study by the European Public Health Alliance reports an alarming discrepancy (up to 20 years) in life expectancy between Roma and non-Roma. The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights reports that the main challenges facing the Roma in Ukraine include the lack of personal documents, difficulties accessing

quality education and employment, inadequate housing conditions and misconduct by the police toward Roma. The same report states that an unknown number of Roma are among the 260,000 displaced from Crimea and eastern Ukraine because of conflict in that region. The report states that displaced Roma are particularly vulnerable owing to their overall marginalization and negative public attitudes toward them. Roma who lack civil registration or residence documents, have been unable to register as internally displaced people for humanitarian assistance (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights). In Hungary, Amnesty International names specific challenges of addressing hate crimes (including the failure of police to investigate racially motivated attacks against Roma people). Forcible evictions of more than 100 Roma families have been recorded in one municipality which resulted in Hungary's highest court ruling that the municipality had violated the country's equal treatment legislation (Amnesty International "Hungary").

The European Union has encouraged member states to create and implement integration strategies for the Roma living in their countries and has made funding available for integration initiatives. There is no consistent implementation of these initiatives.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, through International Ministries, supports the work of missionary staff David and Anna Pandy-Szekeres who work with the Reformed Church of Sub-Carpathian Ukraine (RCCU) and the Reformed Church in Hungary. One part of the Pandy-Szekeres' ministry includes assisting Roma children who struggle in school. The program provides focused educational assistance to Roma children outside of their home school with the goal of re-entering their home school with greater confidence for academic success.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to Bishop Rev. Sandor Zan Fabian of the Reformed Church of sub-Carpathian Ukraine and the Bishop István Szabó of the Reformed Church in Hungary expressing the church's concern at the ongoing discrimination against the Roma and encouraging the Reformed Church of Sub-Carpathian Ukraine and the Reformed Church in Hungary in their mission and ministry with the Roma.

Indigenous People in Guatemala

There are some 390 million Indigenous people in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, Australia and the Pacific region. They experience systematic discrimination in many countries. Indigenous people share experiences of disproportionate levels of poverty, poor health, discrimination and exclusion from political and economic decision-making. In many areas around the world there are large gaps between human rights commitments and the lived realities of Indigenous people.

Half of Guatemala's 13 million people are Mayan (the largest Indigenous group in Guatemala). Some 40% of the population is of mixed Indigenous and European ancestry. Life expectancy for Mayans is 13 years less than non-Indigenous Guatemalans. 73% of the Indigenous population is poor and 26% is extremely poor: 35% of non-Indigenous people are poor. Mayans are subject to systemic racism.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration) is the most comprehensive human rights instrument concerning Indigenous peoples. Implementation is imperative to protecting rights and improving the wellbeing of Indigenous people. The Declaration guarantees the rights of Indigenous people to practice their cultures and customs, religion, languages and the right to a nationality. The Declaration articulates rights to self-determination, the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or occupied. Both Canada and Guatemala support for the Declaration.

In addition, Guatemala has also endorsed and ratified the UN International Labour Organization Convention No. 169, known as the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, yet little progress has been made to include Indigenous people in decision-making or consultation on public policies concerning their land rights or social policies. A 2015 report from the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs states that ten proposals have been submitted to the Guatemalan Congress in recent years proposing changes to allow greater inclusion of Indigenous peoples in decision making on policies that concern them; no new laws have been passed, however. The government created an Indigenous Peoples and Intercultural Office in March 2014 but this office has not published any reports about the results and impact of its work.

The legal system often does not protect Indigenous peoples' rights. The construction of the Chioxy hydroelectric plant resulted in the 1982 massacre of 440 indigenous people and displacement of many more. The Declaration specifies that Indigenous peoples are entitled to redress and compensation. A reparation plan was concluded in 2010,

and in November 2014, the government reached an agreement with the Indigenous communities affected to begin annual payments for reparations in individual compensation, social infrastructure, and economic development projects for these communities. Despite the legal agreement for compensation, construction of new homes and an official apology from the President of Guatemala, as stated by the court, there has been no implementation of conditions of the agreement.

On September 22–23, 2014, the United Nations celebrated the first World Congress on Indigenous Peoples. UN member states reaffirmed the Declaration and outlined several goals consistent with the Declaration to improve the wellbeing of Indigenous peoples including the protection of Indigenous women, development of culturally appropriate education for Indigenous youth and the development of policies by the State to protect Indigenous lands and resources from toxic industries. Implementation is slow. The struggle between the Indigenous population and different levels of government regarding the right to be consulted without fear of repercussions manifests itself daily in Guatemala. Where there is unwillingness to implement these recommendations, civil society groups and international bodies must continue to encourage governments to take meaningful steps to implement policies and programs that advance the principles of the Declaration.

PWS&D is working to improve the livelihoods of Indigenous women and men through partnerships with Maya-Mam Association of Research and Development (AAMID) and the Fraternidad of Maya Presbyterials.

Recommendation No. 7 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Maya-Mam Association of Research and Development and the Fraternidad of Maya Presbyterials to inquire if the Government of Guatemala's support for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has resulted in improvements in the lives of Indigenous people and greater respect for their human rights.

Recommendation No. 8 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs urging that Canada encourage the Government of Guatemala to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Sexual Minorities

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is in the midst of discussing whether or not to consider for certification gay and lesbian candidates for ministry and the celebration for marriage of gay and lesbian couples. While there are strong differences of views on these issues, there is agreement in the church that LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender) people should not be bullied, fear persecution, suffer violence or be the targets of legal sanctions because of their sexual orientation or identity.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, was the first global expression of rights to which all human beings are inherently entitled. The Declaration is considered the common standard for all peoples and nations. The thirty articles of the UN Declaration have been elaborated on in subsequent international treaties, regional human rights legislation and national constitutions. Article 3 of the UDHR states that "everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person." Article 5 states that "no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

A report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in June 2015 on discrimination and violence directed against LGBT people states that: "Since 2011, hundreds of people have been killed and thousands more injured in brutal violent attacks. Other documented violations include torture, denial of rights to assembly and expression and discrimination in education, employment, health care and housing (UN Human Rights Council).

In 76 countries, laws still criminalize consensual same-sex relations between adults, exposing individuals to the risk of arbitrary arrest, prosecution, imprisonment and even the death penalty in at least five countries. Laws criminalizing cross-dressing are used to arrest and punish transgender people. Other laws are used to harass, detain, discriminate or place restrictions on the freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. These discriminatory laws contribute to perpetuating stigma and discrimination as well as hate crimes, police abuse, torture and ill-treatment, family and community violence, and have a negative impact on public health by impeding access to health and HIV services.

Some states require transgender people to submit to sterilization as a condition of obtaining legal recognition of their gender without which many are forced to live on the margins of society excluded from regular employment, education, health care and denied other basic rights (Ghoshal and Knight).

The failure to uphold the human rights of LGBT people and protect them against discriminatory laws and practices or against violence, constitute serious violations of international human rights law and have a far-reaching impact on individuals and society. It contributes to increased vulnerability to ill health, including HIV infection and social and economic exclusion. It can also have a negative impact on economic growth in a society (Reid).

Legislation alone does not prevent hate crimes against LGBT people from happening. Laws need to be enforced. In states where legislation is intended to protect the rights of LGBT people, it is often not fully implemented. In many countries, homophobia and transphobia are entrenched in police forces and there are frequently flaws in the investigation and the prosecution of LGBT hate crimes.

Non-state actors (organizations that are not governments and individuals) commit violence against sexual minorities. Men accused of homosexuality in some countries may be stoned to death or executed (Human Rights Watch).

Some governments are changing their laws and policies so that the human rights of LGBT people enjoy the same basic rights as other citizens. For example, LGBT groups in Kenya and Tunisia have been granted permission to register and openly operate LGBT organizations. Malawi upheld a moratorium in 2015 on arrests for consensual same-sex conduct pending a court review in which activists challenged discriminatory laws.

Canada and LGBT Refugee Claimants

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that sexual orientation is a ‘social group’ within the context of determining convention refugee status (Canada v. Ward, [1993] 2 S.C.R. 689). This means that someone with a well-founded fear of persecution based on their sexual orientation can seek asylum in Canada. The court defined a “particular social group” as: 1) groups defined by an innate, unchangeable characteristic; 2) groups whose members voluntarily associate for reasons so fundamental to their human dignity that they should not be forced to forsake the association; and 3) groups associated by a former voluntary status, unalterable due to its historical permanence (Egale – Canada Human Rights Trust).

Internationally, sexual orientation and gender identity are protected under “particular social group”. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees recognizes sexual orientation and gender identity as a ground for persecution as members of a “particular social group”. People fleeing persecution for reasons of their sexual orientation and gender identity can qualify as refugees under Article 1A (2) of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is opposed to homophobia. Church statements have affirmed that scripture treats homosexual practice as a departure from God’s created order, but that homosexual orientation is not a sin. The 1994 General Assembly affirmed that homosexual acts between consenting adults are a private matter and should not be criminalized.

One of the foreign policy priorities of the former Conservative Government was for Canada to provide leadership on human rights, including religious freedom, protecting the rights of sexual minorities and pursuing a robust agenda for advancing democracy and the rule of law.

Recommendation No. 9 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

The Moderator write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs encouraging the Government of Canada, to continue calling for an end to violence against LGBT people and for the respect of human rights of all people regardless of sexual orientation and/or gender identity in relevant international fora.

Conclusion

Much is revealed about the values and qualities upheld by countries and its peoples, by the treatment of vulnerable people. Scripture reveals specific responsibilities of Israel toward the treatment of aliens and strangers. Jesus’ ethic of love and care for neighbours is subordinate only to loving God. The situation of Indigenous and minority groups that are effected by racism, discrimination, hatred and persecution are painful examples of where humankind fails to love and treat each other with dignity. The suffering love of Jesus Christ reminds us that as God’s grace is miraculously given to us, so we too must strive to reflect God’s love in our treatment of all people.

ARMS TRADE TREATY

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is intended to reduce as much as possible arms transfers to regimes that violate human rights, to terrorists and to organized crime. As of January 11, 2016, 130 UN member states have signed the ATT and 79 have ratified it. The Treaty entered into force on December 24, 2014. Canada is the only member of NATO that has not signed the Arms Trade Treaty. The Government of Canada has made a commitment to accede to the ATT.

The Canadian Commercial Corporation (a Crown corporation) helped broker a \$15 billion contract for the sale of light armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia by the London Ontario-based General Dynamics Land Systems Canada. The sale was announced in 2014. There is evidence that Canadian-built vehicles were used by Saudi Arabian troops in support of Bahraini forces to suppress peaceful public demonstrations against the Bahraini government (Mason, 2015). In May 2015, The Globe and Mail reported, “asked if it believes the Saudis used made-in-Canada [Light Armed Vehicles] when they went into Bahrain, the Canadian government doesn’t deny this happened.”

Given the Government of Saudi Arabia’s appalling human rights record, the 2015 General Assembly approved a recommendation that the Moderator write to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Defence requesting assurances that Saudi Arabia would not use Canadian-made vehicles against civilians engaged in peaceful activities (A&P 2015, p. 306). The letter was re-sent when the new Canadian government took office in November 2015. Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion responded: “Canada remains concerned about the human rights situation in Saudi Arabia. Canadian officials at the Embassy of Canada to Saudi Arabia engage regularly with Saudi officials...to maintain an open, respectful and constructive dialogue on human rights.” The Minister cited particular instances in which Canada spoke out against human rights violations. Regarding the sale of Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs) to Saudi Arabia, the Minister said “Canada has sold LAVs to Saudi Arabia since the 1990s and has no evidence that these LAVs have ever been used against the Saudi population.”

On March 1, 2016 Amnesty International and Project Ploughshares co-authored an open letter to Minister Dion calling for a halt to the deal between Canada and Saudi Arabia citing concerns that that LAVs transferred from Canada to Saudi Arabia in previous years could be used to support ground attacks in conflicts in Yemen which have resulted in thousands of civilian casualties. The last report on human rights in Saudi Arabia by the Government of Canada was done in 2011 and was not made public. The most recent human rights report will be completed in 2016.

Recommendation No. 10 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting information on how the Government of Canada will ensure that military equipment sold to Saudi Arabia will not be used against civilians engaged in peaceful protest activities in Saudi Arabia or in other countries.

Recommendation No. 11 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs requesting that the most recent report on human rights in Saudi Arabia be made available to the public.

The second Conference of States Parties to the ATT will be held in the summer of 2016 in Geneva. If Canada takes the necessary steps for treaty accession, it will be able to attend the conference as a state party. If Canada has not acceded to the treaty, it could still attend as an observer.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Last year, the committee presented a brief report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that had been approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 2000 to guide the international development agenda for the next 15 years. The MDG’s encouraged both donor and recipient nations to rationalize development programs under eight key themes. As noted, Canada has become a leader in promoting Maternal and Child Health which has had significant and measurable impacts. There have also been advances in literacy and poverty reduction. However, there was criticism that, in general, the MDGs lacked measurable indicators, were not ‘rights-based’ and had an inadequate (too narrow) focus on women and girls.

In 2013 the UN initiated a process to review the effectiveness of the MDGs and prepare for the post-2015 period. The process would generate new goals based on broad consultation with community groups. This ‘Global Conversation’ covered 83 countries. Input was received from 800,000 people. The consultation document is called “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, better known as the Sustainable Development Goals 2015–2030. There are 17 goals with 169 targets. These ambitious targets aim to end poverty;

hunger; promote health and education for all; focus on human rights; good governance; environmental concerns, including climate change, clean water and sustainable agriculture. The Canadian Council for International Cooperation has written a helpful commentary called “Transforming our World: Canadian perspectives on the Sustainable Development Goals. (SDGs)” The SDG theme is ‘Leave No One Behind’ and applies not only to ‘developing countries’ but all signatories of the ‘Transforming Document,’ including Canada.

There are critics who feel the SDGs are too broad and unattainable. Concerns are also being raised about resources, human and financial, to reach the goals. Many of these criticisms are fair but none of the goals is beyond reach if there is a consensus to move forward together as a global community.

Challenges for Canada

Canada has been reducing its Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) for the past two decades. Today our ODA has fallen to 0.24% of our GNI, one of the lowest in the developed world. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee has recommended that donor countries set a target of 0.7% of the donor countries’ gross national income for overseas development assistance.

When the Minister of International Development, the Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, received her mandate letter from Prime Minister Trudeau, it included a commitment to create a new policy and funding framework to guide Canada’s aid decisions, and to support the implementation of the SDGs.

Recommendation No. 12 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Minister of International Development asking what the Government of Canada’s plans are to increase ODA in the next three years.

Recommendation No. 13 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to the Minister of International Development encouraging the Government of Canada to ensure that Canada’s ODA policies are consistent with the values and goals of the SDGs.

Recommendation No. 14 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That congregations be encouraged to review the Sustainable Development Goals (2015–2030) as a means of evaluating the conduct of Canadian development priorities.

Information about the Sustainable Development Goals is online at sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs.

GOLDCORP DIALOGUE UPDATE

Shareholder dialogue is one of the few means available to persuade a corporation to respect human rights and limit environmental degradation in the absence of Canadian legislation that would hold Canadian mining companies accountable in law for their activities overseas. SHARE (Shareholder Association for Research and Education) offers shareholder services to investors wishing to encourage greater corporate social responsibility by corporations they hold shares in. SHARE provides services and expertise that The Presbyterian Church in Canada does not have in-house. The Presbyterian Church in Canada holds 22,500 (pension fund) and 29,000 (consolidated fund) shares in Goldcorp. SHARE organizes a dialogue between Goldcorp and several of its investors.

A majority of people in the municipalities surrounding the Marlin mine in Guatemala are Indigenous. Approximately 90% live below the poverty line. Its revenue between 2006 and 2013 was \$3 billion CAD (McGill Research Group). A 2011 report by researchers at Tufts University states that 90 percent of the economic benefits (which stay in Guatemala) of the mine flow to the Guatemalan government and workers from outside the communities closest to the mine, with local communities receiving around \$5 million USD, about one half of one percent of mine earnings (Zarsky and Stanley).

At the request of shareholders, Goldcorp hired an independent assessor to do a human rights assessment on the Marlin mine. The assessment, with recommendations, was published in 2010. Goldcorp prepared a response to the assessment in 2011 and an updated response in 2012. They have responded to some of the recommendations. Updates are imperative to track the implementation and effectiveness of policies to address documented and alleged human rights abuses and environmental protections. Goldcorp reports that an update is currently underway and will be completed later in 2016. The issues raised in the report comprise part of the content of the dialogue.

In 2011, the Asociación Maya-Mam de Investigación y Desarrollo (AMMID), a PWS&D partner, shared with the International Affairs Committee problems reported by seven communities directly affected by Goldcorp's Marlin mine in Guatemala. The dialogue The Presbyterian Church in Canada participates in encourages Goldcorp to implement human rights and environmental policies and due diligence procedures for company operations.

The 141st GA (2015) passed a recommendation that The Presbyterian Church in Canada ask all mining companies in which it has investments about adhering to Free, Prior and Informed Consent principles for consultation with Indigenous peoples. FPIC is a right enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In the next year, the dialogue with Goldcorp will focus on ensuring that sufficient safety, land and water reclamation policies are in place as the Marlin mine closes, encouraging the company to commit to FPIC, and ongoing public reporting of the corporation's activities with regard to human rights and environmental safeguards.

One of the ongoing controversies with regard to the Marlin mine was the disruption of access to potable water to 17 communities around the Marlin mine. These communities brought a case outlining their concerns before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IAHRC) which garnered a great deal of media coverage. Goldcorp is working with the Guatemalan government to address these concerns in two communities, with plans to build wells and infrastructure in a further seven communities. The company reports that these will be completed in 2016.

Post-closure monitoring did not include long term maintenance costs (e.g. maintenance of tailings ponds). The mine is currently being closed at an estimated cost of \$13 million. Land reclamation activities are scheduled for completion in 2017. Goldcorp's human rights assessment will be an important tool for reporting on how the closure plans have addressed the recommendations from the 2010 assessment.

Recommendation No. 15 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Moderator write to AMMID, PWS&D's partner, asking 1) for its reflections on the impact the Marlin mine has had on communities in which AMMID has programs; and 2) whether AMMID has ongoing concerns regarding the mine after it is closed.

With the mine's closure, The Presbyterian Church in Canada will assess its participation in the dialogue.

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Wendy Adams
Convener

Stephen Allen
Secretary

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

INTRODUCTION

This is a record of the stewardship by the Life and Mission Agency of the resources entrusted to it by the church. It is not simply a report; it reflects the lived theology of The Presbyterian Church in Canada as it seeks to be faithful to God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As you read the account of some of the work done in the last year, we hope you will also see behind the words a commitment to Christ's continuing ministry in Canada and around the world.

The Life and Mission Agency works to fulfill the mandate given to it by the church:

- “striving, under the power of the Holy Spirit to enable the whole church to serve the whole world, and thus be a sign of the reign of God;
- being faithful to the Mission statement of the church, and to affirm the vision and desire of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to be a church integrating discipleship, evangelism, social action and justice ministry;
- responding flexibly, creatively and effectively to the needs of congregations and courts of the church as they seek assistance in responding to the call of Jesus Christ in mission;
- giving priority to doing what must be done at the national level and facilitating tasks that can be done more appropriately at another level of the church, or ecumenically.”

The Life and Mission Agency fulfills this mandate by:

- providing resources to congregations, presbyteries and synods, and envisioning new and innovative models for ministries and congregational life;
- responding to disasters, the complex needs of refugees, and supporting life-giving long term development projects;
- communicating both the good and the tragic stories of our church, such as the terrible consequences of residential schools;
- gathering youth from around the world at Canada Youth into a community and encouraging them to follow the way of Christ in whatever path they are called;
- studying tough issues of faith and justice, such as human sexuality and climate change;
- offering guidance for discerning vocations for ordained ministry and welcoming pastors from abroad;
- connecting with people in distant corners of God's realm in order to encounter the diversity and the challenges of the followers of Christ's way.

Lives are being changed and the reign of God is extended because of the generous gifts to *Presbyterians Sharing*. The Presbyterian Church in Canada makes a difference.

PROGRAM SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

There are no consent recommendations

Recommendation No. 1

That permission be granted to report to the 2017 General Assembly on Overture Nos. 13, 22 and 36, 2015 re Establishing a Native Ministries Endowment Fund. (see p. 12.1.3)

Recommendation No. 2

That the General Assembly acknowledge with sincere thanks and appreciation the 31 years of service to The Presbyterian Church in Canada of Herbert Gale and that the minute of appreciation for the Reverend Dr. Herbert Gale be adopted. (see p. 12.1.4)

REPORT

Staff	General Secretary:	Richard Fee (retired August 31, 2015) Ian Ross-McDonald (from September 2015)
	Senior Administrator:	Colleen McCue
	Finance Administrator:	Mathew Goslinski
	Finance Administrative Assistant:	Mary Beth McLean

Representation on various working groups, committees and boards, overall agency coordination, serving the Life and Mission Agency Committee, policy development, human resources and financial management are handled by Program Support and Administration.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Karen Plater (Stewardship and Planned Giving) and Barbara Summers (Communications) have been active participants in the strategic planning initiative. Additional members of the staff and committee of the agency have been part of the larger conversation about the direction of the strategic plan. We look forward to working with the final form of the plan and using its values to frame and further guide our work. (see Assembly Council, p. 2.1.19–21)

REGIONAL RESOURCING GRANTS

The Life and Mission Agency gives regional resourcing grants to support programming in the synods. Four synods (the Synod of Alberta, the Synod of Saskatchewan, the Synod of Southwestern Ontario, and the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda) use the grants to help pay for various configurations of staffing. The remaining four synods designated the funds to support various presbytery and congregational initiatives. Among the initiatives supported this year were programs and events that focused on leadership, session and clergy support and training, youth programming, healing and reconciliation initiatives, rural and remote ministry support, and retreats.

SEXUALITY

presbyterian.ca/sexuality

In June 2015, The General Assembly adopted the following motion (A&P 2015, Rec. No. 5, p. 46):

That the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) prepare a joint study guide on the topics of human sexuality, sexual orientation and other related matters raised in the overtures to be posted on the church's website by the end of October, 2015 and that congregations, sessions, presbyteries and synods be invited to share the result of their conversation with both the Committee on Church Doctrine and Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) prior to March 31, 2016.

To accomplish the General Assembly's resolution, a design team was established in the months after the Assembly rose. The design team worked with terms of reference and served as a design and editorial body for the writer of the study guide, *Body, Mind and Soul – Study Guide on Human Sexuality*.

The members of the design team were the Rev. Marion Barclay MacKay (Justice Ministries), the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Chenard (Committee on Church Doctrine), the Rev. Daniel Cho (Justice Ministries), Ms. Nancy Harvey (Justice Ministries), the Rev. Dr. Dong-Ha Kim (Committee on Church Doctrine), and the Rev. Ian Shaw (Committee on Church Doctrine). The writer and compiler of the document was the Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset.

The purpose of the study guide was to promote and facilitate informed conversation about the topic of human sexuality and sexual orientation in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In addition, the study guide was intended to help people understand what The Presbyterian Church in Canada currently says about the topic, drawn from Acts and Proceedings and approved documents such as the Social Action Handbook. Thirdly, the study guide was designed to invite people and groups through The Presbyterian Church in Canada into prayerful consideration of the matters before it regarding sexuality and sexual orientation.

Multiple departments in the Life and Mission Agency supported the church's conversations about sexuality this year. Additional materials were compiled and created and financial resources were made available to assist congregations and courts of the church in their study and prayer about issues of sexuality.

OVERTURE NOS. 13, 22 AND 36, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 587–88, 597–98, 610)

Re: Establishing a Native Ministries Endowment Fund

Overture Nos. 13, 22 and 36, 2015 were referred to the Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency. A working group comprised of the Rev. Graham Kennedy and Ms. Mabel Litowski (both representing the Assembly Council) and the Rev. Dr. Ian Morrison and Ms. Anne Phillips (both representing the Life and Mission Agency) was created to prepare a response.

The working group reviewed the overtures, various policies, the Confession, and other collected documents relating to finances and the church's history and relationship with Aboriginal peoples. Additionally, the members consulted groups and individuals in the church in the process of preparing a response to the overtures. In the autumn of 2015, the group reported to both the Life and Mission Agency Committee and the Assembly Council and received further guidance about refining the report. It was agreed to name an Indigenous person as a member of the working group. However, before this came into effect, the members of the working group indicated that they felt that they had done all that was possible at this time.

Given the importance of these overtures and ensuring the participation of Indigenous voices, a new working group will be named to take the collected work of the working group as the basis for preparing a response to be presented to the 2017 General Assembly.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to report to the 2017 General Assembly on Overture Nos. 13, 22 and 36, 2015 re Establishing a Native Ministries Endowment Fund.

ASSOCIATE SECRETARY OF THE LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY AND DIRECTOR OF PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

The General Secretary and the convener of the PWS&D Committee were informed of Mr. Ken Kim's intention to resign as Director on January 16, 2015. Mr. Kim's last day was March 13, 2015. The Life and Mission Agency Committee was authorized to call for nominations from presbyteries. A Position Description Review Committee was named to review and make changes to the position description.

The Life and Mission Agency created a search committee that included the Rev. Wendy Paterson (convener, representing the Life and Mission Agency Committee), the Rev. Lara Scholey (convener of the PWS&D Committee), Dr. Marilyn Scott (former convener, representing the PWS&D Committee), the Rev. Dr. Andrew Johnston and the Rev. Glenn Inglis (both representing the church at large). The search committee also included the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency, the Rev. Dr. Richard Fee and the incoming General Secretary, the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald (both non-voting).

Letters were sent twice to all presbyteries requesting nominations. The position was advertised in *The Record*, PCPak and on the PCC and PWS&D website. The job posting was circulated widely within ecumenical and relief and development networks (CFGB, CCIC, ACT, etc.). Nominations were received from one presbytery for one candidate, and nine people submitted applications.

The search committee met by conference call on four separate occasions; at these meetings the committee spent a considerable amount of time reviewing the qualifications and position description and developing the interview questions. The search committee short-listed the applications to three people. The three candidates were invited to an interview in Toronto on August 7, 2015.

Upon recommendation of the search committee it was agreed that Mr. Guy Smagghe be appointed the Associate Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency and Director of PWS&D effective September 1, 2015.

ASSOCIATE SECRETARY FOR CANADIAN MINISTRIES

In June 2015 the General Assembly appointed Ian Ross-McDonald as the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency. The Life and Mission Agency Committee was authorized to call for nominations from presbyteries for the position of Associate Secretary for Canadian Ministries.

A Position Description Review Committee was named to review and confirm the position description. The members of the committee were: the Rev. Dr. Tom Billard, Ms. Judy Dodds, the Rev. Dr. Rick Fee, the Rev. Dr. Jean Morris, the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald, Ms. Betty Trevenen, the Rev. Anne Yee Hibbs (convener).

The Life and Mission Agency Committee authorized that a search committee be established to fill the vacancy of Associate Secretary, Canadian Ministries. The members of the search committee were the Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand, Ms. Nancy Harvey, the Rev. Chuck Moon, the Rev. Wendy Paterson (convener), Ms. Lori Ransom, and the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald (without vote).

Letters were twice sent to all presbyteries requesting nominations. The position was advertised in *The Record*, PCPak and on the PCC web site. Nominations were received from five presbyteries for five candidates and two of those nominated submitted applications. Twelve other people submitted applications.

The search committee met by telephone to review the qualifications and position description before developing interview questions. The search committee interviewed four candidates in Toronto on October 21, 2015.

Upon recommendation of the search committee it was agreed that Ms. Jennifer de Combe be appointed as the Associate Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency for Canadian Ministries.

Jen has a lively faith that instills a passion for service within her work and her life. She brings to this new work extensive experience and a deep understanding of partnership in mission and ministry.

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION

The Rev. Dr. Herbert Gale

For 31 years, the Rev. Dr. Herbert Gale faithfully served Christ and The Presbyterian Church in Canada, from his dynamic ministry in congregations to his retirement in 2015 as the Associate Secretary of Planned Giving within the Life and Mission Agency.

Herb Gale, born and raised in Charlotte, North Carolina, was an active member of Myers Park Presbyterian Church. Upon graduating from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, he served his home congregation as youth director before entering Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. After receiving his D.Min. from Union Seminary, Herb was called to Shelby Presbyterian Church in North Carolina as associate minister. From Shelby, Herb attended the Toronto School of Theology where he received a M.Th. in the area of spirituality.

In 1984, Herb was called to St. James Church in Stouffville, Ontario. While there, Herb met his wife, Shirley, who is also a Presbyterian minister. From Stouffville, the Gales were called, in 1993, to serve as co-pastors of Westminster-St. Paul's Church in Guelph, Ontario, where they still reside. In June 2004, Herb accepted the position of Associate Secretary for Planned Giving for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In this work, he traveled across Canada helping congregations develop vital planned giving ministries which integrated a holistic theology of stewardship and vision for ministry. In 2010 Herb was elected Moderator of the 136th General Assembly. As moderator, Herb shared his passionate conviction that an intentional focus on planned giving provides additional sources of funding for the church at every level to realize its dreams and expand its ministry for generations to come.

Herb served on the Worship Advisory Committee when it produced *The Book of Common Worship* in 1991 and the Stewardship Advisory Committee when the *Stewards by Design* Conferences were initiated. He is a frequent retreat leader and conference speaker. He has been the worship leader for three *Stewards by Design* Conferences, the worship co-ordinator for Canada Youth 2003, and the worship leader and chaplain for three national Clerks' Consultations.

A visionary pastor at heart and a Canadian Presbyterian by conviction, Herb has a passion for Christian spiritual growth and development, and how faithful stewardship builds up the reign of God and the church. His breadth of knowledge about congregational ministry as a result of serving congregations with 75 to 3,000 members, both urban and rural, over the past 31 years makes him a blessing to God's people. A passionate dreamer and visionary, Herb knows well the possibilities and challenges of ministry.

We thank God for Herb's extensive ministries and for the many contributions made in his years of faithful service. We pray that God will be with Herb and his family as he enters the next years of his journey.

Recommendation No. 2

Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly acknowledge with sincere thanks and appreciation the 31 years of service to The Presbyterian Church in Canada of Herbert Gale and that the minute of appreciation for the Reverend Dr. Herbert Gale be adopted.

STAFFING

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is fortunate to have people working in the various departments of the Life and Mission Agency who are very aware of the needs for their individual portfolios and work together in promoting the building up of the body of Christ, the Church.

This year has seen significant staffing changes in the Life and Mission Agency. At the end of August 2015 the Rev. Dr. Richard Fee retired as the General Secretary. Likewise, the Rev. Dr. Herb Gale retired as the Associate Secretary of Planned Giving in January 2016. Ms. Barbara Summers, Associate Secretary Communications, gave birth to a son named Cayden and is on parental leave until September 2016. Mr. Guy Smagghe was appointed as the Associate Secretary and Director of Presbyterian World Service and Development as of September 2015, Ms. Jennifer De Combe was appointed Associate Secretary for Canadian Ministries, effective in December 2015. International Ministries was fortunate to have the support of Ms. Nicole Jeffrey before Ms. Lily Ko joined the department in February 2016. The Stewardship and Planned Giving departments were amalgamated in September 2016; we give thanks for the work and dedication of Ms. Sheryl Sutton who served in the department for many years until February 2016. Ms. Anna Muir joined PWS&D in April 2016. Ms. Laura Fenwick left PWS&D after many years to work in Financial Services at the end of August 2015. In September 2015, Mr. David Jeffrey and Ms. Susan James completed their time with PWS&D. This year Ms. Julia Rao, Mr. David Di Sera and Ms. Michelle Ball joined PWS&D on a contract basis. In December 2015, Ms. Alison Stirling joined PWS&D as the Finance and Administration Coordinator. Ms. Jennifer Ramkissoon, PWS&D Program Coordinator, began maternity leave in October 2015 when she and her husband welcomed a daughter named Elena.

We are grateful that Mr. David Phillips adeptly and energetically continues to respond to requests and give presentations on Leading with Care.

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE

The denomination is blessed to have highly committed and gifted people from across Canada who serve the church as members of the Life and Mission Agency Committee. We are grateful to those who serve on the committee with diligence, faithfulness and dedication: the Rev. Dr. Tom Billard, Ms. Judy Dodds, the Rev. Chuck Moon, the Rev. Dr. Alfred Lee, Ms. Ginny-Lou Alexander, Mr. Aubrey Hawton, Ms. Nancy Harvey, Ms. Vivian Ketchum, the Rev. Douglas Schonberg, Dr. Jo Szostak, Ms. Carol Stymiest (Assembly Council representative), Ms. Susan McLennan (Womens Missionary Society representative), the Rev. Karen Horst (Moderator of the 141st General Assembly). We are especially grateful to the following people who are retiring from the committee this year: the Rev. Peter Baek (Assembly Council representative), Ms. Bonnie Langille (Atlantic Missionary Society representative), the Rev. Dr. Martin Kreplin, the Rev. Wendy Paterson (convener), the Rev. Lara Scholey (Presbyterian World Service and Development convener).

CANADIAN MINISTRIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Ian Ross-McDonald (until November, 2015) Jennifer de Combe (from December 2015)
	Program Coordinator:	Jennifer Bell
	Program Coordinator:	Anne Saunders

INTRODUCTION

presbyterian.ca/canadianministries

The second chapter of the Book of Acts gives us a pattern of Christian community at its best. The faithful members of the early church

...devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they

spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42–47)

Canadian Ministries understands its work in light of the design, experience and the distinctive characteristics of the early church expressed in Acts above: 1) the apostles' teachings, 2) fellowship (the spirit of communion that binds people together and catalyses community and communal sharing, and 3) the breaking bread and the prayers. The department provides human, online, printed and financial resources to enhance the mission and ministry of Christ through The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Life and Mission Agency, through Canadian Ministries, works and partners with ministries (e.g. congregations, missions, camps) and presbyteries to support and equip their members for effective leadership and faithful and dynamic ministry in the world to which Christ came and for which he died.

MANDATE

Understanding that congregations are of vital importance and that presbyteries have a pivotal role in the oversight of their constituencies, Canadian Ministries:

- provides accessible, thorough, and prompt responses to requests for information in all aspects of congregational life;
- produces online and print resources for the church in the fields of worship, evangelism, Christian education, youth, congregational development, change, transition, and leadership development;
- draws upon the gifts and talents of the leadership of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and connects them and their ideas to the wider church through leadership opportunities and online/print resources;
- assists presbyteries as they evaluate, envision, and execute programs as a part of their pastoral oversight and strategic planning;
- supports presbyteries in the development of workshops, consultations, conferences, and other programs for growth, renewal and health;
- aids congregations, presbyteries, and synods in their search for new and innovative mission and ministry initiatives by providing grants from regular budget sources, from internally restricted funds, and from designated bequests;
- partners with presbyteries to support new congregations, renew congregations, assist specialized ministries, and sustain ministries;
- makes mission appointments based upon presbytery requests; and
- will be current, creative, responsive, proactive, and innovative in all aspects of congregational ministry in seeking to carry out its mandate.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: “THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES...”

Faith is vibrant and robust when it is actively in search of greater understanding. In the Reformed tradition, study is an act of worship and a form of prayer. The task of learning and passing on the teachings of the faith is an essential part of Christian discipleship and is the responsibility of all.

Reports about the nationally available programs and funds that support Christian education are featured in this section.

Teacher/Leader Courses (TLC)

The Teacher/Leader Courses program has been discontinued. Canadian Ministries staff is exploring the creation a new program that will provide learning opportunities for congregational and mission leaders. This new initiative will be launched in the near future and will be designed to encourage church leaders, explore new ways of being church and address the theological and practical concerns of congregations in this time.

Children and Worship (C&W)

presbyterian.ca/children-and-worship

Children and Worship is a children's ministry based on the Montessori tradition. Children are invited to experience the wonder and mystery of God through a unique storytelling format and multi-sensory materials within a worship format designed for young children. This form of “Godly play” encourages faith formation in children, and has transformed Sunday Schools within The Presbyterian Church in Canada for over 25 years. C&W is perfect for smaller Sunday schools with a wide age range. C&W leadership training is done in partnership with the Reformed

Church in America, and the Christian Reformed Church in North America. There are currently seven enthusiastic and gifted trainers based in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario and British Columbia. Training opportunities are available in all provinces to equip church leaders to start a C&W ministry within their congregations and to provide ongoing support and resources. During 2015 there were eight training events held. Full information and a current list of upcoming training events are available on the church's website: presbyterian.ca/children-and-worship. Linda Shaw, C&W Program Coordinator (Simcoe, Ontario), and Jennifer de Combe, Associate Secretary for Canadian Ministries are the current representatives on the North American ecumenical partnership. Linda Shaw (has been a part of this ministry from the beginning) can be contacted (ianandlindshaw@gmail.com) for information or advice about beginning and nurturing the program.

Opening Doors to Discipleship

odtd.net

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a member of Presbyterian Reformed Education Partnership (PREP) in cooperation with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Moravian Church in America, and Presbyterian Church (USA).

Opening Doors to Discipleship (ODTD) is an on-line learning resource that has been the focus of the PREP partnership since 2006. Available at odtd.net, it offers congregations free online volunteer training, leader development and faith formation for groups and individuals. Each online course has 12 sessions packed with engaging life stories, solid biblical material, and opportunities for group and individual reflection. Two of its courses are now offered in Korean and Spanish – Course A: Teaching Skills and Course D: Discipleship. The other two courses are Course B: Bible Background and Course C: Reformed Faith. While these courses were originally created to help support Christian educators in congregations, the material can serve as excellent curriculum for Bible studies and confirmation classes or as a resource to equip elders, camp staff, parish nurses, etc. for informed and effective leadership. In 2015, 1,621 people visited the ODTP site a total of 3,662 times; 56.8% visits were from returning users and 43.2% were first visits; there were 627 users registered with The Presbyterian Church in Canada and 10 of these were newly registered.

Canada Youth (CY)

canadayouth.ca

CY events offer an exciting opportunity for youth, young adults and youth leaders to connect together; to celebrate and affirm not only their faith, but also their unique witness as Canadian Presbyterians. Substantial financial support is provided by the Life and Mission Agency. The funding is augmented by generous gifts from a number of different sources.

The CY Planning Team is a vibrant and diverse group from across the denomination and has been diligently and energetically working to ensure that CY2016 will continue to offer unique experiences that nurture faith and equip youth, young adults and youth leaders for effective and faithful leadership and service.

CY2016 will take place July 5–10, 2016, at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario. The theme for the event, *Joined together as God's dwelling place We Are Home* (Ephesians 2:20–22) will be explored throughout the week through worship, recreation, keynote presentation, workshops and smaller group experiences.

So many doors. So many journeys.

Still, whoever you are, wherever you're from, wherever you're going... we belong to each other.

Even more, we belong to God. God who says, "Welcome Home."

CY2016 will host two new initiatives:

1. **A Long Way from Home**
A full day at CY for all participants, of discovery activities designed to explore and respond faithfully to the current refugee crisis. This unique day will include workshops, films, discussion groups and interactive experiences.
2. **A Day in the Life of CY**
A new opportunity for congregational leaders to join the CY community for one day and get an authentic taste of the event. Guests will have the chance to hear great speakers, participate in workshops and join the CY community for worship and recreation.

In addition to the new elements, CY will again offer the Youth Track for those who have completed grade 9 up to age 19. This will be a time for youth to share their voice and experience and affirm their valued place within the whole church.

Young Adults (graduated high school to age 25) in the Discipleship Track will be encouraged and challenged through discovery conversations about vocation, discipleship, spiritual practices and building community connections.

The Youth Ministry Training Track returns for youth leaders (ages 18+) to get re-charged with great keynote sessions with Dr. Amanda Drury. Dr. Drury is Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Indiana Wesleyan University. This track will also host interactive workshops, dynamic panel discussions, and the opportunity to swap youth ministry ideas with colleagues from across the country.

We pray that CY2016 will again be an exciting community where all participants will be inspired, challenged and encouraged to take an active, engaged and faithful role in their home communities of faith. For more information, please contact the CY2016 Coordinator, Jo Morris at cy@presbyterian.ca.

Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE)

apcenet.org

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has had a covenantal relationship with the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) for many decades and has been responsible for the region of Canada since 2003. In affiliation with the Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, Christian Reformed Church, and the Moravian Church in North America, APCE supports educators and educational ministry through conferences, scholarships, and publications. APCE representatives are elected from a variety of populations to promote quality educational ministry.

In January 2016, Jo Morris and Jennifer de Combe attended the APCE conference *God's New Thing: See it! Hear it! Live it!* in Chicago, Illinois.

Camping

presbyterian.ca/camping

Canadian Ministries supports presbytery and synod camps associated with The Presbyterian Church in Canada by providing curriculum resources designed specifically for Christian camping. This year curriculum was distributed to nine camps. The importance of camping cannot be overlooked: camping is the means by which many children come in contact with the Christian faith.

Canadian Ministries provided memberships for 13 organizations (12 camps and one conference centre) in the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association (PCCCA) for 2013–2015. This membership provides networking, access to consulting, site management standards, education, camp specific resources and promotion for all our camping ministries.

Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

The Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund was established in 2008 by The Presbyterian Church in Canada to help congregations and specialized ministries to develop new programs and innovative projects that reach out to children, youth and their families. This fund may grant up to two thirds of the money needed to initiate a new project, not exceeding a grant of \$8,000 per year and capping individual grants at \$15,000 for one program. Sponsoring bodies are asked to provide the remaining one third of the monies needed to start the project. While these grants may be for a one-time event, it is hoped that financial support from this fund will be seed money for ongoing projects. In 2015 grants were given to support the following programs: *The Church on the Move* (Presbytery of London), a camp choir at St. Paul's (Port-Hope, Presbytery of Lindsay-Peterborough), and a teen self-esteem building program at St. John's (Grimsby, Presbytery of Hamilton).

Conference Support Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

The Conference Support Fund helps facilitate events that are intended to further educate and nurture faith within congregations, presbyteries and identified groups. In 2015, grants supported a worship renewal conference

(Presbytery of Oak Ridges) and *Speaking the Truth in Love: A Forum on Human Sexuality* (Presbytery of Hamilton). In 2016 each presbytery was given access to a one-time grant of up to \$1000 from the Conference Support Fund to support presbytery sponsored educational initiatives that encouraged people and courts to study, reflect on and discuss issues related to sexual orientation and the church.

Lay Bursary Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

The Lay Bursary Fund supports opportunities for lay leaders of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to attend educational workshops and conferences to further their training in important areas of leadership. In 2015, two grants were received by applicants associated with Camp Kannawin (Sylvan Lake, Synod of Alberta and the Northwest).

The Niven Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

The Niven Fund helps support eligible educational and evangelical programs that support ministry in Ontario. In 2015, two grants were given to support regional staff from the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda to attend the *Reclaiming Evangelism: Celebrating Change and Collaboration* conference organized by the World Council of Churches.

Lorraine Major Fund

This fund helps provide funds for people studying in the area of ministry with Aboriginal peoples. In 2013 the Lorraine Major Fund and the Native Ministry Orientation Fund were amalgamated. In 2015, a grant was given to Yvonne Bearbull from the Kenora Fellowship Centre (Kenora, the Presbytery of Winnipeg) to attend the Breakforth conference in Edmonton, Alberta.

Equipping for...

presbyterian.ca/eq4

Recognizing that congregations seek resources to facilitate faithful ministry, Canadian Ministries provides articles, stories, prayers, scripture references and questions for reflection to support programs under the title *Equipping for...* in the following areas: Christian Education, Evangelism and Mission, Leadership and Worship. Experienced and creative people in leadership positions throughout the denomination submit articles for these resources. The goal is to share programs, ideas and current experiences and to promote discussion across the church about innovative work being done.

Presbyterians Are Talking About...

presbyterian.ca/talking-about

How can we talk in church about controversial issues that challenge our faithful living? What does the Bible say? And what has The Presbyterian Church in Canada and its partners said about such issues?

This online educational series provides resources aimed at helping us talk about issues of contemporary concern that challenge us in living our faith. To support conversations inside and beyond congregations, the *Presbyterians are talking about* series will provide background material from our denomination and its partners, scripture readings, prayers and hymn suggestions, reflection questions, and follow-up ideas and resources. Subjects in this series include human sexuality, slavery/human trafficking, end-of-life care, refugees and migrants, homelessness and more.

These resources will help us discuss important matters not only with other members of our church family, but also with friends, classmates, and colleagues, enabling us to listen and share questions and perspectives from our faith journeys.

Curriculum Comparison Guide and Christian Education Resources

presbyterian.ca/curriculumchart

Canadian Ministries has produced a resource to assist sessions, Christian education teams and leaders in the selection of appropriate material for Christian education programs. The material is similar to the familiar curriculum chart, but has been produced in a format for online and print use. Resource lists include Sunday school, mid-week,

youth, adult, family and profession of faith curricula. Copies are available from the Resource Centre or at presbyterian.ca/curriculumchart.

In the fall of 2015 Canadian Ministries conducted a survey about confirmation or profession of faith programs for young people in our denomination. Two surveys were prepared by Anne Miller and posted online, one for people in leadership positions and one for youth. Participation was invited through announcements on the church's webpage and Facebook, Presbyterian Youth Facebook pages, the Canada Youth network, GA 2015 YARs, and student contacts, camps and other youth ministry networks, and individual emails. As a result, an annotated list of confirmation resources currently in use has been prepared and made available at presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/equipping-leaders there will be a Youth Ministry Track workshop on the subject at Canada Youth 2016, and a strategy is being developed to involve Presbyterian young people and leaders in creating online material for discussion groups.

Reading Lists

presbyterian.ca/resource-centre/#reading

In response to requests for recommendations of books on important topics, reading lists are prepared in consultation with people who have expertise and experience in various fields. These lists can assist leaders in finding books for various ministries like evangelism, leadership and organizational change, new church development, confirmation, youth and children – including a number of annotated lists of children's picture books prepared by Laura Alary on themes related to the Christian calendar and faithful living. These lists can assist people find books for their church or home library or to find books as gifts. The books listed are available for purchase from online booksellers and some for loan through public libraries.

These lists will be updated as new and suggested books come to our attention. Please send book reviews and recommendations to canadianministries@presbyterian.ca.

Book Studies

The Advent 2015 resources included a book study on *A Christmas Carol* drawing on sermons written and preached by Laura Alary. This spring a second study on the book (and movie) *Still Alice* was produced. These resources are intended for small group study and include scripture readings, prayers and hymns in addition to discussion questions that challenge participants to relate their faith to issues raised in the books.

A Study for the Church

A five-session group study for adults and older youth has been produced to encourage reflection about some of the values that we cherish in our congregations and the ways we can join with our neighbours in nurturing and sharing them. The study was written by Emily Bisset and includes scripture readings and commentary, prayers, hymns, discussion questions, mission stories and outreach activities.

PARTNERSHIPS IN MINISTRY: “THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO...FELLOWSHIP...”

At the heart of the early church was the principle and practice of a form of fellowship that extended beyond loose affiliation and assembly; unity and communion are perhaps better words to describe the fellowship to which the first faith communities were devoted. The proofs of authentic fellowship were the sharing of resources held in common for the greater good, the sharing of the gospel, and the formation of vibrant and safe congregations that sought and nurtured signs of the reign of God. When the church practices authentic Christian fellowship, it incarnates the Johannine image of the branches that are united, nourished, and connected by Christ, who is the vine.

This portion of the report focuses on the ability of the national church to share resources in the form of grants, appointments to ministries, ecumenical shared ministries, evangelism, and the Leading with Care Policy.

Sharing Resources

presbyterian.ca/grants

Presbyterians Sharing makes it possible for The Presbyterian Church in Canada to partner with presbyteries and local ministries to support initiatives across the country. Presbyteries are to take great care in reviewing proposed grant applications before endorsing and submitting applications for consideration by Canadian Ministries. The denomination relies heavily upon the wisdom, insight and active supportive involvement of presbyteries and their

committees to assess the needs of the local context and make requests only after ensuring that there is strong local support for new and renewing ministries and that they fit within the presbytery's vision of mission and ministry. While application forms and supporting documents that are useful in the application process are always available on the webpage, ministries and presbyteries are to be in touch with Canadian Ministries before new grants are applied for so that greater clarity about the purpose and scope of the ministry can be understood.

Presbyteries are urged to take great care in assessing and approving applications to ensure the most faithful use of available funds.

Operating Grant Categories

All ministries are valued and perform important service in the world. However, the Life and Mission Agency Committee has identified categories based on need and volume of work and the priorities of the church. The Life and Mission Agency has categorized the types of support-receiving ministries in the following groups:

1. New congregation development
2. Renewing ministries
3. Specialized ministries (ministries with Aboriginal People, inner-city ministries, Francophone ministries)
4. Sustaining ministries (rural and urban ministries)

Grants Committee

The Canadian Ministries Advisory Committee, named by the Life and Mission Agency Committee, functions as the Grants Committee and has decision-making responsibility for grants from the budget and some internally restricted funds. This committee consists of representatives named from every synod.

New Congregation Development

These are completely new ministries. Ministries receiving grants in 2015 were: La Communauté chrétienne Siloé (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal), Nigerian Mission (Toronto, Presbytery of West Toronto), Two Rivers (Guelph, Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington), Antioch Community (Oakville, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca), Hamilton Almanarah (Hamilton, Presbytery of Hamilton), Almanarah (London, Presbytery of London), Lighthouse Evangelical Arabic (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg), Sung An (Vancouver, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca), and Hanmaum (Langley, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca).

New Congregation Development Capital Fund

In addition to operating grants, Canadian Ministries has responsibility for the New Congregation Development Capital Fund that is used to provide financial assistance toward the cost of purchasing land for new congregations and maintaining other properties.

Growing Churches Fund

The Growing Churches Fund was established to help presbyteries start new congregations and to support those called to this vital area of ministry. In the context of an overall decline in church attendance and congregations that are closing or amalgamating, it is more important than ever for the church to provide strategic support for those engaged in the development of new congregations. This fund encourages presbyteries to use a variety of models for starting up new congregations and ministries by providing funds to support presbyteries to hire consultants, train coaches who can assist new congregation development workers, help fund mentoring relationships, provide testing for potential new congregational development workers and provide funds to help equip those engaged in new congregation development.

Coaching is an important component of successful new congregation development initiatives. Presbyteries initiating new congregations are strongly encouraged to contact Canadian Ministries early in the planning process to arrange for a trained coach to be put in place as soon as the first minister is called or appointed in all new ministries. Coaching for new church development workers is financially supported by the Growing Churches Fund and governed by a covenant agreed to by the coach, the worker, and Canadian Ministries.

The Growing Churches Fund supported a Canadian gathering of new church development leaders and new church development coaching and training.

Properties

Canadian Ministries, at the request of judicatory bodies, in the establishment of new work, or through existing historical agreements, supports the following presbyteries and synods with the ownership of land and/or buildings (e.g. holds titles, facilitates payment of property taxes and appropriate insurance, etc.). The nature of support differs and is unique in each situation.

Location	Presbytery/Synod	Property Type
French Village Station Rd Site	Halifax & Lunenburg	Land
Camp d'action biblique	Quebec	Camp
Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre	Montreal	Building
Barrhaven	Ottawa	Land
Gateway Community	East Toronto	Church
White Oak	Brampton	Church
Winnipeg	Winnipeg	Land
Kenora Fellowship Centre	Winnipeg	Building
Kenora Fellowship Centre	Winnipeg	Manse
St. Andrew's, Thompson	Winnipeg	Manse
St. Clements	Winnipeg	Church/cemetery
Saskatoon Native Circle	Northern Saskatchewan	Manse
Mistawasis Church	Northern Saskatchewan	Church
Mistawasis Church	Northern Saskatchewan	Manse
Carragana	Northern Saskatchewan	Land
Camp Christopher	Synod of Saskatchewan	Camp
Calgary (sold in 2016)	Calgary-Macleod	Land
Pouce Coupe	Peace River	Land
Victoria	Victoria Island	Land

Congregation Development Conferences

“So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily”. (Acts 16:5)

In May 2016 a conference led by Stan Ott was held at Crieff for grant receiving congregations and social ministries, selected presbyteries, theological students and interested congregations across the county. This conference instructed participants in the principles of congregational vitality, transformation, missional endeavour, and leadership. It also gave participants an opportunity to share experiences and resources with colleagues from across Canada. Springing out of this conference is a follow up initiative to provide conference participants with an opportunity to receive two follow up mentoring conversations with Stan Ott designed to move theory into practice.

Renewing Ministries

These are congregational ministries involved in a significant intentional program of change that results in something new and different arising from what had existed. An example of this would be a congregation that intentionally decides to minister in a different language or to a different cultural group. The change must be a critical change and not a matter of improving or making alterations to what is already in existence. In 2015, grants were received by Livingstone (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal), and Heritage Green (Hamilton, Presbytery of Hamilton).

Renewing Ministries Capital Fund

In addition to operating grants for ministries engaged in remarkable programs of renewal, the Renewing Ministries Capital Fund is available to provide assistance to congregations involved in a capital project. The criteria for the fund are:

- capital projects that meet The Life and Mission Agency's definition of renewing ministries;
- when the capital project is clearly a part of a greater plan for renewal;
- limited to a maximum of \$200,000;
- the grant will be given according to a formula for matching grants agreed to by the congregation, the presbytery and Canadian Ministries.

The application process for capital grants for renewing congregations is similar to other grant processes from Canadian Ministries and requires the endorsement of the presbytery.

The Life and Mission Agency will review the definition and terms of this fund with the Assembly Council to ensure that it can be used for the renewal of the church in the most faithful ways.

Sustaining Ministries Grants

These grants are given for smaller congregations and pastoral charges, often located in rural and remote situations. The grant-receiving congregation or pastoral charge works with their presbytery and Canadian Ministries to agree upon the duration and amount of the grant. It is expected that each congregation or pastoral charge would be responsible for an increasing portion of its costs each year.

The following congregations were recipients of Sustaining Ministry Grants in 2015: St. Matthew's (Grand Falls, Presbytery of Newfoundland), Knox, Campbellton/St. Luke's (Bathurst, Presbytery of New Brunswick), Eglise St. Luc (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal), Sohrae (Toronto, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca), Temiskaming Regional Ministry (Presbytery of Temiskaming), Grey-Bruce-Maitland Co-op (Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland), St. Andrew's (Thompson, Presbytery of Winnipeg), Knox and Dunleath (Yorkton and Dunleath, Presbytery of Assiniboia), Mistawasis Memorial (Mistawasis First Nation, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan), St. Andrew's, (Swift Current, Presbytery of Assiniboia), Chetwynd Shared Ministry (Chetwynd, Presbytery of Peace River), Cariboo (Cariboo Region, Presbytery of Kamloops), Nazko and Area Dekelh Outreach (Cariboo Region, Presbytery of Kamloops) and St. Stephen's (Creston, Presbytery of Kootenay).

Supporting Specialized Ministries

Understanding that there is vital work of Christian ministry that is done in non-congregational settings, Canadian Ministries works with and makes available funding to ministries in the following categories in 2015:

Native Ministries:

Kenora Fellowship Centre (Kenora, Presbytery of Winnipeg), Winnipeg Inner City Missions (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg), Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry (Saskatoon, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan), Hummingbird Ministries (Richmond, Presbytery of Westminster) and Edmonton Urban Native Ministry (Edmonton, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca).

Inner-City Ministries:

Action Réfugiés (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal), Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal), Boarding Homes (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto), and ARISE (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto).

Rural and Remote Ministry Fund

presbyterian.ca/randr

Since 2009, grants from this fund are normally used to assist rural and remote ministries employ certified theological students. Up to eight ministry positions can be funded each year. In the summer of 2015, three students served in the following locations: First and Kenora Fellowship Centre (Kenora, Presbytery of Winnipeg), Fort St. John and St. James (Fort St. John and Dawson, Presbytery of Peace River), and St. Andrew's (Greenstone, Presbytery of Superior).

The McBain/Barker Small Community Capital Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

This fund provides grants to congregations in small communities, to help with capital improvements to church buildings. In 2015, grants were received by: Kitimat Church (Kitimat, Presbytery of Kamloops), St. Paul's (Caintown, Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry), St. Andrew's (Beeton, Presbytery of Oak Ridges) and St. Andrew's (North River, Presbytery of Cape Breton).

The MacBeth-Baker Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

This fund provides principal and interest loans for capital expenses to new congregational developments that have an existing bank loan approved by The Presbyterian Church Building Corporation or the Presbyterian Extension Fund (BC) Ltd., or have arranged other financing acceptable to Canadian Ministries. The loan is to assist

congregations pay the principal and interest on debt (above and beyond the regular payment of principal and interest by the congregation) incurred for construction of church facilities. Additional loans may also be made to support the work of congregations with priority given to congregations engaged in new congregational development, grant receiving congregations, or congregations without existing loans or debt. The maximum amount of the loan shall not exceed \$50,000.

The Special Projects Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

The Special Projects Fund provides grants to assist non-congregational ministries with small projects or programs. In 2015, grants were received for: musical instruments for Hummingbird Ministries (Presbytery of Westminster), an accessibility project at Camp Kintail (Kintail, Synod of Southwestern Ontario), and a *Getting Back to God* programme at the Fredericton Council for Christian Ministry on Campus (Fredericton, Presbytery of New Brunswick).

The Chisholm Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

The Chisholm Fund supports congregations and missions with grants for small capital projects or programs; the maximum grant is \$25,000. The first claim on these funds is for work in Saskatchewan and then for projects in the rest of western Canada. In 2015 grants were received by: Knox (Vernon, Presbytery of Kamloops), Norman Kennedy (Regina, Presbytery of Assiniboia), First (Regina, Presbytery of Assiniboia), Knox (Yorkton, Presbytery of Assiniboia), Mistawasis Memorial (Mistawasis First Nation, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan), Calvin-Goforth (Saskatoon, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan), St. Columba (Marion Bridge, Presbytery of Cape Breton), and St. Giles (St. Catharines, Presbytery of Niagara).

The Avondbloem Experimental Fund

presbyterian.ca/funds

The Avondbloem Experimental Fund makes grants to individuals or groups within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, or to projects recommended by them, to support experimental projects that will help to spread the message of Jesus Christ and further the Kingdom of God. In 2015 a grant was received by Paris (Paris, Presbytery of Paris).

Appointments

Appointments may be made by the Life and Mission Agency, for up to three years, in the following categories: (a) Minister of Word and Sacraments, (b) Diaconal Minister, (c) Lay Missionary with specialized training, (d) Lay Missionary, (e) Director (Institutions). All requests for such appointments come through the presbytery of the bounds in which they serve. Appointees are members of the presbytery and responsible to it. Canadian Ministries is currently working with Mistawasis Memorial and the Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan to appoint a minister of Word and Sacraments to the serve the congregation.

Below is a record of those currently appointed by the Life and Mission Agency to work in Canada, some of whom serve at ministries supported by grants through Canadian Ministries:

Name	Location	Presbytery	Appointed	Completion
Lincoln Resende	Portuguese Evangelical	West Toronto	Feb 1, 1988	2016
Jon Wyminga	Nazko and Area Dakelh	Kamloops	Sept 1, 1994	Jan 31, 2018
Shannon Wyminga-Bell	Nazko and Area Dakelh	Kamloops	Sept 1, 1994	Jan 31, 2018
Stewart Folster	Saskatoon Native Circle	N. Saskatchewan	Apr 1, 1996	Jan 31, 2018
Mary Fontaine	Hummingbird	Westminster	Jun 1, 2008	Jan 31, 2018
Beverley Shepansky	Mistawasis	N. Saskatchewan	May 1, 2010	Jan 31, 2016
Arlene Onuoha	Temiskaming Regional	Temiskaming	Aug 1, 2010	Jan 1, 2016
Augustus Oku	Toronto, Nigerian	West Toronto	Apr 7, 2011	Apr 7, 2016
Amin Mansour	Almanarah	Hamilton	Jul 14, 2011	Jul 14, 2017
Glen Sampson	St. Luke's/Knox	New Brunswick	Mar 4, 2013	Mar 5, 2016
Yvonne Bearbull	Anamiewigummig (Kenora)	Winnipeg	Apr 1, 2013	Mar 31, 2016
Raymond Abekah	Toronto, Ghanaian	West Toronto	Feb 11, 2014	Feb 11, 2019

Ecumenical Shared Ministry

presbyterian.ca/ecumenical-handbook

Canadian Ministries continues to receive information about and supports congregations that are in ecumenical shared ministries. There are 12 charges that currently share ministry with congregations of other denominations; of these, some have formalized Ecumenical Shared Ministry agreements.

- a) Presbytery of Halifax & Lunenburg: Sharon, Dean shares with Upper Musquodoboit and Higginsville United Church.
- b) Presbytery of Quebec: St. Andrew's, Inverness shares ministry with Inverness United Church, Kinnear's Mills and Thetford Mines United Churches.
- c) Presbytery of Quebec: St. Andrew's, Valcartier shares ministry with St. Andrew's United Church in Valcartier, using the services of the Quebec City United Church minister who serves the two-point United Church charge of Quebec City and Valcartier.
- d) Presbytery of Quebec: Leggatt's Point shares ministry with the Métis Beach United Church.
- e) Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew: Deep River Community Church.
- f) Presbytery of East Toronto: Calvin, Toronto shares ministry with Deer Park United Church.
- g) Presbytery of Brampton: Knox, Grand Valley shares ministry with the United Church of Canada.
- h) Presbytery of Temiskaming: St. John's, Kapuskasing shares ministry with Kapuskasing United Church.
- i) Presbytery of Temiskaming: Knox, Cochrane shares ministry with Cochrane Christian Reformed Church.
- j) Presbytery of Superior: St. Andrew's shares ministry with St. James Anglican, Greenstone.
- k) Presbytery of Winnipeg: Pinawa Christian Fellowship in Pinawa, Manitoba shares ministry with several other denominations.
- l) Presbytery of Peace River: Chetwynd Shared Ministry shares ministry with St. Peter's United Church, Hudson's Hope, British Columbia.

The *Ecumenical Shared Ministries Handbook* is available on the webpage to help congregations and presbyteries plan shared ministries; sample agreements are available from Canadian Ministries' staff.

Evangelism

presbyterian.ca/evangelism

The scriptural warrant issued in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16–20) “to go and make disciples” is the responsibility of all Christians. Faith sharing is most powerfully and authentically done in and by communities and through personal interaction; the most effective evangelism is done locally. Grants have been given this year to individuals and congregations to attend and host conferences and courses with a focus on evangelism, for example the World Council of Churches (WCC) “Reclaiming Evangelism” gathering in Nashville, Tennessee in November, 2015. Resources are shared in the PCPak, and courses and programs that explain theories, emerging trends and strategies of evangelism are supported. This year a new brochure “We are a community of The Presbyterian Church in Canada” was produced for use by congregations reaching out to neighbours and newcomers. The text on its panels comes from the church's mission statement. The brochure can be downloaded from presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/evangelism/ and there is space on the back panel to allow congregations to add their own contact information.

Through Canadian Ministries, the denomination's representative to Evangelism Connections (EC) is named. The Rev. Peter Bush currently is the denomination's representative. EC is an ecumenical partnership focused on assisting Christians and their congregations in conveying the good news. The goal for EC is to cultivate a collection of best resources and practices in evangelism from within each of our communities, and to facilitate access across denominational lines. Working collaboratively provides the context for mutual support and collegiality around this shared mission and purpose. EC is actively working to fulfill its unique calling: “Engaging Evangelism Ecumenically.”

EC provides a searchable index, *EvangeLectionary*, of weekly online reflections on lectionary texts from an evangelism perspective (evangelismconnections.org). This has meant that preachers who use the lectionary can access evangelism reflections on the biblical texts from which they are preaching. EC will be expanding *EvangeLectionary* with a new section providing a series of sermon helps on the Holy Spirit in mission and evangelism. This will pick up on the focus on the Holy Spirit in the WCC document *Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes*. A link to this document will be added to the EC website. Building on EC's production last year of the online video *Evangelism in the 21st Century*, a study guide with the same title has been prepared for use by individuals, groups, congregations and presbyteries.

All people who have heard and responded to Jesus' invitation to "come and follow me" are called to invite those around them to "come and see". Evangelism is a grass-roots activity in which neighbours reach out to neighbours, colleagues to colleagues, students to students, sharing the good news.

The Evangelism Connections Advisory Board, established in 1996, currently consists of representatives from the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Church of the Brethren, The Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Presbyterian Church in the USA, the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Canada, the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church.

Leading with Care

presbyterian.ca/leading-with-care

Ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada continue to implement the Leading with Care Policy and address emerging situations. The response has been extremely positive as we continue to make church buildings safe and our leaders better trained and aware of issues of safety in all programs.

Over the past year, David Phillips has led workshops across the country with leaders from congregations, missions, theological colleges and presbyteries. The purpose of the workshops is to explain and help to implement Leading with Care throughout the denomination. The workshops also seek to bring to the attention of church leaders areas of interest that are being considered within the policy. It is important for every congregation to regularly review the policy as the congregation's programs, leadership, and facilities change. Important aspects of the Leading with Care Policy, or issues associated with it, are highlighted regularly in the *Equipping for...* resources. Contact Ian Ross-McDonald (imcdonald@presbyterian.ca) with questions about the policy.

WORSHIP: "THEY DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO...THE BREAKING OF BREAD AND THE PRAYERS."

The chief end of the Christian life is to glorify and enjoy God. *Living Faith* reminds us that, "...we have no higher calling than to offer the worship that belongs to God day by day..." The resources available to support the worship life of the church are outlined in this section of the report.

Worship Resources

presbyterian.ca/worship

Canadian Ministries provides worship resources (lectionary readings, worship planners, prayers, hymns suggestions, devotions, etc.) for each Sunday and other significant and seasonal celebrations of the church year. Ministers and lay people of the denomination contribute to the creation of these resources. Additional worship resources are produced regularly and distributed through the PCPak and posted on the webpage. This year these included issues of *Equipping for Worship* (e.g. Why Worship with the Music of Global Christianity? and Visual Arts in Worship: Designing the Content of Screens for Effective Communication), an intergenerational Remembrance Day prayer written by Neal Mathers, family devotions for Advent and Lent written by Diana Loach, an Advent congregational event/pageant written by Emily Bisset, and a book study on *A Christmas Carol* based on sermons written by Laura Alary.

While the material is created to be as useful as possible in as many contexts as possible, an emphasis has been placed on creating resources that are educational and can be easily used by congregations that may be without ordained leadership. For example, *To Preach the Good News: A Handbook about Preaching for Presbyterians in Canada*, written by Sarah Travis, has been produced with the lay preacher in mind, but it is a useful resource for all clergy.

Frequently used sections of the *Book of Common Worship* have been posted on the webpage in a format that is easy to modify for specific purposes. New liturgies and new forms of current liturgies have been created to address emerging needs.

Bulletins

presbyterian.ca/bulletins

Canadian Ministries has responsibility for the creation of bulletins for Sundays and special occasions. In 2015 an emphasis was placed on featuring writers with a constellation of perspectives and backgrounds in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Samples of the bulletins are available on the webpage.

These Days

Through Canadian Ministries, The Presbyterian Church in Canada participates on the board of the devotional magazine *These Days*. The Resource Centre at the national office administrates subscriptions and distributes the devotional quarterly.

Worship and Liturgy Trust Fund

The Worship and Liturgy Trust Fund is designed to encourage and assist those committed to improving their knowledge and skills as worship leaders in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Grants from the fund are available for those engaged in continuing education programs focusing on worship and liturgical concerns, or in a postgraduate program in liturgical studies. Applicants may also access the fund for personal study and research that results in the development and publication of a paper, or in a presentation of an outstanding essay, on a specific subject.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The purpose of advisory committees includes assisting the department to fulfill its mandate, set priorities, identify new directions, develop policy, and advise the associate secretary. Canadian Ministries is fortunate to have input from a broad spectrum of people from across the country to help guide and inform its work.

In addition to the advisory committees listed in this report, the Associate Secretary of Canadian Ministries is a member of the Committee on Church Architecture and is the secretary for the Fund for Ministerial Assistance.

The Growing Churches Fund Task Group

This year, the Life and Mission Agency Committee approved the creation of a small task group with national representation to make suggestions on how best to approach new church development and use the fund for the support of healthy new ministries. Committee members are: Tim Archibald (New Minas, Nova Scotia), Matthew Brough (Winnipeg, Manitoba), Sherif Garas (Mississauga, Ontario), Heather Malnick (Baxter, Ontario), and Dianne Ollerenshaw (Calgary, Alberta); ex officio members are the associate secretary and one program coordinator of Canadian Ministries.

The Hungarian Ministries Advisory Committee

The Hungarian Ministries Advisory Committee provides a consultative and advisory forum that addresses the pastoral needs of Hungarian congregations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada at both the level of the national church and at the invitation of presbyteries. Within this committee, visioning about the future ministry needs of Hungarian churches and the Hungarian community in Canada can be pursued. The committee also provides a forum for exploring the development of closer relationships with Hungarian Reformed Churches in Central and Eastern Europe, and for informing and advising The Presbyterian Church in Canada about emerging issues within the Hungarian Reformed Churches. The committee is co-chaired by the Associate Secretaries for Canadian Ministries and International Ministries and consists of six members nominated by the Hungarian Ministerial and Elders' Association of Canada. Members beyond driving range of Toronto are members by correspondence.

The National Native Ministries Council (NNMC)

The Executive and Council meet throughout the year by conference call to discuss issues related to the purpose and goals of the Council. In addition to these meetings, members of this association are invited by Canadian Ministries to gather during the year to share experiences, further education, pray for one another, and share mutual concerns and insights. Alongside regular conference calls, an NNMC conference was held in Ontario in May 2016. The incumbent and one elder or member of the board from each of the Native Ministries, and staff of Canadian Ministries join together for the conferences. The member ministries of the council are Kenora Fellowship Centre, Winnipeg Inner City Mission, Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry, Mistawasis Memorial Church, Edmonton Urban Native Ministry, Cariboo Church, Hummingbird Ministries, and Cedar Tree Ministry.

The Chinese Consultation

In 2015 Canadian Ministries facilitated a meeting of ministers serving in Chinese congregations within the denomination. During this meeting, issues of mutual concern were discussed and the gathering engaged in continuing education.

Canadian Ministries Advisory Committee

The following people have been confirmed by the Life and Mission Agency Committee as the members of the Canadian Ministries Advisory Committee: the Rev. Jeff Murray (Sackville, New Brunswick), the Rev. Ian Fraser (Pointe Claire, Quebec), Ms. Lori Ransom (Toronto, Ontario), the Rev. Anne Yee-Hibbs (Dundas, Ontario), Ms. Betty Trevenen (Winnipeg, Manitoba), Mr. Gerry Kraay (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan), the Rev. Dr. Jean Morris (De Winton, Alberta), and the Rev. Herb Hilder (Prince George, British Columbia); ex officio members are the general secretary, the associate secretary and staff of Canadian Ministries.

COMMUNICATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

Staff Associate Secretary:	Barb Summers (on parental leave until September 2016)
Web Coordinator:	James Laurenson
Communications Coordinator:	Michelle Kortinen

INTRODUCTION

The Communications department assists congregations, the courts of the church, groups, committees and agencies of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in the area of communications and best practices in the field. It is our goal to produce and promote useful, relevant resources, both in print and online format, and to improve access to church information through print and digital channels. We strive to inspire the church in innovative communication techniques and to help equip congregations to successfully share their mission and ministry.

Workshops

The staff in the department conducted a number of website and communications workshops for congregations, presbyteries and synods this year.

WEBSITE OPERATIONS

presbyterian.ca

The PCC website is a valuable tool for all congregations and individuals. It is an informational and educational site, providing access to a wide variety of resources and materials such as worship materials, resources for elders, official church documents, policies, and updates on events, activities and new resources.

In 2015, the website received over 285,800 hits. The most popular web pages are the homepage, worship, pulpit vacancies, resources, General Assembly 2015 and Church Finder. The most popular downloads on the site are Lectionary Year B & Church Year Dates (2014–2015), *Body, Mind, and Soul Study Guide*, Lectionary Readings Year C (2015–16), Family-Friendly Christmas Eve Worship, Westminster Confession of Faith, and the 2015 Book of Reports.

One of the most frequently used features of the website is the Comments section and the Contact form. Visitors to the site are able to provide feedback on news posts and ask questions. This provides an additional venue for people to get in touch with departments of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and to receive a prompt, timely response. Comments are received daily and the service is expanding.

Website Development

All news, information, resource materials, promotion and communication regarding the Church, congregations and members is created on and/or delivered through our website. The amount of resources and information that continues to accumulate is tremendous and requires maintenance for improved usability. Currently, the website is being further developed to:

- improve navigation and search functionality
- restructure information, and to better access resources

- update the look and functionality, especially to help increase church engagement and attract new members
- include more engagement via social media and blogging

PCCWeb

presbyterian.ca/pccweb

PCCWeb is a service to congregations, groups, presbyteries and synods of the denomination that allows them to set up a website, free of charge, hosted by the denomination. We currently host approximately 315 sites. Online tutorials are offered to help people learn how to use WordPress more easily. Maintaining security features remains one of the most important components of the network. This service has been well received and the network is steadily growing.

Using the PCCWeb server, we host and support a number of other websites in addition to individual congregation and presbytery sites, including Presbyterian World Service & Development, the Presbyterian Archives, Canada Youth, Presbyterian camps, the Women's Missionary Society, the Women's Gathering, the Presbyterian Museum, the missionary blogs, Renewal Fellowship, PresbyCan Daily Devotional, Portland Place, Boarding Homes Ministry, and others.

Regional News

A section on the homepage is specifically reserved for highlighting the activities of congregations and groups within the church. By submitting information using the online form, special events, worship activities, fundraisers, guest speakers, etc., can be shared in the Regional News section. Individuals can subscribe to receive daily news updates via email by signing up on the homepage.

Online Donations

presbyterian.ca/donate

The online donation system has processed 1,195 transactions with a total of just over \$245,000 this year. Donors can designate a gift to a variety of programs and ministries using a shopping cart format, and can make a gift in someone's honour or memory. Individuals have the option to assign their gift as part of their local congregation's *Presbyterians Sharing* allotment and also sign up for monthly giving using a credit card. Donations are also processed for PWS&D as well as Canada Youth registrations, the Presbyterian Museum and the Archives.

Social Media

In the past year, the denomination's presence on Facebook has grown from 770 "Likes" to 1,301 and this number continues to grow. There are nearly 1,213 followers on Twitter; the Twitter feed is picked up from content posted to the website newsfeed.

RESOURCE PRODUCTION

The Communications department assists in the production of a wide variety of resources. This includes the management and distribution of the PCPak collection of resources, the annual wall calendar, as well as design and layout of the Pension and Benefits newsletters, Prayer Partnership, *Equipping for...* educational resources, newsletters, flyers, web visuals, display materials and brochures for all departments of the national office, as well as several national committees, etc.

PCPak

presbyterian.ca/pcpak

PCPak is a collection of educational and informational resources for those bodies directly connected to The Presbyterian Church in Canada that is distributed three times a year. Each PCPak contains material from the various agencies of the church to educate, equip and inform the denomination for faith ministry.

All PCPak materials are available to view and download and print on the PCPak section of the website. This feature saves congregations time and money. After viewing online, people may phone in or use an online order form to request copies.

A PCPak survey was conducted during 2015 with a total of 50 people responding. Overall, 29 respondents are "very satisfied" or "satisfied with PCPak"; 11 reported a "neutral" response and six reported being "not satisfied". Mission Moments, *Equipping For...*, PWS&D and Prayer Partnership ranked highest in usage rate, while *Presbyterians Sharing*

information and Christian Education are next in popularity. Mission Trip Flyers and Justice Ministries Flyers are sometimes or rarely used. There was no clear preference for PCPak to be distributed exclusively online. While most were satisfied with the timing of distribution, there were suggestions about how to improve the distribution schedule.

PCCconnect

presbyterian.ca/pccconnect

As one of the most popular resources, the PCCconnect monthly e-newsletter contains the latest news and information from the denomination in a clear, easy-to-read layout. The e-newsletter contains snapshots of information such as deadline reminders, mission trip opportunities, new resources for congregations, upcoming events, popular links to online materials and much more.

The PCCconnect e-newsletter is opened by approximately 46% of those who receive it, which is well above the industry average of 25%. Distribution is made to 1,475 addresses. Individuals from across the church are encouraged to sign up. As the distribution list grows, we are able to reach a wider audience with relevant news and information.

Online Forms

The department hosts over 45 online forms from various departments and the popularity of this service continues to grow as it avoids paper copies, allows forms to be completed in an automated format quickly and easily, and improves reporting. Individuals and groups use our online forms to register for events, apply for funds, give feedback, and order a wide variety of resources offered from the national office through the Resource Centre.

General Assembly

presbyterian.ca

The department provides and maintains the live video feed, produces daily summaries, monitors and engages in social media activities (particularly Twitter), shares photos, posts web content, and provides technical assistance to commissioners. There were approximately 200 downloads of each daily summary edition and over 2,000 active sessions of the live video stream. The top ten countries viewing the live stream were: Canada, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan, Russia, Germany, South Korea, Netherlands and China. As well, the Communications Office was able to assist the General Assembly Office in providing electronic materials. This included expanding the circulation of the Book of Reports and the Summaries.

PCC Style Guide and Web Standards

presbyterian.ca/styleguide

The PCC Style Guide and Web Standards resource contains grammatical rules and preferences specific to The Presbyterian Church in Canada, as well as web guidelines, voicemail and email best practices, specialized PCC terms, and a troubleshooting section. It is available as a free download on the website, along with a Quick Reference Guide.

Advisory Committee Members

The Rev. Jeremy Bellsmith, Mr. Spencer Edwards, the Rev. Kristine O'Brien, the Rev. Dr. Pam McCarroll, the Rev. David Moody.

INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 3

That sincere thanks and appreciation for Mr. Brian Johnston's many years of overseas service be acknowledged and that the above minute of appreciation be adopted. (see p. 12.1.22)

Recommendation No. 4

That sincere thanks and appreciation for Ms. Denise van Wissen's many years of overseas service be acknowledged and that the above minute of appreciation be adopted. (see p. 12.1.23)

REPORT

Staff Associate Secretary: Glynis Williams
Program Coordinator: Nicole Jeffrey (May – November 2015)
Lily Ko (from February 2016)

INTRODUCTION

World Christianity is changing in ways that begs us in Canada to be attentive and responsive as we envision a new missional presence. Christianity is shifting geographically, and in its forms and expressions of faith; and we in Canada are invited to rethink how to relate to our historic and emerging global partners. International Ministries is aware that this is a time for new ideas as we engage globally. 2016 will be a year to reflect upon the possibilities and challenges ahead, and we will be asking Canadian Presbyterians for your thoughts. May God's spirit give us courage and vision as we embrace a new era of partnership.

MANDATE

International Ministries is the department of the Life and Mission Agency responsible for the relationships between The Presbyterian Church in Canada and overseas partner churches and agencies. The most visible way in which we relate to our partners is the appointment of Canadian Presbyterians to a variety of short or longer term assignments. The recruitment, preparation and support of these mission personnel is our responsibility. Two other ways in which we accompany our partner churches is through leadership development programs, as well as funding programs and special projects.

CATEGORIES OF SERVICE

Regular mission personnel are appointed to a one year to five year, renewable term of service with a partner church or agency overseas. Currently, two people live in Canada and travel to their partner church and agencies, several times a year for extended periods. Short term volunteers are appointed for varying terms of service ranging from one month up to one year. This latter category includes participants in the Amity Foundation Summer English Program in China; the Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI); and social, medical and theological internships.

STAFF TRANSITIONS

The past year has seen a number of changes affecting mission personnel appointed by The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Among those retiring, completing their term of service or beginning new terms are mentioned below.

Retirements

Dr. Richard Allen

Dr. Richard Allen has served The Presbyterian Church in Canada in various places since completing a Medical degree in 1975, and a Master of Public Health in 1984. His overseas service started in 1974 as a medical student in India, and went on to Nigeria, and Nepal, where he was appointed to the United Mission to Nepal. In 1984, he went to Pakistan to work in a Rural Health Care Project. He was Acting Executive Director of PWS&D from September 1989 to August 1990. In 1994 Dr. Allen was appointed by the Life and Mission Agency to serve as Community Health Advisor to the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) based in Kikuyu, Kenya. He served there for 20 years. Along with African colleagues, his work focused on HIV/AIDS control and the development of a progressive HIV/AIDS policy. Dr Allen retired on December 31, 2015. We give thanks for his ministry over many decades and wish him God's blessing in his retirement. (A minute of appreciation is in the A&P 2015, p. 364)

Minute of Appreciation

Mr. Brian Johnston

In 1997, Brian Johnston was appointed by the Life and Mission Agency as an English teacher, and Music and Choir Leader at the Protestant Theological Seminary, of The Reformed Church in Transylvania, Romania. The seminary is situated in the ancient city of Cluj, or Kolosvár in Hungarian, and is the only institution that offers theological degrees leading to ordination. Students must learn Latin, Greek, Hebrew and English, which is where Brian's talents as a teacher were greatly appreciated.

The city of Kolosvár includes a vibrant arts and music scene. Music is important in Hungarian culture and faith, so it was not long before Brian formed a men's choir that performed on tour in Canada in 2001. The Gifts of Music Fund has provided opportunities for seminary students, and congregational members, to learn to sing or play an instrument, and enhance their performance abilities. One might say that the 2001 Canadian choir tour was a "high note" in Brian's ministry.

The Rev. Dr. Rezi Elek, Principal of the seminary, wrote a tribute to Brian's many gifts as an educator, working with students with varied language abilities and skills. Brian gave extra attention where needed and set challenges for those students who were excelling.

The concerts that Brian has organized at the seminary have been a huge success. On the 2015 Moderator's trip to Eastern Europe, the Rev. Karen Horst and companions, were treated to a musical ride from Gershwin show tunes, to Brazilian indigenous songs to Opera.

A former student noted that "these concerts brought people from other denominations to our seminary, people who otherwise would have never made contact with a protestant institution, breaking down the walls and the barriers of the fear of the unknown, of an alien world for them. These concerts had a much greater impact on the lives of people, and on the special relation between ethnicities, religions and cultures in the city, than one would have thought."

As so often happens in ministry, Brian did not see the impact he was making, because he was open to all people, and delighted in their talents, especially when it came to music. Brian welcomed outsiders into a closed and homogenous community, and allowed them to be accepted there. Does this not sound like a gospel story, Jesus welcoming the outsider, the stranger, offering hospitality? After almost 20 years of service, Brian retired on May 31, 2016.

A coda is an ending to a piece of music, and Brian, may this tribute be the coda to this particular relationship in Romania. We anticipate there will be an encore as God continues to work through you. Now it is your turn to enjoy the music.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That sincere thanks and appreciation for Mr. Brian Johnston's many years of overseas service be acknowledged and that the above minute of appreciation be adopted.

Minute of Appreciation

Ms. Denise van Wissen

Like so many young Presbyterians, Denise van Wissen served first as a volunteer in 1993, following a mission trip to Nicaragua. In 1998, she accepted a regular mission appointment with SOYNICA, the Soya Association of Nicaragua, working as a nutritionist and technical advisor. SOYNICA focused on women, working to break the vicious cycle of poverty, the legacy of years of oppression and war. Providing nutritional education, SOYNICA trained promoters who worked in small communities, encouraging the use of soy and green leaf extract, in order to improve health. Working in the rural north of the country, Denise's gifts were put to good use.

Denise has the rare gift of being truly bi-cultural, as comfortable with the campesino's in the rural outposts of Nicaragua, as she is with the urbanites of her home town of Oakville or Managua, the capital of Nicaragua. Fluency in a language is more than words; it is being a part of the community, understanding the references to past events, and being able to make jokes, or "chistes"! With this impressive cross cultural ability, Denise accompanied many Presbyterian youth and adult mission groups visiting Central America, enhancing the learning and making these trips life-changing for so many.

In 2007, Denise moved to Guatemala, being appointed by International Ministries to work as coordinator of the Health & Nutrition program of the Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas, the Association of Mayan Presbyterian Women. Indigenous communities formed 60% of the population but were largely excluded from political life. Not an easy ministry context, but Denise's work with these women was an important witness of solidarity and spiritual accompaniment. While in Guatemala, Denise married her fiancé Nelson who joined her from Nicaragua. With breaks for the arrival of sons Jeremy in 2008 and Diego in 2010, Denise returned to SOYNICA in 2011.

In 2015, Denise was assigned to CEPAD, the Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua, using her skills in rural communities, with food security and nutrition programs, some supported by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. In 2016 Denise is sharing her skills with World Renew as Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor, with an additional focus in the areas of nutrition, newborn and child health issues. In December 2016, Denise will complete her assignment with The Presbyterian Church in Canada and continue to work with World Renew.

Denise often ended emails quoting Father Francis, a Kenyan priest: “It is not enough to kneel and pray. Whatever we do, we must do something that will affect peace somehow.” For two decades Denise has worked for peace with justice in Central America on behalf of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. For her integrity, huge smile and good heart, we give thanks to God and wish her all God’s blessings in the future.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That sincere thanks and appreciation for Ms. Denise van Wissen’s many years of overseas service be acknowledged and that the above minute of appreciation be adopted.

New Appointments and Short-term volunteers

Ms. Michelle Verwey was re-appointed for a three year term as a regular mission worker to the Central Regional Board of Health Services-Church of North India; and the Mid India Board of Education (MIBE) Graduate School for Nurses in Indore, India. Her appointment commenced January 1, 2016. She will be working as an advisor for a PWS&D supported Community Health Program in Madhya Pradesh. In addition, she will be engaged with the MIBE Graduate School for Nurses faculty, in planning and facilitating learning activities for nursing students. Michelle will be based in Canada with regular trips to India for an average of four weeks at a time. This full-time work assignment will continue in Canada through email, Skype and telephone. International Ministries is hopeful that this new model will be beneficial to both the India partners and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Michelle will be available for deputation while in Canada.

The Rev. Joel and Ms. Rebecca Sherbino were appointed for a one year term as mission workers with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Blantyre Synod, commencing in August 1, 2015. Joel is serving as Associate Minister of Ndirande Kachere Congregation and assisting with the Synod Prison Ministry. Rebecca is reporting on the Neno School Project under the CCAP Blantyre Synod, and is assisting with the reporting of the Tidzalerana Project, under the supervision of the Mulanje Mission Hospital. The Sherbinos served for three years with this partner church from 2004–2007, so returning to Malawi with their three children, Isaac, Masika and Canaan, has been a little like returning home. They will return to Paris Presbyterian Church in Paris, Ontario following this term. The congregation sent them with their blessing on this one year adventure in Malawi, and has supported the ministries in which they are engaged through prayers and financial gifts. Maybe this is a model that other congregations may wish to consider.

Ms. Amy Zavitz was appointed as a young adult intern to work with The Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), in northern Malawi. Amy worked with LISAP, the Livingstonia Synod Aids Program, supported by PWS&D. During the nine month internship Amy participated in trainings, community monitoring visits, writing case stories and editing reports, and served as a member of the proposal development team. Amy’s term of service was from July 13, 2015 to April 16, 2016. She is looking forward to sharing stories with Presbyterian congregations upon return.

Ms. Chantel Cole accepted an assignment to serve as a development studies intern in Guatemala, appointed to the Asociación Maya-Mam de Investigación y Desarrollo (AMMID) for a term of ten months, beginning August 18, 2015 and ending June 18, 2016. Chantel served as an International Development Studies (IDS) student on co-op placement. AMMID is a PWS&D supported partner.

Amity – Summer English Program

The Amity Foundation is a Chinese Christian NGO, a partner agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In 2015, a team of three participated in this program of teaching English, which helps 100 rural teachers with their English listening and speaking skills. The program ran from July 6 to August 4, 2015. The Presbyterian Church in Canada was well represented as the team included the Rev. Wendy Adams, and the Rev. Edward Millin from British Columbia; and Ms. Beth Culp from Ontario. They served in Shandong China, and reported that their mission experience was a great opportunity to learn and to grow in faith. More information about the program is available on the website at presbyterian.ca/missiontrips.

Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine/Israel (EAPPI)

In 2015, two people participated in this accompaniment program of the World Council of Churches in Israel/Palestine. The Rev. Diane Tait-Katerberg of Surrey, British Columbia, and the Rev. Gordon Timbers of Orillia, Ontario, both recently retired, started a three month term as Ecumenical Accompaniers (EA's) on December 2, 2015. They served in Jerusalem and the South Hebron Hills, respectively. Although the situation was very difficult during their time, they spoke of the obvious appreciation of the Palestinians and Israelis who are working for peace. Their blogs are available on the website at presbyterian.ca/missionstaff.

PARTNERSHIP EVENTS

Moderator's Trip to Eastern Europe – September 14–30, 2015

For her official overseas trip, the Moderator of the 141st General Assembly, the Rev. Karen Horst visited the historic Reformed partner churches in Eastern Europe. Karen Horst was accompanied by her husband, the Rev. Dr. Rick Horst, Mr. Andrew Faiz of the Presbyterian Record, and the Rev. Glynis Williams of International Ministries. The group arrived in Hungary on the day the border with Serbia was closed to refugees, most of whom were transiting through to Germany. Upon arrival in Hungary, we were met by David Pandy-Szekeres, The Presbyterian Church in Canada mission staff who works in Hungary and the Ukraine. His extensive list of contacts allowed us to see the humanitarian efforts being undertaken by faith communities and their concerns at the numbers of people on the move. We were graciously received by the Bishops of The Hungarian Reformed Church, The Hungarian Reformed Church in the Sub-Carpathian Ukraine and The Reformed Church in Transylvania, Romania. We met so many committed people engaged in educational, refugee, music and Roma ministries. The legacy of the past conflict in all three countries, and still present in Ukraine, defines their identity. The shared language and Reformed faith holds them together. It was good to spend time with David and Anna Pandy-Szekeres and Brian Johnston, International Ministries mission staff, and see them at work in their respective contexts.

Malawi, Synods of Livingstonia and Blantyre – August 11–30, 2015

As an introduction to the global partnerships of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the new General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency, the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald, and the Rev. Glynis Williams visited church partners in both regions of Malawi. In Livingstonia in the north, we were able to spend time with the intern Amy Zavitz, and see the many ministries in which the church is engaged. We met Abel Soko, a medical student who is supported by a Leadership Development grant. The Blantyre Synod Partners Consultation offered the opportunity to visit programs in Mulanje, Blantyre and smaller communities; and to witness the vibrant faith of the churches as we participated in worship. We observed the many challenges affecting the population such as floods followed by drought, and the devaluation of the currency made worse by unemployment.

Japan, November 16–23, 2015

At the invitation of the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ), five Presbyterians attended the 3rd International Conference on Minority Issues and Mission. Responding to a resurgence of hate speech against minorities in Japan, the World Council of Churches supported the conference where 120 participants learned more about the issues of xenophobia and hate crimes. We resolved to share the stories of discrimination and to work toward building inclusive communities. Mr. Jackie Bannerman, Ms. Mary Kyei and Ms. Yeram Ryu attended the youth event immediately preceding the conference, and were joined by the Rev. Dr. Ron Wallace and the Rev. Glynis Williams for the full conference.

PERSONNEL AND PARTNERSHIPS

All the groups listed below are established partnerships of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. However, in terms of the ongoing maintenance and administration of these partnerships, International Ministries acts as the lead agency for some partnerships, while PWS&D acts as the lead agency for others.

Country/Region	Church or Agency	Staff
Afghanistan	Church World Service (CWS), Pakistan/Afghanistan	
Africa	All Africa Conference of Churches	
Asia	Christian Conference of Asia	

Caribbean	Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM)	
China	China Christian Council The Amity Foundation	
Cuba	Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba Cuban Council of Churches Evangelical Theological Seminary of Matanzas Cuban Centre for Reflection and Dialogue (CCRD)	
El Salvador	Instituto de la Mujer (IMU)	
Ghana	The Presbyterian Church of Ghana	The Rev. Raymond Abekah (in Toronto) The Rev. Stephen Azundem (in Montreal from April 2016)
Grenada	The Presbyterian Church in Grenada	
Guatemala	Maya Mam Association for Research and Development (AMMID) Evangelical Centre for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA) New Dawn Association for Community Health and Development (ASDNA) Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas (Association of Mayan Women) Francisco Coll School	Ms. Chantel Cole
Guyana	The Guyana Presbyterian Church	
Hungary	The Hungarian Reformed Church	
India	The Church of North India (CRBHS) MIBE Graduate School for Nurses Centre for Dalit Studies Church's Auxiliary for Social Action Institute for Development Education Madurai Non-Formal Education Centre Christian Medical Association of India Roofs for the Roofless	Ms. Michelle Verwey
Japan	The Korean Christian Church in Japan	
Kenya	The Presbyterian Church of East Africa	Dr. Richard Allen (to December 2015)
Korea	The Presbyterian Church of Korea	
Kyrgyzstan	Interserve Canada	Mr. Sam and Mrs. Linda Ling*
Lebanon	The Near East School of Theology (NEST) The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL)	
Malawi	The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) Blantyre Synod Livingstonia Synod	The Rev. Joel & Ms. Rebecca Sherbino (from August 2015) Ms. Amy Zavitz (from July 2015)
Mauritius	The Presbyterian Church in Mauritius	
Middle East	The Middle East Council of Churches Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine/Israel (EAPPI)	The Rev. Diane Tait-Katerberg and the Rev. Gordon Timbers (from December 2, 2015–February 28, 2016)
Mozambique	SABEEL Presbyterian Church of Mozambique	
Nepal	The United Mission to Nepal (UMN) International Nepal Fellowship	
Nicaragua	Asociación Soya de Nicaragua (SOYNICA) Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD)	Ms. Denise van Wissen

Nigeria	The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria Abakaliki Literacy and Translation Trust	
Pakistan	Interserve Canada Church World Service (CWS) Pakistan/Afghanistan	Dr. William and Mrs. Sheila McKelvie*
Romania	The Hungarian Reformed Church in Transylvania	Mr. Brian Johnston
Taiwan	The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan	The Rev. Dr. Paul McLean Ms. Louise Gamble The Rev. Dr. Ted and Ms. Betty Siverns
Tanzania	Africa Inland Church Tanzania (AICT)	
Ukraine	The Hungarian Reformed Church in the Sub-Carpathian Ukraine	Dr. David and Mrs. Anna Pandy-Szekeres

* Associate Missionary

Visits from Overseas Partners to Canada

General Assembly Visitors:

E.H. Johnson Award recipients – Ms. Loly Rico and Dr. Janet Dench, representing the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR)
The Rev. Thegu Patrick Mutahi, Deputy Secretary General, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Kenya
Dr. George Sabra, President, Near East School of Theology (NEST), Beirut, Lebanon

Other Visitors:

The Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong, Moderator, The Presbyterian Church of Ghana
Dr. Lilian Ayete-Nyampong, The Presbyterian Church of Ghana
The Rev. Sungjae Kim, Vice Moderator, Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ)
The Rev. Baekki Heo, Minister, Tsukuba Tokyo Church, Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ)
The Rev. Arif Masih Siraj, Moderator, The Presbyterian Church of Pakistan

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Leadership Development Program grants for students studying at our colleges

Professor Meng Yan-ling, China Christian Council, studying for a Th.D. at Toronto School of Theology

Leadership Development Program grants for students studying outside Canada

The Rev. Takuze Chitsulo, Blantyre Synod, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, studying for a Ph.D. at the University of KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. He is expected to convocate in spring 2016
Ms. Judy Wanjiku Kamau, Presbyterian Church of East Africa, studying for a Degree in Human Resources at St. Paul's University, Kenya
The Rev. Lyton Kilowe, Blantyre Synod, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Malawi, studying for a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Accounting, Auditing and Information Systems at the Malawi College of Accounting
The Rev. Mwawi Chilongozi, Livingstonia Synod, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Malawi, studying for a Masters of Theology, Stellenbosch University, South Africa
Mr. Abel Soko, Livingstonia Synod, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Malawi, studying for a Bachelor's Degree in Medicine and Surgery at Kampala International University, Uganda
Ms. L. Titizian, The Near East School of Theology, Lebanon, studying for a M.Div. and Library Science Degree at the Lebanese University

ECUMENICAL RELATIONSHIPS

International Ministries and/or PWS&D participates in the following ecumenical organizations:

- KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives – the Rev. Andrew Johnston, Mr. Stephen Allen (Justice Ministries)
- Canadian Churches Forum for Global Ministries – the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams, the Rev. Dr. Robert Faris
- Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM) – Ms. Anne Phillips, the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Rev. Marion Barclay-Mackay, the Rev. Corrie Stewart, Ms. Rebecca Pitt de Vries, Ms. Huda Kandalaf (maternity leave), Ms. Margaret Evans, Mr. Guy Smagge, the Rev. Jeannie Lee, Ms. Margaret McKague and the Rev. Glenn Inglis.

REPORT OF THE DR. E.H. JOHNSON MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE

Firstly we thank the Life and Mission Agency for their gracious support of the work of the E.H. Johnson Committee by the generous gift of the time and talents of staff members. Secondly we thank supporters from churches across Canada who continue to hold up in prayer, work on the “cutting edge of mission”. Their gifts of time and treasure ensure that The Presbyterian Church in Canada is exposed to the good news and exciting possibilities of mission in our country and around the world.

During the 2015 General Assembly in Vancouver, the E.H. Johnson Award for work on the “Cutting Edge of Mission” went to the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) represented by Janet Dench, Executive Director and Loly Rico, President. As the dimension of the refugee crisis around the world approached a level unseen since WWII, this recognition was timely. The CCR was recognized for its work influencing Canadian government policies and legislation, educating lawmakers and being the conscience for our nation as “fear of the stranger” increased. One of the most notable contributions of the CCR is the way in which refugee voices, including youth, articulate the problems that refugees face in seeking protection. We are grateful to the University of British Columbia Student Union and to members of the local arrangements committee for their great help in hosting the awards luncheon.

The recipient of the E.H. Johnson Award at the 2016 General Assembly will be Dr. Bernard Sabella, Executive Director of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees of the Middle East Council of Churches. We keenly anticipate hearing his perspective as a Christian Palestinian, an academic and as someone who has dealt with the pressing Palestinian refugee situation for many years. The work of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees has been supported by International Ministries for many years. We will be recognizing that cutting edge mission in a context where a new exodus of peoples from the Middle East has assumed tragic and historic proportions.

E.H. Johnson Memorial Fund Committee Members

One Year – Dr. Marjorie Ross, the Rev. Duncan Jeffrey (convener)

Two Years – the Rev. Mona Scrivens, Ms. Anne Saunders, Ms. Annemarie Klassen, the Rev. Thomas Kim, Ms. Janette McIntosh

Three Years – Ms. Shahrzad Kandalaf

Ex-Officio – the Rev. Stephen Kendall, Principal Clerk of the General Assembly, the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald, General Secretary, Life and Mission Agency, and the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams, Associate Secretary, International Ministries, Life and Mission Agency

Duncan Jeffrey
Convener

Glynis Williams
Secretary

JUSTICE MINISTRIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 5

That congregations and presbyteries be encouraged to study the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. (see p. 12.1.32)

Recommendation No. 6

That sessions and presbyteries consider ways to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action in their communities. (see p. 12.1.32)

Recommendation No. 7

That congregations be encouraged to acknowledge the traditional territory on which the congregation meets to worship by posting this information in bulletins, by a sign in the church or a combination of both. (see p. 12.1.32)

Recommendation No. 8

That congregations be encouraged to acknowledge the traditional territory on which the congregation meets to worship on Aboriginal Day Sunday. (see p. 12.1.32)

Recommendation No. 9

That sessions, presbyteries and all church groups be encouraged to acknowledge the traditional territory on which they are meeting at each meeting. (see p. 12.1.32)

Recommendation No. 10

That permission be granted to the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) to present a response to the above Overture Nos. 4, 5, 14, 15, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 2015 to the 2017 General Assembly. (see p. 12.1.39)

Recommendation No. 11

That permission be granted to the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) in consultation with the Assembly Council to present a response to Overture No. 9, 2016 to the 2017 General Assembly. (see p. 12.1.40)

REPORT

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Stephen Allen
	Program Coordinator:	Katharine Masterton

HEALING AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAM

Outreach

Since the 2015 General Assembly Justice Ministries staff led nine healing and reconciliation presentations or workshops for congregations, presbyteries, synods and presbyterials. In addition, there were two local leader training workshops. The Confession was read at three reconciliation events hosted by Indigenous people.

Local Leaders Network and Training

One of the priorities in the program is leading training workshops for Presbyterians who would like to be local leaders in their congregations, presbyteries and communities. More than 150 Presbyterians across Canada have attended training workshops since 2007. The purpose of these workshops is to widen the base of local leaders who can speak to congregations and inform and involve more Presbyterians.

The training takes place in communities across Canada. Workshop presentations cover the history of residential schools, The Presbyterian Church in Canada's involvement in residential schools and The Presbyterian Church in Canada's commitment to healing and reconciliation. Participants do the Blanket Exercise (developed by the Aboriginal Rights Coalition, one of the ecumenical coalitions brought together to form KAIROS). Participants visit a First Nation community, a Friendship Centre or an Indigenous elder may speak to the group.

Two local leaders training workshops have taken place since the 2015 General Assembly. David Phillips and Susan Samuel were hired to plan these workshops. David Phillips facilitated a local leader training workshop in Waterloo, Ontario on Saturday, September 26. The workshop was hosted by Knox Church, Waterloo, and planned with St. Andrew's Church, Hespeler. Fifteen people attended. Youth played an important role in the workshop.

Susan Samuel planned the workshop with a team from Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation (Cape Croker First Nation near Lion's Head, Ontario in the Bruce Peninsula) on September 25–27, 2015. Twenty Presbyterians attended. Following the workshop many participants spoke to their congregation and/or presbytery about their experience. Hosts from Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation have invited the church to partner with them for future events. Participants from the Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland are planning several workshops in 2016 to learn more about healing and reconciliation and to consider the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. One participant is exploring opportunities to partner with Saugeen First Nation to organize a healing and reconciliation event.

Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund

Since the Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund was established in 2006, 65 projects totaling \$246,786 have been funded. In 2015 the Healing and Reconciliation Advisory Committee approved seven projects for \$22,040. Information about the seed fund is online at presbyterian.ca/healing/#funding.

Summaries of Seed Fund Projects

The Presbytery of Brandon in Manitoba is developing a relationship with members of **Birdtail First Nation**. Presbytery members attend worship at Birdtail and organize social gatherings once a month. Funds support food for community meals and fellowship, travel costs for participants and Sunday School supplies. Project leaders are working to establish a church council to ensure ongoing leadership by members of Birdtail in decision making. This project was approved April 29, 2015 and received \$4,800.

Camp Kintail (Synod of Southwestern Ontario) received seed funding to support the travel costs for two young women, Tammy Wedamin and Brenda Gon, from Gamèti, Northwest Territories, who were hired as counsellors by Camp Kintail in the summer of 2015. Gamèti is between Great Slave and Great Bear Lakes in a traditional hunting area of the Tłı̨cho and Sahtu Dene peoples. This was an opportunity for counselors and campers to learn about Tammy and Brenda's communities. While in Ontario, Tammy and Brenda visited Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation (Cape Croker First Nation) where they were warmly received. Tammy and Brenda taught 80 counsellors to round dance. They left a lasting impression on Camp Kintail and underscored the value of young Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians working and having fun together. This project was approved April 29, 2015 and received \$2,040.

Dianne Ollerenshaw, staff for the Synod of Alberta and the Northwest and a group of Presbyterians partnered with Blood (Kainai) First Nations to host an event in September 2015 called **Moving Forward Together as a People** that focused on the impact of residential schools. Children and youth from Blood First Nation participated. This was a two day event. On the first day, participants had a community feast. A play called "New Blood" was performed by youth from the community which explored the legacy of residential schools. On the second day, youth from Blood First Nation hosted panels to talk about the intergenerational impact of residential schools. Church leaders from the Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian and United churches responded to the TRC's Calls to Action. Presbyterians from the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod attended. This project was approved September 1, 2015 and received \$5,000.

Kingston Community Reconciliation Feast took place October 21, 2015, where 180 people attended the feast. The purpose was straightforward – invite Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Kingston to share a meal together. The Feast was endorsed by the Presbytery of Kingston. The Rev. Dr. Andrew Johnston, minister at St. Andrew's Church was on the planning team and worked with the Katarokwi Indigenous Grandmothers Council and KAIROS. The evening also featured the Shimmering Water Drum Circle. Presbyterians from several congregations attended. A member of the Grandmothers' Council wrote to the Rev. Dr. Johnston: "Andrew, you lit a special fire when you reached out to the Grandmothers to join in this Feast. Your openness rekindled the flames of inclusivity in many, many hearts last night". This project was approved October 16, 2015 and received \$2,500. Project leaders returned \$364.23 of unspent funds.

Churches Responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission involves eight congregations from Free Methodist, Mennonite Brethren, Salvation Army and United churches and Westwood Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba. They planned three educational evenings over three months beginning January 2016. Each evening had a different speaker. Justice Murray Sinclair, former chair of the TRC was one of the guest speakers. The fourth evening in April focused on discerning on to faithfully respond to the TRC's Calls to Action. This project was approved November 24, 2015 and received \$2,000.

Youth in Mission Trip to Winnipeg Inner City Missions is an initiative of the youth program at Knox Church in Waterloo, Ontario. Youth and adult will visit the WICM in the summer of 2016. Youth and adult participants learn about Aboriginal peoples as part of their preparation for the trip. Youth will share their experiences with their church afterward. The importance of youth participation in healing and reconciliation cannot be understated as new generations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous grow up. They will become leaders who continue to build new relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This is the second time Knox Church has received funding for this initiative. The project was approved November 24, 2015 and received \$5,000.

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Interfaith Workshop involved members of Knox Church, Calgary, Alberta and included support from the Calgary Interfaith Council. The Rev. Mark Tremblay served on the planning team. Ms. Doreen Spence facilitated a one day workshop for participants to discuss why and how the Declaration can be implemented in Canada. Doreen Spence is a Cree from Alberta. She is a respected traditional healer and contributed to the development of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that took over 20 years to work through the United Nations system. This workshop was filmed and will be a resource for the church. This project was approved November 24, 2015 and received \$700. The Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action include the Government of Canada, churches and other faith groups to implement the Declaration (Call to Action No. 48).

Plan to Implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action

The 2015 General Assembly adopted a motion that "the Assembly Council to develop a plan to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission related to church apologies and reconciliation, through committees, agencies and departments of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the synods, presbyteries and congregations and to report to the 142nd General Assembly on the plan and the progress made". (A&P 2015, p. 25) Justice Ministries will work with the Assembly Council in preparing this report.

Responding to Initiatives from Indigenous People

In December 2015, Justice Ministries was contacted by Sam Thomas, a Cayuga artist. He invited The Presbyterian Church in Canada and other denominations to participate in a project he has initiated called "Opening the Doors to Dialogue". Sam collected doors from several residential schools. "Opening the Doors to Dialogue" involves inviting Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples to come together to learn how to bead, but more importantly to talk. Sam is a researcher, artist and educator of Iroquois beadwork. Together worship participants bead patterns on the doors. Sam Thomas received funding for "Opening the Doors to Dialogue" from the Canada Council for the Arts as well as from one of the largest private foundations in Canada.

The launch took place at the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford on January 16, 2016. Katharine Masterton read the Confession on behalf of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The launch included statements by the Chief of the Six Nations of the Grand River, the Director of the Woodland Cultural Centre, a member of the Brantford City Council, the local member of the Ontario Legislature and several survivors of residential schools.

Some 30 participants participated in the beading workshop. Several residential schools survivors courageously spoke about their experiences at school. Other participants spoke about their hopes for the future and why they believe reconciliation is important. These stories create sacred spaces where healing from brokenness becomes possible.

Similar events were planned in Niagara on the Lake, Ontario and Fort Erie Ontario. The Rev. Wally Hong read the Confession on behalf of the church at the February 20, 2016 event at the Niagara Regional Native Centre in Niagara on the Lake and Stephen Allen read the Confession at the April 2, 2016 event at the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre in Fort Erie.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

The Closing Event began with a sacred ceremony on Victoria Island on the Ottawa River on Sunday, May 31, 2015. Victoria Island is traditional Algonquin territory. The Presbyterian delegation attended a wonderful service at St. Andrew's Church Ottawa. At noon that day, the Walk for Reconciliation began in Gatineau, Quebec and ended next to the Ottawa City Hall. Between 7,000 and 10,000 people walked together for reconciliation. Young and old, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, walking together. It was a moving day.

On June 2, the Commissioners presented a summary of the final report and the 94 Calls to Action, of which 42 focus on healing the wounds of residential schools and 52 are steps for building new relationships. As each Call to Action was read by one of the Commissioners, there were often loud cheers of hope and for some survivors, tears, perhaps because they felt that their pain (and it is as much Canada's pain) was finally being publicly acknowledged. A number of the Calls to Action are directed to the churches and taken together, provide a road map for the continuing journey of truth telling, asking for forgiveness and seeking reconciliation. Together they build a foundation for justice and right relations.

On June 3, the Governor General of Canada, His Excellency David Johnston, hosted a closing ceremony at Rideau Hall. The Presbyterian Church in Canada's delegation to this ceremony included: the Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris, Moderator of the 140th General Assembly; the Rev. Stephen Kendall, Principal Clerk; Ms. Vivian Ketchum, survivor of Cecilia Jeffrey residential school.

The WMS had a delegation at the Closing Event in Ottawa. Justice Ministries recruited a team of 12 people; it included Indigenous people and young adults. Many members of this team have spoken to their congregations and presbyteries.

Presbyterians across Canada marked the Closing Event in different ways including through worship, in local Walks for Reconciliation and in community feasts.

The TRC's Final Report was presented in Ottawa, December 15, 2015. The Moderator of the 141st General Assembly, the Rev. Karen Horst spoke on behalf of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The mandate of this historic Commission has come to the end, but the journey for reconciliation continues.

The TRC's Calls to Action that are directed to churches are posted on a new webpage that will provide background information and stories from Presbyterians responding to these actions (presbyterian.ca/healing/trc-calls-to-action/).

Peoples of Faith Moving Forward in Reconciliation

In November 2015, representatives from a number of denominations, ecumenical agencies and traditional elders met in Pickering, Ontario, to consider how they might work together on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The gathering was fortunate to have Shirley Williams, a traditional elder from Peterborough participate in the gathering.

In addition to the churches that are part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (Anglican Church of Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the United Church of Canada), there were representatives from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, Canadian Council of Churches, Canadian Yearly Meeting (Quakers), Christian Reformed Church in North America, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, KAIROS, Mennonite Church Canada, Mennonite Central Committee and the Salvation Army.

There was agreement to cooperate on Call to Action No. 48 – developing a plan by March 31, 2016, to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

There were other proposals for possible ecumenical collaboration. These will be considered in the months to come.

Stephen Allen (Justice Ministries) and Yvonne Bearbull (Kenora Fellowship) represented The Presbyterian Church in Canada on the planning team.

Congregations are responding to the Calls to Action

The session at First Church in Port Colborne, Ontario, created an ad hoc committee to inform the congregation, community and the Presbytery of Niagara about Presbyterian involvement in residential schools and to discern ways to promote healing.

Westwood Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba is cooperating with eight churches in their community to host four evening events in January to April 2016. The first three evenings will have speakers who will address themes that run through the Calls to Action. The final evening will be community discernment for ways the community can respond to the Calls to Action together.

First Church in Regina, Saskatchewan is working ecumenically and with Indigenous organizations to advocate for the commemoration and maintenance of the cemetery of children who died at the Presbyterian-run Regina Indian Industrial School. The school closed in 1911 (Call to Action No. 75).

The Presbytery of Ottawa is developing liturgical resources for congregations to learn more about the legacy of residential schools and the TRC's Calls to Action.

Knox Church in Calgary is learning about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The congregation joined an interfaith planning team and organized a forum to discuss how peoples of faith can implement the values and principles enshrined in the Declaration.

The Rev. Susan Samuel planned a workshop in the spring, 2016 for members of the Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland to learn about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Both of these initiatives are faithful responses to Call to Action No. 48 which calls on churches to learn about and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Copies of the UN Declaration are available from Justice Ministries.

These are just some of the local initiatives that Presbyterians across Canada have been involved in since the release of the TRC's Calls to Action.

Justice Ministries is available to lead workshops on the Calls to Action. The Calls to Action can be found at trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That congregations and presbyteries be encouraged to study the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Hard copies of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples are available from Justice Ministries. Softcopies can be downloaded online from un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That sessions and presbyteries consider ways to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in their communities.

The General Assembly now begins by acknowledging the traditional territory on which Assembly gathers. This is in response to an overture from the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington in 2013. (A&P 2013, p. 541; A&P 2014, p. 373) This act is a sign of respect and for those who are not Indigenous, a brief history lesson.

Identifying the traditional territory may require some research. In some cases, several First Nations or Indigenous groups may need to be recognized as traditional territories may have overlapped or been shared. This is a project that could involve young people in the congregation. Here are some steps to take.

Identify the traditional territory the church is on. It may be a treaty territory. Libraries may provide this information or do some research on the internet. The other approach is to contact the closest First Nation community or organization (Friendship Centre). In addition, many universities and community colleges have Indigenous student organizations or Indigenous Studies programs.

Justice Ministries is developing a resource to assist congregations to identify the traditional territory on which their buildings are located.

Recommendation No. 7 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That congregations be encouraged to acknowledge the traditional territory on which the congregation meets to worship by posting this information in bulletins, by a sign in the church or a combination of both.

Recommendation No. 8 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That congregations be encouraged to acknowledge the traditional territory on which the congregation meets to worship on Aboriginal Day Sunday.

Recommendation No. 9 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That sessions, presbyteries and all church groups are encouraged to acknowledge the traditional territory on which they are meeting at each meeting.

Healing and Reconciliation Advisory Committee

The Rev. Tim Choi (Native Ministries Representative), Ms. Carol MacLennan, the Rev. Katherine McCloskey, the Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie (convener), the Rev. Barbara Pilozow, Ms. Heather Purdy, Mr. Keith Randall, Dr. Douglas Stewart, Ms. Laura VanderVleuten.

The Rev. Dr. J.H. (Hans) Kouwenberg and the Rev. Dr. W.G. Sydney McDonald completed two three-year terms. Justice Ministries thanks them for their contributions.

KAIROS: CANADIAN ECUMENICAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES

KAIROS unites 11 Canadian churches and religious organizations in a faithful ecumenical response to the call to “do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). KAIROS advocates for social change, amplifying and strengthening the public witness of its members, including The Presbyterian Church in Canada. KAIROS is a Greek word meaning “God’s time” and refers to an auspicious moment for decision or action. KAIROS was established on July 1, 2001, and brought together ten ecumenical coalitions. KAIROS has five national Circles of Ecumenical Collaboration. Members of the circles contribute to shaping KAIROS’ programs. Representatives are appointed by Justice Ministries to the following circles: Sustainability, Dignity and Rights, Indigenous Rights and Movement Building. The representative to the Global Partnership Circle is appointed by PWS&D. The grant from the Life and Mission Agency to KAIROS in 2015 was \$42,700. The website is kairoscanada.org.

Spirited Reflections

Individuals are invited to submit theological reflections that are posted on KAIROS’ website. The reflections may follow the lectionary cycle, but this is not essential. Several Presbyterians have contributed reflections in the past year including Diane Munier and Charmila Ireland.

Sustainability Circle

KAIROS hosted a national forum on fracking on October 30–31, 2015 in Moncton, New Brunswick and Vancouver, British Columbia. Over 100 people attended the two events. In addition participants joined over the internet. Speakers from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Quebec described the fracking debates in their respective provinces. On Saturday, Alma Brooks, a grandmother from the Maliseet Nation, spoke from the perspective of a woman who lives in an affected community. Kenneth Frances and Katrina Clair shared their experiences in resisting fracking on Elsipogtog lands. Jennifer Henry, KAIROS’ executive director offered a theological reflection which emphasized some common points between Christianity and Indigenous spirituality.

In Vancouver two Indigenous women, Freda Huson, from the Unist’ot’en clan of the Wet’suwet’en nation and Christine Martin from the Lax Kwa’alaams explained why their nations set up camps to defend their territories from corporations wishing to build shale gas pipelines and a Liquefied Natural Gas export terminal. The forum ended with strong presentations by Toghestiy, Hereditary Chief of the Likhts’amisyu and Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs.

KAIROS policy briefing papers are written to contribute to public debate on key domestic and foreign policy issues. Two were written in 2015: “Hopeful Signs, Alarming Realities on the Road to Climate Justice” and “Canada Falls Far Short of Pope Francis’ Call for Ecological Justice”. In 2016 KAIROS prepared a briefing paper called “Huge Challenges for Canada after Paris Climate Conference”.

The Circle supports reconciling relationship with Indigenous peoples and will continue to consider how to advocate with corporations and governments to implement free, prior and informed consent, an article of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, for genuine involvement of Indigenous peoples at every stage of resource development in Canada and abroad.

The Circle will continue to animate KAIROS’ reconciling in the watershed program which encourages people to learn about their community through the watersheds.

Ms. Janette McIntosh (Vancouver, British Columbia) is our representative on the Sustainability Circle.

Dignity and Rights Circle

Members of the Dignity and Rights Circle worked with the Indigenous Rights Circle and staff at KAIROS in researching and writing a submission to the United Nations' Human Rights Committee regarding Canada's compliance with obligations to Indigenous people under various international conventions to which Canada is a signatory. The report, NGO Shadow Report – Submission of information by KAIROS to the Human Rights Committee for the examination of Canada's Sixth Report – July 2015. The report received coverage in several national media. Copies are available from Justice Ministries.

In the coming year, members of the Dignity and Rights Circle will research and prepare briefs to United Nations organizations and possibly regional multilateral bodies such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. This work will be done in consultation with other Circles and with staff.

With support from a major foundation and in partnership with migrant workers and other organizations, KAIROS held a forum in Fredericton in February 2016, on Migrant Rights. In the coming year, KAIROS will work with these organizations in recommending changes to Canada's Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP). One change would be a clearer path to permanent residence which is denied to agricultural workers under the TFWP. Workshops are being planned with migrant workers for the fall, 2016. Migrant workers are participating in KAIROS' Blanket Exercise and learning about Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in Canada.

Ms. Margaret Evans (Toronto, Ontario) our representative on the Dignity and Rights Circle.

Movement Building Circle

The Movement Building Circle's priority is to support participation by KAIROS' member churches in its education programs. The focus of these programs has been Indigenous rights and supporting the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

KAIROS' campaign for 2015–2016 is called *Winds of Change*. It is in response to Call to Action No. 62 which calls for the residential school legacy, treaties and past and present Indigenous contributions to Canada to be a mandatory part of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools in each province and territory. There are workshop and activity resources. There are petitions for each province as well as background information on each province and territory's policies and practices on KAIROS' webpage (kairoscanada.org).

KAIROS' Blanket Exercise is being used in churches and increasingly in many other organizations across Canada. Here is one example. A professor at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario invited staff from KAIROS to train 20 of her teaching assistants. The teaching assistants then did the Blanket Exercise with over 800 students in the professor's course.

The Blanket Exercise is the most requested workshop facilitated by Justice Ministries' staff. A Presbyterian version of this resource is online at presbyterian.ca/healing.

The Movement Building Circle periodically meets in different parts of the country in order to highlight KAIROS' work. In November, 2015, the Circle met in the newly opened Truth and Reconciliation Centre at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. The Circle participated in organizing a community discussion on reconciliation that took place at the Thunderbird House.

Ms. Katharine Masterton (Toronto, Ontario) is our representative on the Movement Building Circle.

Indigenous Rights Circle

The KAIROS Indigenous Rights Circle includes representatives from KAIROS' member churches and partner organizations as well as Indigenous people from across Canada. Its mandate is to suggest ways KAIROS members can reset the relationship with Indigenous peoples within KAIROS as well as within our local communities.

Beginning in February 2015, Deborah Tagornak, an Inuit living in Ottawa, and Ray Jones, an Hereditary Chief from the Gitksan Nation in British Columbia, will be an interim Indigenous presence on KAIROS' board of directors.

During the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Closing Event, the Indigenous Rights Circle led a workshop on "Perspectives on Reconciliation" at a KAIROS gathering.

Two members of the Indigenous Rights Circle attended the intergenerational "Future of Life in the Arctic Conference" in Storforsen, Sweden. Their report described the devastating changes that are occurring in the Arctic, and their concern that the people of the North were under-represented at the December, 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, France.

The Rev. Susan Samuel (Lion's Head, Ontario) is our representative on the Indigenous Rights Circle.

KAIROS Board of Directors

Mr. Stephen Allen represents the Life and Mission Agency on KAIROS' board and the Rev. Dr. Andrew Johnston represents PWS&D.

CHURCH COUNCIL ON JUSTICE AND CORRECTIONS

The Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC) is a national faith-based coalition of eleven founding churches, incorporated in 1972. Through education, advocacy and community development programs, the CCJC seeks to foster healthier communities and crime prevention through social responsibility.

The CCJC has been active over the past year with a view to inspiring innovation about restorative justice. For Restorative Justice Week (November 15–22, 2015) CCJC held an art contest and circulated infographic materials about restorative justice which can be viewed at: ccjc.ca/restorative-justice-week/.

CCJC has recently advocated for the reopening of prison farms and better support for chaplaincy services. An event was held in Ottawa January 28, 2016 to launch the book *Looking for Ashley: Re-reading What the Smith Case Reveals about the Governance for Girls, Mothers and Families in Canada* written by Rebecca Bromwich.

The CCJC's website is ccjc.ca.

Ms. Rebecca Bromwich (Ottawa, Ontario) represents our church on the CCJC's board of directors and serves as the treasurer.

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Commission on Justice and Peace

The Commission on Justice and Peace (CJP) is able to do as much as it does because of the active participation of the denominations that have representatives on the Commission. The Commission's Associate Secretary is part-time. The Commission's program includes: Climate justice; human trafficking; poverty in Canada; undoing racism in Canadian churches.

The Canadian Council of Churches was officially represented by the CCC's vice-president, Willard Metzger, at the United Nations Climate Conference in Paris in December, 2015.

The Commission on Justice and Peace coordinated a statement released in September 2015 on climate justice and ending poverty in Canada signed by a number of denominations, religious communities, ecumenical agencies and other faiths. The Moderator of the 141st General Assembly signed on behalf of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The Canadian Council of Churches and the Church of Sweden co-organized the Future of Life in the Arctic – The Impact of Climate Change. This consultation took place in northern Sweden to consider Indigenous and religious perspectives on the impact of climate change in the Arctic.

The Commission on Justice and Peace contributed to a Federal Election Resource involving a number of ecumenical agencies.

The Canadian Council of Churches is the legal entity under which Project Ploughshares operates and, as such, the Governing Committee of Project Ploughshares is accountable to The Canadian Council of Churches. The Canadian

Council of Churches has official accreditation to the United Nations which meant that Project Ploughshares' Executive Director and a member of staff attended United Nations discussions on nuclear disarmament. On a program basis, Project Ploughshares connects to the Commission on Justice and Peace.

Mr. Stephen Allen represents our church on the Commission on Justice and Peace.

Project Ploughshares

Project Ploughshares is an agency of the Canadian Council of Churches. Its vision for a secure and just world at peace has guided the agency since it was founded in 1976.

This has been a year of change at Project Ploughshares. A new Executive Director, Cesar Jaramillo, began his duties in July 2015. Mr. Jaramillo will provide leadership in implementing the organization's new strategic plan. The plan calls Project Ploughshares to provide leadership with evidence-based research and policy options for sustainable peace and disarmament. Towards this goal, Project Ploughshares held a number of community events in the past year, including a book launch for Ernie Regehr's new book, *Disarming conflict. Why peace cannot be won on the battlefield*. Regehr is one of the founders of Project Ploughshares.

Since 2007 The Presbyterian Church in Canada has provided funding for a Presbyterian who has recently graduated from university to serve as the Peace and Human Security Intern for an eight month period. Philip MacFie is the sixth intern. He began working at Project Ploughshares in September 2015 and completed his work in April 2016. This internship program was an opportunity for a young Presbyterian to gain valuable work experience and to do so with an ecumenical agency. The internship has been funded for two three year terms. Additional funding will not be sought to continue the internship beyond 2016.

Project Ploughshares' website is ploughshares.ca.

Ms. Kathryn Hare (Waterloo, Ontario) is our representative on Project Ploughshares' Governing Committee.

Biotechnology Reference Group

The Biotechnology Reference Group (BRG) is an initiative of the Canadian Council of Churches. The BRG strives to understand the theological and ethical implications of some of the major developments in biotechnology including: direct to consumer genetic testing, genetic privacy, synthetic biology, labeling of genetically modified organisms (GMO) in our food and nanotechnology.

Mr. Stephen Allen (Toronto, Ontario) and Ms. Rose Janson (Hamilton, Ontario) represent our church on the Biotechnology Reference Group.

The Rev. Dr. George Tattie (St. Catharines, Ontario) completed his term this year. Justice Ministries thanks him for his contributions.

The Biotechnology Reference Group's website is councilofchurches.ca/biotechnology.

ECOLOGY

CDP – Driving Sustainable Economies

Formerly called the Carbon Disclosure Project, the name has been changed to "CDP – Driving Sustainable Economies". The 2008 General Assembly approved a recommendation that The Presbyterian Church in Canada become a signatory to the CDP and has been listed as such in the CDP's annual reports since 2009 (A&P 2008, p. 328, 41).

The CDP is an investor coalition representing over \$95 trillion in assets from 822 institutional investors. It is an independent, not-for-profit organization and the largest investor coalition concerned about climate change in the world. Investors include private and public pension funds and faith communities in the USA, Canada, the UK, Australia and a number of other countries.

The CDP requests full disclosure from corporations regarding the opportunities and risks they face due to climate change and publishes the results. In Canada, annual surveys are sent to the 200 largest publically traded corporations listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange. The survey is voluntary.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Investments

The 2012 General Assembly approved a recommendation that Justice Ministries identify the corporations that were invited to complete the CDP's survey in which The Presbyterian Church in Canada has investments and that the Moderator write to these corporations to commend or encourage participation in the CDP survey (A&P 2012, p. 373, 32). Out of the 200 corporations that received the surveys, The Presbyterian Church in Canada held shares in 91; of these, 70 completed the 2015 survey and 21 corporations did not. The Moderator of the 141st General Assembly wrote to these corporations. Justice Ministries will post the list on the website. The list may be of interest to church trustees, financial management committees and groups responsible for the management of endowment funds.

Report on the 2015 General Assembly's Carbon Footprint

Justice Ministries has developed a series of questions for a university or community college about how the institution is reducing its carbon footprint. These questions are available for use by those planning General Assembly. The responses to the checklist are not intended to decide whether or not the venue will be used, because there may be limited venues available in a community, but to communicate The Presbyterian Church in Canada's concerns about the environment.

Each year the General Assembly's carbon footprint is calculated as one way to highlight the ecological impact of Assembly.

A note about the calculations

The calculations of the General Assembly's carbon footprint only include travel (air and auto). The carbon footprint incurred at the venue itself is not included as universities or community colleges do not provide this data (air conditioning, electricity, meals, waste, etc.).

Air mileage is calculated from airport to airport, using the carbon calculator recommended by the Pembina Institute. Car emission calculations are based on a medium sized vehicle and are calculated using KAIROS' carbon calculator. Mileage information is gathered from the expense claim forms of those attending General Assembly. Miles and flight distances are estimated when information is not available.

Car Travel

- This information is gathered from two sources: 1) expense claim forms and 2) forms submitted by commissioners requesting specific information on their carbon footprint.
- General Assembly participants collectively drove 40,062 kilometers producing approximately 8,661 kg of CO₂e.

Air Travel

- 300 participants travelled by plane to attend the General Assembly. The carbon emissions from flights totaled 492,006 kg of CO₂e. Calculations are based on direct, return flights.

Totals

- The total emissions for 341 participants is 500, 667 kg of CO₂e. The average is 1468.23 kg per person.

General Assembly Carbon Footprint

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of participants	222*	358*	356	345	341	341
Location	Sydney, Nova Scotia	London, Ontario	Oshawa, Ontario	Toronto, Ontario	Waterloo, Ontario	Vancouver, British Columbia
Total (tonnes of CO ₂)	271.5	98.8	163.8	140.3	134.0	500.7
Average (tonnes of CO ₂)	1.2	.29	.46	.41	.39	1.5

* Travel for ecumenical and overseas partners and guests was not included in these calculations.

Calculations in 2012 and 2013 were more robust than those made previously because the calculations include car travel for participants to and from airports in addition to participants who drove directly to General Assembly. This, in part, accounts for variances between 2010–2011 and 2012–2013. The method for calculating mileage for 2015 was different than previous years because of a change in how mileage information is collected. This may cause variations in mileage (road transportation only) between 2014 and 2015.

- A return flight from St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador to Victoria, British Columbia produces 3.04 tonnes of CO₂.
- The average citizen in India emits 0.9 tonnes of CO₂ annually.
- On a per capita basis, Canadians emit 22.4 tonnes of CO₂ annually.
- To limit the increase in the globally averaged combined land and ocean surface temperature to two degrees Celsius and based on the earth's sustainable capacity to absorb carbon emissions, each person should have a personal annual cap of 2 tonnes of CO₂.

All references in the bulleted list are from Atmosfair, an online carbon calculator for air travel at atmosfair.de/en. Countries in the Global North are responsible for a majority of the greenhouse gases that have caused the climate crisis. Countries in the Global South face the most serious impacts of climate change, have little capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and have historically contributed very little to the problem. The ethical issue is this: those who contribute least to climate change suffer disproportionately while those who contribute the most suffer the least.

Update on Climate Change

This report will provide a summary of the most recent information available on climate change. It will comment on current international climate change talks. It will conclude with recommendations that encourage the Government of Canada to take a leadership role to avoid serious or irreparable damage to the earth's ecosystems by climate change.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the leading scientific authority on climate change. Its reports are consensus findings reflecting a majority of independent and peer reviewed scientific research. The IPCC's 2014 report states that climate change is "unequivocal" (IPCC 2014, 1). The averaged combined land and ocean surface temperature increase is 0.85 degrees Celsius since the industrial revolution (IPCC 2014, 1). The report projects global temperatures will continue to rise and that the impacts of climate change will intensify. Impacts include more intense and longer heat waves and more intense and frequent storms. Oceans will continue to warm, become more acidic and mean ocean levels will rise (IPCC 2014, 10).

Canada's Carbon Emissions and Reduction Commitments

The most recent information on Canadian emissions available from Environment Canada indicates that in 2013, Canadian greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were 726 megatonnes. It is important to track and report emissions so we can follow changes over time and be able to compare data from different countries. For example, the international community developed the Copenhagen Accord. Under this voluntary Accord, Canada committed to reduce emissions to 17% lower than its 2005 emissions by 2020. Canada's target for 2020 is 611 megatonnes and is unlikely to meet this target.

In December 2015, the international community negotiated the Paris Accord. The agreement calls for emission targets that result in limiting global warming to "well below" 2 degrees C compared to pre-industrial period, and striving to limit warming to 1.5 degrees C. An increase of 2 degrees C is considered the threshold to limit catastrophic climate change. The Moderator of the 141st General Assembly wrote to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, the Hon. Catherine McKenna, encouraging Canada to set goals for emission reductions that limit warming below this threshold.

196 countries agreed to the Paris Accord. Under the Kyoto Accord, countries in the Global South did not have to reduce emissions. They do under the Paris Accord. While the Paris Accord is considered legally binding, critics have noted that there are no penalties for countries that fail to meet reduction targets. Countries are expected to publish their greenhouse gas reduction targets.

The goal of the Accord is to achieve a carbon neutral world after 2050 and before 2100. Carbon neutral means that emissions for human activity do not exceed the natural ability of the earth's systems (e.g. soil, trees, oceans) to absorb greenhouse gases.

The Paris Accord calls for \$100 billion to be set aside annually by 2020 to assist countries in the Global South to combat climate change. In November 2015, the Government of Canada committed to spend \$2.65 billion dollars over 5 years to assist poorer countries in the Global South. This commitment doubles commitments made by the previous government. When combined with the \$1.2 billion dollars given to a similar fund negotiated as part of the Copenhagen Accord, the CBC notes that Canada has “exceeded the \$ 4 billion target that environmental groups have been urging it to meet as its ‘fair share,’ based on [Canada’s] national wealth” (Barton).

The federal Minister of the Environment is scheduled to meet with provincial and territorial counterparts by March 15, 2016 to discuss how both levels of government will work together to meet the commitments that Canada agreed to in the Paris Accord.

References

Barton, Mary. “Government announces \$2.65B to help developing countries fight climate change” CBC, November 27, 2015. cbc.ca/news/politics/funding-for-climate-change-chogm-1.3339907.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2014). “Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report – Summary for Policy Makers.” ipcc.ch.

OVERTURES, 2015 RE HUMAN SEXUALITY

In 2015 the General Assembly referred to Justice Ministries Overture Nos. 4 and 5, 2015 requesting statements recommending full inclusion of all persons regardless of sexual orientation and gender. Overture No. 21, 2015 requesting a study paper on human sexuality that affirms the statement made in 1994 was referred to Justice Ministries in consultation with the Church Doctrine Committee. Overture No. 23, 2015 was directed to the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries re gay and lesbian candidates for ministry and same-sex marriages. Overture Nos. 24, 30 and 35, 2015 requested statements recommending full inclusion of all persons regardless of sexual orientation and gender and were directed to the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries. Overture No. 15, 2015 was referred to Justice Ministries and the Committee on Church Doctrine and requested a statement that would lead to a “fresh round of listening” in the church. Overture No. 29, 2015 referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries requested a review of the traditional exegesis of the biblical texts that speak to homosexuality alongside revisionist readings of the same texts and prepare a report to guide the church. Overture Nos. 14, 21, 26 and 33, 2015 were referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries and requested a statement affirming the Statement on Human Sexuality (1994). Overture No. 32, 2015 was referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries requested a statement upholding marriage as between one man and one woman.

Recommendation No. 10 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) to present a response to the above Overture Nos. 4, 5, 14, 15, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, 32, 33, 35, 2015 to the 2017 General Assembly.

OVERTURE NO. 9, 2016 (p. 28.1.5)

Re: Utilize and develop resources re passive energy

Overture No. 9, 2016 from the Presbytery of Winnipeg was referred at its request to the Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries). The overture requests that a) an action plan be developed and implemented to make the church's national office a passive energy building; b) enter into conversation with the theological colleges so they become passive energy buildings and instruct the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) to develop a resource to assist congregations make their buildings passive energy buildings, explore the viability of clergy serving multi-point charges to use electric cars and explore the costs of congregations with strategically located parking lots to build charging stations for electric cars.

This overture will require consultation with the Assembly Council and will also require significant research in preparing a response. For these reasons, the following recommendation is presented:

Recommendation No. 11 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) in consultation with the Assembly Council to present a response to Overture No. 9, 2016 to the 2017 General Assembly.

Note: A passive energy building can result in a dramatic reduction of energy consumption for heating or cooling. Passive design strategies include day lighting, natural ventilation, and solar energy. Active design strategies use purchased energy to keep the building comfortable and include forced-air HVAC systems, heat pumps, radiant panels or chilled beams, and electric lights.

PUBLIC WITNESS

Education, reflection, prayer, advocacy and solidarity are essential to how we serve as the body of Christ in the world. Since the 2015 General Assembly, Justice Ministries staff and volunteers led workshops or made presentations to: five WMS groups and presbyteries; five congregations; one synod; Knox College; Assembly Council; and Camp Kintail in the Synod of Southwestern Ontario. Justice Ministries will be participating in Canada Youth 2016.

Justice Ministries communicates with congregations and courts of the church through PCCconnect, Mission Capsules, Prayer Partnerships and the website presbyterian.ca/justice. It produces a semi-annual newsletter “Streams of Justice”, of which there are over 800 subscribers. A monthly e-newsletter on healing and reconciliation is also produced.

Justice Ministries produced bulletin inserts highlighting National Affordable Housing Day (November 22), Human Rights Day (December 10), and Earth Day (April 22).

The Social Action Handbook is updated each year following General Assembly and is available online.

The Moderator of the 141st General Assembly wrote to the Hon. Stéphane Dion, Minister of Foreign Affairs, acknowledging the Government of Canada’s efforts to secure the release of the Rev. Lim sentenced to 13 years of hard labour by the Supreme Court of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) as well as to the DPRK’s Ambassadors the United Nations in Geneva and New York requesting the Rev. Lim’s release and return to Canada.

JUSTICE MINISTRIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Rev. Daniel Cho, the Rev. Jeffrey Lackie, Mr. Brockenshire Lemiski, Ms. Shirley Miller, Ms. Deb Schlichter, Mr. Seth Veenstra and the Rev. Marty Molengraaf.

Ms. June Campbell, the Rev. Mary Campbell and the Rev. Dr. Pam McCarroll completed their terms. Their contributions to Justice Ministries are appreciated.

MINISTRY AND CHURCH VOCATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

That recommendation No. 12 (identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 12

That permission be granted to the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations) to report on Overture No. 6, 2016 to the next General Assembly. (see p. 12.1.47)

Recommendation No. 13

That the prayer of Overture No. 25, 2015 not be granted. (see p. 12.1.48)

REPORT

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Susan Shaffer
	Program Manager:	Liz Brewer
	Administrative Assistant:	Jackie Czegledi

PREAMBLE

As Presbyterians, we believe that Christ is calling leaders to renew and nurture God's people to be Christ's hands, voice and heart. This core belief is grounded in scripture (see especially Ephesians 4:11–13) and affirmed in the "Preamble to the Ordination Vows" (Book of Forms section 447). This foundational document is read during worship whenever a candidate is ordained as a minister of Word and Sacraments or a minister is inducted or recognized to serve in a pastoral charge.

Strong ministers are essential for a strong church. The unique contribution of Ministry and Church Vocations is passion for ministers and for ministry. Ministry and Church Vocations helps the church to discern, prepare and support ministers, so that they can renew and nurture God's people to share in Christ's ministry in and to the world.

Ministry and Church Vocations continues to keep before it the goals developed with its advisory committee. These goals are:

- to provide caring, competent and appropriate support to the courts and individual members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
- to help church leadership and staff to have knowledge and background to interpret and respond to new information and trends;
- to research and monitor changes in church and society and the requirements for leadership for the support of professional church workers by the courts of the church; and
- to facilitate the sharing of information and talent among various regions and courts.

As it works to realize these goals, Ministry and Church Vocations has focused on the tasks of education, research and communication.

EDUCATION

Seminars were held with theological students on maintaining appropriate pastoral boundaries, conflict resolution and seeking a call; new ministers in the Starting Well 2.0 program; the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry on the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment; and clerks of presbyteries and synods at the Clerks Consultation

RESEARCH

Departmental study topics this year have included revising and reforming the diaconate (Overture No. 25, 2015) and revising the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment when the complainant is a minister in a congregation (Overture No. 6, 2016).

COMMUNICATION

In fulfilling its support role, Ministry and Church Vocations strives to facilitate effective communication. For example, through the profile referral service, congregations and professional church leaders are assisted in searching for suitable candidates and ministry positions.

We appreciate the contributions of volunteers across the country to the work of Ministry and Church Vocations. We wish to thank especially the advisory committee, the various task groups and committees, and the ministers, diaconal ministers and elders who serve as counsellors or chaplains to theological students at guidance conferences.

PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

Guidance Conferences

In 2015, guidance conferences were held at Crieff Hills Community, Puslinch, Ontario, in May and August.

13 candidates were recommended for re-certification.

7 candidates were recommended for re-certification with conditions.

1 candidate was not recommended for re-certification at this time, with conditions outlined before certification might be reconsidered.

Two conferences are planned this year in May and in August at Crieff Hills.

Bursary List for Candidates for Ministry

presbyterian.ca/bursaries-for-candidates

A list of bursaries available to The Presbyterian Church in Canada candidates for ministry is posted on the church's website. The intention is to include all bursaries except those restricted to members of a specific congregation or administered through the colleges. Any new information may be submitted to Ministry and Church Vocations (ebrewer@presbyterian.ca).

SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS

Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Fund

The Presbyterian Church in Canada understands the “offices of ministry” to be Christ's gift to the church. Even as Christ calls all Christians to share in his ministry, he also recognizes the church's need for leaders. To meet this need, God gifts and calls individuals to serve as ruling elders, diaconal ministers and ministers of Word and Sacraments. Through their leadership and service, the church is renewed continually and Christ's people embrace his call to share the gospel with the world.

Leadership is costly – it draws upon the spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical resources of those who offer it. To sustain pastoral excellence, ministerial leaders employed in the church require ways to nourish and sustain their spiritual lives, to promote their ongoing intellectual growth, to nurture their pastoral imagination and energy, and to care for the health and wellbeing of themselves and their families.

With these needs of ministerial leaders in mind, the Life and Mission Agency has established the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Fund. Using bequest funds provided through the generosity and foresight of members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, it is designed to help the church to finance programs of learning, renewal and support for ministerial leaders employed in the church. Information about making contributions to this fund is available through the Stewardship and Planned Giving Office (Ms. Karen Plater, kplater@presbyterian.ca, 1-800-619-7301, ext. 272). At the present time, funds in the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Fund have been allocated to the church's pilot employee assistance program during the trial period, with the exception of a small portion set aside for incentive grants for new colleague covenant groups. A description of both programs is found below.

The Pilot Employee Assistance Program

presbyterian.ca/eap

The trial period for the church's pilot employee assistance program (EAP) began in September 2010. It is designed to enable actively serving professional church leaders to meet their needs for confidential assessment, counseling and referral in a timely manner. Too often in the “fish bowl” of congregational life, ministers and their families suffer in silence and isolation when experiencing anxiety, depression, addiction, unmanageable debt, and distressed marital and family relationships. There are many reasons why ministers might refrain from seeking help. Perhaps they feel they cannot access local resources with privacy and confidentiality. Perhaps they hesitate to choose an unfamiliar resource person outside their local area without the benefit of a trusted referral. Perhaps they lack the necessary funds. Whatever the reasons, delays in accessing qualified assistance increase the ministers' risks of burning out, becoming ill, losing their marriages and close family relationships, or leaving the ministry.

The EAP offers church leaders and their immediate families confidential, competent and timely resources, thereby making early, effective intervention more attainable. One phone call at any time of day to the toll-free Care Access Centre results in arrangements for the caller to connect with a counselor or other expert consultant within a few days. The Shepell.fgi resource team is comprised of thousands of experienced, Master's level counsellors and experts located in communities, large and small, across the country, so referral to qualified assistance is possible regardless of the caller's location. Moreover the preference and convenience of the callers is accommodated in the way the counsellors meet with them. Some individuals choose to meet their counselor face-to-face in the counselor's office, while others connect with their counselor by telephone or email. Finally and importantly, there is no cost to the individuals accessing the EAP Services. During this initial trial period, the cost is being underwritten entirely by bequest funds donated to The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

All services covered by this program are short-term and solution-based. Matters requiring longer term care are referred to others. EAP services include:

- Counseling related to any personal or work-related concerns, including marriage and family relationships, psychological health, addiction, life transitions, vocational concerns, and financial or legal matters.
- Consultation and Information Services, such as legal, financial, nutrition, health coaching, child care, elder care, and stress management.

Who Is Eligible?

To qualify as an EAP plan member, an individual must be a church employee enrolled in the church's health and dental plan (Sun Life Financial contract 50380) and not receiving the church's pension. All EAP coverage is family coverage, which extends benefits to the employee's spouse and dependent children (children up to 21 years of age, or up to 25 years of age for full-time students).

How Are Benefits Accessed?

Individuals call toll-free, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week:

English: 1-800-387-4765

French: 1-800-361-5676

Online counseling at: shepellfgi.com/ecounseling

Online resources at: shepellfgi.com

Use of the Employee Assistance Program

Each quarter, Shepell.fgi reports statistics about how the program is being used, without revealing clients' names. In the first five years and three months, ministers and their families have accessed EAP services 504 times. Most individuals were church employees (85%), while 15% were family members of church employees. These individuals live in all synods across Canada. The church employees using the EAP were all ages and years of experience, and slightly more frequently female than male (55% and 45%, respectively).

The majority of EAP clients requested counseling (82%, or 412 of 504). There was a wide range of emerging issues. By far the most common were personal/emotional concerns, which 207 individuals (50%) identified as the reason they had requested counseling; 108 of these 207 individuals attributed their concerns to stress. Couple/relationship and work-related concerns were the next most common emerging issues (80 and 71 individuals, respectively). Of the 71 individuals with work-related concerns, 47 attributed their issues to stress. A small number of EAP clients requested counseling for family issues (47 individuals), while the smallest group identified concerns regarding addiction (nine individuals).

A small proportion of EAP clients requested work-life services (18%, or 92 of 504). These individuals sought expert advice in dealing with legal matters, financial matters including credit and debt, personal health and well-being including nutrition and disease management, child/youth care, and elder/adult care.

Individuals received the help they requested using the full spectrum of options. Some met in-person with the counselor or consultant, some spoke with the professional over the telephone, while still others communicated by the internet.

The various measures used by the EAP provider to assess the effectiveness of the program demonstrate highly positive results. For the 341 closed counseling interventions, goal attainment was in the range of 92–100%. About 40% of the individuals receiving counseling were assessed by their counselor for depression; a significant proportion of these were discovered to be suffering moderate to severe levels of depression – a finding that potentially would be the first step along a pathway of appropriate treatment, healing and recovery. Occasionally the short-term, solution-based counseling available through the EAP uncovers conditions that require longer-term care. The statistics indicate that counsellors made a total of 20 referrals to professionals outside the EAP, and that 19 of these were accepted by the clients. The results of client satisfaction surveys (from 75 individuals, or 15% response rate) were also positive. By far the majority of respondents indicate that they would use the EAP again, that they would recommend the EAP to others, and that overall they were satisfied with the EAP.

While individuals accessing EAP services have complete confidentiality, in conversation with Ministry and Church Vocations staff, several ministers have chosen to mention how beneficial the program has been for themselves and their families. Personal comments on client satisfaction surveys reinforce this view, as illustrated in the following sample:

“Talking and solving personal problems has been great for me. The advice and support given during my sessions have been invaluable.”

“The EAP has been very helpful to me in dealing with my concerns. I'm very glad this service is available.”

“The counselor was very sympathetic and supportive.”

The utilization statistics for the employee assistance program demonstrate that ministers and their families are turning to it for help with confidence. Of course it must be acknowledged that many needs lie well outside the scope of any employee assistance program. Ministers are called as good stewards to look after all aspects of their own well-being and that of their family. This broad canvas includes all the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, psychological, physical and financial dimensions of their lives. Nevertheless, the church's employee assistance program offers ministers valuable resources as they seek to strengthen themselves for Christian service. At the same time, the employee assistance program provides The Presbyterian Church in Canada with another opportunity to express its care for the community of people who serve it as leaders.

Future Funding for the Employee Assistance Program – the Current Challenge

The greatest challenge related to the church's employee assistance program is its continued funding. On the advice of the church's Chief Financial Officer, the Life and Mission Agency extended the trial period for up to another four years beyond the initial termination date (August 2013). The hope is that the current pension fund deficits will be resolved by then and a source of regular funding in the church's normal budgeting process will be secured. Another possibility would be the donation of endowment funds designated for the employee assistance program and sufficient to support it moving forward. Or perhaps some combination of budget funds and designated donations and bequests might enable the program's continuation. Certainly Ministry and Church Vocations staff regard the church's employee assistance program as the answer to prayer, and it is in this same spirit that ongoing funding will be sought.

Incentive Grants for New Colleague Covenant Groups

presbyterian.ca/mcv/colleague-covenant-group-grants

Colleague covenant groups are meetings of ministerial colleagues designed to offer participants encouragement and support. They create for ministers a place to pray together, to gain perspective, to experience gentle accountability and support, to deepen Christian faith, and to share these opportunities with others. Colleague covenant groups engage ministers in a supportive, network of peers who pray for one another. With the help of their colleagues, ministers may develop sound perspectives on themselves and their ministries and grow in understanding and in Christian faith and discipleship. Their resources for ministry may be strengthened and their ministries enhanced.

To encourage the formation of new colleague covenant groups, the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations) provides incentive grants from bequest funds held in the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Fund. One-time grants are provided to ministers, diaconal ministers or lay ministers to assist with start-up costs for a new group. The grant application requires the prospective members to create a covenant outlining their goals, activities and the times when they will meet regularly and often over the course of the year. Depending on the focus chosen by the group, these funds could be used for such things as the purchase of copies of a book the group plans to study, or the individuals' travel costs when not covered by their congregations, or an honorarium for a paid group facilitator. The funds available through this incentive grants program are not provided to cover costs in future years after the colleague covenant group is established. It is hoped that group members will remain committed to covering their meeting costs once they have experienced the benefits of being in the group. The grant application form may be obtained from Ministry and Church Vocations or online.

Starting Well 2.0: First Years in Ministry

The first years of ministry are a critical time when pastoral identity and understanding of ministry are solidified. They can help a new minister lay the foundation for years of fruitful service in the church, or they can lead to discouraged resignation from the ministry or settling into unhealthy patterns that persist through a series of troubled ministries.

Recognizing that new ministers need mentoring and support as they move for the first time into a myriad of new contexts, assuming new roles and identities, the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations) has been participating in developing a Canadian ecumenical program designed to support new ministers. From 2001–2012,

Starting Well: First Years in Ministry gathered new ministers annually to reflect on their contexts and practice of ministry and to encourage their participation in collegial groups. The modular format of this three-year program made it possible to enter the program in any year, without having attended previous years. Participants were consistently enthusiastic about the program and voiced their intention to recommend it to their peers.

In January 2016 a redesigned Starting Well 2.0: First Years in Ministry was launched with a new online format. New ministers may participate from any location in Canada through active, live-time visual and audio interaction via the internet or on-site in the electronic classroom at Knox College. Participants choosing the distance option who live in close proximity to one another are encouraged to join the class from a common location, forming a local community.

Ten ministers have registered to meet one Wednesday afternoon each month from January through June of this year. Over the course of the six meetings, each minister will have the opportunity to present a case study arising out of his or her current practice of ministry, and to learn from the analysis and comments of their peers in a supportive environment. In addition, the class will spend time in worship, seminars on a range of ministry topics, and prayer for one another and for their congregations. Program leadership is being provided by the Rev. Dr. Andrew Irvine, Director of the Centre for Clergy Care and Congregational Health, and the Rev. Susan Shaffer, Associate Secretary, Ministry and Church Vocations.

The program design team includes representatives of the sponsoring groups: the Centre for Clergy Care and Congregational Health, Knox College, Emmanuel College, and staff from denominational ministry offices of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the United Church of Canada. As in previous years, Ministry and Church Vocations has written to all new Presbyterian ministers to invite their participation.

Continuing Education Committee

presbyterian.ca/con-ed-fund

The Continuing Education Committee met three times in 2015 (April, September and December) to discuss continuing education, review the General Assembly established annual continuing education allowance and consider applications for grants.

In 2015, five applications were received, with grants totaling \$7,175 being awarded to the various applicants. The minimum grant was \$495 and the maximum was \$2,000 making an average of \$1,435 per applicant. Grants were approved for studies related to New Testament Greek, Clinical Pastoral Education, APCE (Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators) conference and three Doctor of Ministry programs.

The continuing education grant application form is available on the church's website. This committee hopes and prays that congregations and presbyteries will encourage their ministers and church professionals to engage in continuing education, making full use of the church's regular provisions for continuing education leaves as well as the supplemental funds administered by this committee.

The members of the committee in 2015 who reviewed applications, administered the fund and reviewed the annual continuing education allowance were: Liz Brewer, Cathy Finlay, Andy Kuo, Joan Masterton and John Read. During the year we welcomed one new committee member, Joan Masterton.

Profile Referral Service

presbyterian.ca/vacancies

The profile referral service links individuals searching for a call with congregations seeking to call a minister. The congregational profile enables congregations to introduce themselves and their ministerial needs to professional church workers and candidates certified for ordination. The personal profile enables professional church workers and candidates certified for ordination to introduce themselves to search committees. An up-to-date listing of ministry opportunities and interim moderators is maintained on the church's website.

In addition to ministry opportunities leading to calls, the profile referral service continues to be used for stated supply and interim ministry appointments.

At the time of writing this report in February, Ministry and Church Vocations records indicate that 79 professional church workers and graduating students were seeking a call. A total of 34 pastoral charges (4.78% of 724 pastoral

charges) are looking for a minister and have prepared a congregational profile, submitting it to Ministry and Church Vocations for assistance. Five (5) of these are part-time positions.

To provide some perspective on these figures, it may be helpful to categorize the 79 individuals who are known to be seeking a call. Eighteen (18) individuals are Presbyterian Church in Canada ministers who are already serving in a pastoral charge and whose names are on the active roll of the presbytery. Should they accept a call to a different pastoral charge, it is quite likely that their move would create a new pulpit vacancy. In this case, their net effect on the number of ministry opportunities would be neutral. Seventeen (17) individuals are Presbyterian Church in Canada ministers not serving in ministries within this denomination and whose names are on the appendix to the roll of the presbytery. Fourteen (14) individuals are ministers or licentiates of other denominations who have been declared eligible to be received; 6 of these persons live outside Canada. Since many ministers of other denominations who are declared eligible for reception never in fact receive calls to Presbyterian Church in Canada congregations, especially when the minister lives outside Canada, it is probable that only a very few of these ministers will take positions in seeking congregations. Finally, 30 individuals are certified Presbyterian Church in Canada candidates for ordination who have graduated in previous years or who will graduate this spring.

The proportion of graduated candidates eligible to seek a call who have received one and been ordained is considerably higher than the statistics above might suggest. Since 2009, the majority of candidates for the ministry graduating from Presbyterian Church in Canada colleges who were eligible to seek a call have been ordained (101 of 127 or 80%).

Leading with Care Policy and Vulnerable Sector Police Records Checks

Presbyteries are reminded that they have the responsibility to ensure that the professional church workers under their care provide vulnerable sector police records checks as stipulated in the Leading with Care Policy. Ministers are required to obtain and present a new vulnerable sector police records check at the time of a new call or change of position and/or every five years (A&P 2005, p. 345–46).

Certified candidates are required to obtain a new vulnerable sector police records check every five years, while in the intervening years they must submit annually a signed update statement attesting that they have not committed a crime since their police vulnerable sector checks were issued. In addition, a vulnerable sector police records check must be presented at two points in the candidacy process: by prospective candidates prior to the first certification and by certified candidates prior to participating in a field education placement; if the vulnerable sector police records check is more than one year old, a signed update statement is also required. At other points in the candidacy process, certified candidates are required to submit a signed update statement: annually at recertification and at the time of examination for certification for ordination; if the five-year period for the vulnerable sector police records check has elapsed, a new document must be obtained and presented (A&P 2007, p. 339–40).

Training about the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment

Presbyteries are reminded of their responsibility to ensure that all professional church leaders under their care are educated to deal with sexual abuse and sexual harassment. This responsibility extends to ministers newly received from other denominations. Synods, colleges and sessions are reminded of the same responsibility for those under their care.

Two resources have been developed especially for congregational use. A brochure explains what The Presbyterian Church in Canada believes about sexual abuse and sexual harassment and the first steps to be followed in the case of a complaint. This brochure has now been printed in English, Korean, Chinese and Japanese. “Training for Sessions and Congregations in Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment” (updated 2005) is a workshop outline. These resources are available for purchase from the Resource Centre at church offices (resources@presbyterian.ca). Several videos/DVDs on the topic are available to borrow from Ministry and Church Vocations (ebrewer@presbyterian.ca).

Overture No. 6, 2016 (p. 28.1.3–4)

Re: Revising the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment when the complainant is a minister in a congregation

Overture No. 6, 2016 from the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry was referred at its request to the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations). The overture focuses on cases when a minister serving in a congregation brings a complaint of sexual abuse or sexual harassment against a member of the congregation. The overture notes

correctly that complaints are to be dealt with by the church court to which the person who is complained against is accountable. In the situations that form the subject of this overture, in which the complaint is against a lay member, adherent or staff person of a congregation, the case would fall under the session's jurisdiction. The overture expresses the view that such situations would be difficult and delicate, unfairly placing both the minister complainant and the session in a conflict of interest. The proposed solution is revision of the church's policy to assign to the presbytery the responsibility to deal with the kinds of complaints anticipated by the overture. The overture was accompanied by a document also prepared by the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry outlining the revisions being proposed to a dozen sections of the policy.

The Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations) recognizes that studying the concerns raised by the overture will require consultation with the authors of the overture, with the Clerks of Assembly, and perhaps also with legal counsel. These discussions were commenced on receipt of the overture in the last week of January. However, since thoughtful consideration of the revisions requested by the overture will require time, the following recommendation is presented.

Recommendation No. 12 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations) to report on Overture No. 6, 2016 to the next General Assembly.

SPECIAL MINISTRIES

Overture No. 25, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 599–601)

Re: Revising and reforming the diaconate

Overture No. 25, 2015 was submitted by the session of Knox's Church Galt in Cambridge, Ontario and transmitted by the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington without comment. It was referred to the Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations) and the Order of Diaconal Ministries. The overture proposes a substantial evaluation, revision and reformation of two areas of ministry within The Presbyterian Church in Canada: the Order of Diaconal Ministries and the Deacon's Court.

The Life and Mission Agency (Ministry and Church Vocations) chose to study the overture with the help of its advisory group, which brought perspectives from across the church including a principal of one of the church's theological colleges and the Administrator of the Order of Diaconal Ministries. Alongside the text of the overture itself, a supplementary document provided by the overture author was examined.

To place the overture's proposal in context, the following information about the two areas of ministry under review would be helpful. As described in the chapter entitled "Order of Diaconal Ministries" in the Book of Forms (sections 174–175, and also 176.5–176.5.1) members of the Order are referred to as diaconal ministers. They are members of presbyteries who have completed the church's candidacy process of preparation and discernment, including theological study in a Presbyterian Church in Canada college. When in active service, diaconal ministers take their functional titles from the specific position which they hold, commonly in the areas of Christian education, pastoral care, social ministry or church administration. As described in the chapter entitled "The Session" in the Book of Forms (sections 135–138), the office of deacon refers to the special care taken in distributing the offerings of the people to meet the needs of the poor. This responsibility rests with the ministers, diaconal ministers and ruling elders who together comprise the session. There is provision for this work to be assigned to congregational deacons. When this approach is chosen, deacons are elected and admitted in the same manner as elders. Deacons serve under the direction of the session. The Deacon's Court is the name given to the meeting at which the deacons consult, without vote, with the session.

The overture maintains that these two areas of ministry have evolved over time to the point that they no longer serve the missional purposes of the church today. Moreover the overture states that individuals "who wish to pursue a call outside the church" to serve needy, marginalized and vulnerable persons are not recognized in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. From the perspective of the overture, this lack of recognition is hampering the church's mission in the world. The proposed remedy is to create a new office of deacon whose work takes place in secular and faith-based institutions beyond the local congregation. The overture suggests that qualification standards for these deacons be established that include professional certification in areas of healing, justice and discipleship, along with one year of core theological training at seminary. The overture clearly regards ordination to be essential for individuals who are "pursuing a call outside the church." The overture seeks permission for individuals who meet

the church's qualification standards, once these are established, to use the title "deacon" in their public ministry and to indicate this standing by placing appropriate initials after their names.

Comments

The overture's emphasis on the importance of the church's ministry in the world is well placed. Responding to the grace and love of God in Jesus Christ draws the church into loving service to the people and the world God loves. Such service is the fruit of deepening Christian discipleship, even as it stands as testimony to the love the church has received as God's gracious gift.

Moreover one of the primary contexts where the church expresses its faith is the everyday lives of the people of God. If one were to ask, "Where is the church?" the answers might point first to the work that Christians do together – ministries shared within congregations, presbyteries or synods, national programs and ecumenical and interfaith partnerships. Equally valid, however, is the understanding that Christ's hands and feet and voice and heart are to be seen in the work, play, community involvement, family and friendships of individual Christians. The Reformed concept of Christian vocation is germane here: Christ's disciples live out their Christian vocation in the world and this "calling" encompasses all of life. At the present time, it would be difficult to emphasize too strongly the church's need to embrace this belief.

Nevertheless, although the overture draws attention to important Christian teaching, the arguments it advances do not stand up to scrutiny. Firstly, it is not accurate to state that the office of deacon is languishing and soon expected to cease altogether. In fact the church exercises this "special care for the needs of the poor" in myriad contexts: through service in local, regional, national or international initiatives of the church, of ecumenical or interfaith partners, and of other charitable organizations by our church's lay members and adherents, as well as by our ministers, diaconal ministers and ruling elders (who are understood to be deacons, Book of Forms section 135.1), and through funds donated to Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D), *Presbyterians Sharing*, and faith-based or secular charities.

Furthermore it is unclear why individuals in professions serving needy, marginalized and vulnerable persons should be singled out for special recognition. Every Christian has a calling and that calling involves living and serving in contexts described by the overture as "outside the church," that is, outside the church's formal activities and programs. Christian vocation may be expressed in every part of life and through every kind of work. The gospel imperative to share in Christ's ministry in and to the world is not restricted to the so-called caring professions. Equally, the church's faithfulness in sharing in the mission of God is not being diminished because the church does not grant special standing to these professionals in the manner that the overture is seeking.

Finally, in its critique of the Order of Diaconal Ministries, the overture does not appear to recognize the degree of connectedness that the Order enjoys within the diaconal community worldwide. The overture states that the Order lacks two hallmarks of religious orders, notably spiritual formation and "a rule of life" (a pattern or rhythm of spiritual disciplines that may include communal and private prayers offered at stated times throughout the day). The overture recommends that spiritual formation and an invited rule of life be implemented as core spiritual practices, to better distinguish the Order as a religious order. However, the Order of the Diaconal Ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is connected to diaconal ministry communities throughout the world through its active involvement in two associations: DOTAC (Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean) and DIAKONIA World Federation (World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconal Communities). Hence the Order is fully conversant with diaconal ministry as it carried out in other denominations and communities. Moreover the Order currently is engaged in a review of its life and work, with a goal of discerning future directions. Should the Order wish to make any changes to its focus, structure or practices, one may assume that, on its own initiative, it will take the necessary steps through its Biennial Council and with recommendation to the General Assembly where required.

In conclusion, the proposal advocated by the overture is not supported adequately by the reasons advanced for it, and should not be adopted. Therefore the following recommendation is presented.

Recommendation No. 13 **Adopted/Defeated/Amended**
That the prayer of Overture No. 25, 2015 not be granted.

The Order of Diaconal Ministries

Diaconal ministry has been a recognized form of ministry within The Presbyterian Church in Canada since 1908. The story of diaconal ministry within the church has always been one of change and adaptability, and that continues. “Just as the Presbyterian Church is challenged by the realities that are demanding significant change, so the ODM is challenged by the twin realities of the decreasing number of its members and the different kinds of ministries demanded by a changing society, a society that seeks to meet its spiritual needs outside of the institutional church. The Order is being pushed, often unwillingly, to listen to these challenges and to pursue the new directions to which God is leading us” (*From the Bottom Up – A Story of Collegial Leadership* by the Rev. Joyce Davis, p. 195).

Biennial Council

The Council of the Order of Diaconal Ministries ordinarily meets biennially, and our most recent gathering was held from April 19–21, 2015 at Crieff Hills Community. Twenty-seven members gathered for business, mutual support and spiritual enrichment with the theme of “The Uniqueness of Christian Community – what it means to be the church today” facilitated by Dorothy Henderson.

Task Force

At the 2015 Biennial Council meeting the Task Force on the Future of Diaconal Ministries presented a report. In 2013 the Task Force was given a three-fold mandate: (1) explore what other denominations are doing in the area of diaconal ministry (2) examine the options for the future direction of the Order and (3) bring a proposal or proposals on the future of the ODM to the next Council Meeting. The Task Force, convened by Dorothy Herbert, worked diligently and presented a substantial report to the council meeting for consideration. Over the three-day gathering discussion was held on various aspects contained within the report. Following discussion the gathered membership resolved to choose the proposal to evolve the ODM to meet the needs of the church. The ODM agreed further to engage in several action steps as it explores and analyzes the implications of the “resolve to evolve”.

Diaconal Organizations

The Order of Diaconal Ministries is a member of DIAKONIA World Federation and DOTAC (Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean). Both groups meet every four years, with the next DIAKONIA gathering set to meet in 2017 in Chicago (USA) and the next DOTAC gathering in 2019 in Vancouver. We look forward to having the DOTAC gathering in our country. A ministry of DOTAC is DOVE (Diakonia Overcoming Violence Experience) and it will be held in Canada this fall from September 19–23, 2016 at Crieff Hills Community. DOVE builds an international team of 12 people (3 each from Brazil, Caribbean, United States and Canada). The team participates in a multicultural, hands-on, action-reflection experience related to overcoming violence in the world. Participants promise to find ways to initiate action/reflection experiences in their own countries; write reflections to share with the group, their own community, and DOTAC; seek ways to provide leadership and develop networks to assist others in overcoming violence. The topics include: overcoming violence through empowerment and being a strong ally; restorative justice approaches; toxic and healthy masculinities; advocating for and empowering sex trade workers; and residential schools and relationships with First Nations People.

We are grateful to Margaret Robertson who is on the DOVE planning team and to Ann Blane who is the ODM rep on the DOTAC Central Committee.

Grants and Bursaries

The Order is grateful to the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education for its support of a multi-year grant to assist certified theological students to attend approved conferences and events. Five grants were approved for Knox College students to attend the 2016 APCE conference (Association of Presbyterian Church Educators) in Chicago, Illinois, from January 27–30.

Bursaries are available for diaconal ministers furthering their theological education. The Ewart College Alumnae/Alumni Bursary Fund is administered by the Order and provides up to \$1,500 per academic year to a maximum of \$3,000 to members who request assistance.

Memorials

The Order of Diaconal Ministries records its gratitude for the faithful ministry offered by the following members who have passed on to greater service: Ada Wyllie (designated 1958) and Gale Kay (designated 1965).

A Partner in Ministry

As the Order enacts its resolve to evolve, we uphold our affirmation to work collegially in leadership, open to the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, to equip and enrich others for Christian life and service. As we look to the future, we do so as partners in ministry, seeking to respond obediently to God's call.

Donna McIlveen
Administrator

Canadian Forces Chaplaincy

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has a vital and vibrant ministry through the 14 ministers serving as chaplains in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Regular Force Chaplains:

Commander Bonnie Mason	2nd Division HQ, Montreal, Quebec
Major Charles Deogratias	CTC Gagetown, New Brunswick
Major Kenneth MacRae	1st CMBG HQ, Edmonton, Alberta
Captain David Stewart	Wing Chaplain, Cold Lake, Alberta
Captain Daniel Forget	Base Chaplain, Kingston, Ontario
Lieutenant-Navy Mike Rundle	3rd Wing Chaplain, Bagotville, Quebec
Captain In-Seob Won	2nd Service Battalion, Petawawa, Ontario
Captain Andrew Cameron	Personnel Services, St. Jean, Quebec

Reserve Force Chaplains:

Major Sandy Scott	Director of Chaplaincy Operations, Ottawa, Ontario
Captain David Clark	7th Toronto Regiment, Toronto, Ontario
Captain Steven Filyk	15th Field Regiment, Vancouver, British Columbia
Captain Tom Hamilton	Prince Edward Island Regiment, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
Captain Gavin Robertson	39th Combat Engineering Regiment, Trail, British Columbia
Captain Frances Savill	Algonquin Regiment, North Bay, Ontario

These women and men are called to serve as part of an ecumenical and interfaith chaplaincy. They have a unique and very effective ministry supporting the moral and spiritual well-being of military personnel and their families in all aspects of their lives, during conflict and in peacetime. There are diverse and complex spiritual and pastoral care needs that are within the scope of practice of military chaplains. Canadians have come to a deeper understanding of some of the struggles and trauma that is experienced by members of the Canadian Armed Forces. Chaplains are indispensable in the healing process of individuals and families. In this, as in many other challenges and opportunities for transformation, chaplains provide a powerful ministry of presence, and of spiritual leadership. The Presbyterian chaplains are well-respected for their pastoral expertise and their leadership in community and chapel life. As Presbyterians, we gather together annually for a day of study, reflection and support as part of the larger Chaplain Retreat. In June 2015 we were pleased to have the Rev. Dr. Pamela McCarroll as our guest. She led us in a timely theological reflection and discussion on the theme of hope and suffering.

Our chaplains have a dual accountability. As ministers of Word and Sacrament, they are accountable to their presbyteries. As commissioned officers, they are subject to the code of service discipline and are responsible to their military superiors. The Royal Canadian Chaplain Service is well known and respected around the world for its integrated approach of uniting the chaplains across branches into one chaplain service. It is the only interfaith, joint military chaplaincy in the NATO alliance.

It is my honour to serve as The Presbyterian Church in Canada's representative on the Interfaith Committee on the Canadian Military Chaplaincy (ICCMC). The ICCMC is a national committee made up of representatives from various Christian denominations, as well as Jewish and Muslim faith communities. The ICCMC is the body that acts as a common channel of communication between faith groups in Canada and the Minister of National Defense, the Chief of Defense Staff, and the Chaplain General, in matters related to military chaplaincy. ICCMC members have the responsibility of endorsing all potential military chaplains, and we provide a link between the chaplains and the denomination. I am available to any of our Presbyterian chaplains, at their request, for pastoral counsel and care. I also participate in at least one chaplain educational event per year. In June 2015, I was elected Chair of the ICCMC. Also in

June, members of the ICCMC received the Command Commendation from the Chief of Military Personnel, Lieutenant General David Miller. This recognition was given as an acknowledgement of the work and service of the ICCMC.

In August 2015, Padre Guy Chapdelaine was installed as the new Chaplain General. Brigadier General Chapdelaine is a Roman Catholic priest with a strong pastoral heart and a deep commitment to the spiritual health of chaplains. I ask for your prayers for him, and for all chaplains in The Royal Canadian Chaplain Service.

M. Jean Morris

Ministry and Church Vocations Advisory Committee

The Rev. Dennis Howard, Ms. Joyce Harrison, Ms. Donna McIlveen, the Rev. Patricia Van Gelder, the Rev. Dr. Dale Woods.

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

That Recommendations Nos. 14, 15, and 16 (identified by ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 14

That individuals, congregations and presbyteries be commended for their involvement in refugee sponsorship and for their support for refugees who remain overseas and who require humanitarian assistance. (see p. 12.1.76)

► Recommendation No. 15

That individuals, congregations and presbyteries be commended for their prayers, generosity of spirit and resources to support the life-saving work of PWS&D in emergency assistance, in particular for the generous responses to the Nepal earthquake relief and to the Syria crisis, and life-transforming work in development programs responding to communities suffering from hunger, disease, disaster, conflict and injustice around the world. (see p. 12.1.77)

► Recommendation No. 16

That individuals, congregations and presbyteries take note that PWS&D continues to be a separate fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As such all are encouraged to meet their *Presbyterians Sharing* allocation and to consider making separate contributions in support of the development, relief and refugee work of the church. (see p. 12.1.78)

REPORT

Staff	Director:	Guy Smagghe (from September)
	Interim Director:	Richard Fee (April to August)
	Director:	Kenneth Kim (to March)
	Communications Coordinator:	Karen Bokma
	Communications Assistant:	Anna Muir (from April)
	Program Coordinator:	Leah Adema
	Program Coordinator:	Jeanine Cudmore
	Program Coordinator, Refugee Sponsorships, Strategic Planning and Special Projects:	Rob Shropshire
	Program Assistant:	Jennifer Ramkissoon (on maternity leave from October)
	Administrative Assistant:	Laura Fenwick (to August)
	Finance, Administration Coordinator:	Alison Stirling (from December)
	Program Coordinator, Finance, part-time:	David Jeffrey (to September)
	Program Coordinator:	Julia Rao (from November, contract)
	Program Coordinator, part-time:	Susan James (to September, contract)
	Program Assistant, Refugee Sponsorships, part-time:	Michelle Ball (from September, contract)
	Administrative Assistant, part-time:	David Di Sera (from September, contract)

INTRODUCTION

God calls us to abundant life through Jesus Christ. From the beginning of his ministry, Jesus focused on bringing new life to the most vulnerable. “The Spirit of the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim relief to the captives...to let the oppressed go free.” (Luke 4:18, 19) With generous gifts from Presbyterian across the country, the commitment of our partners around the world, and by the work and faithfulness of staff at PWS&D, we are privileged to participate in development, relief and refugee work. With each child born healthy, each family taught to effectively grow their own food, each refugee family safely arrived in Canada, we witness God’s Spirit enabling abundant life to be experienced, one person at a time.

After the Nepal earthquake, Presbyterians generously gave \$593,848 to assist those whose homes and livelihoods were destroyed. In times of crisis, the church responds. With the approval of a scaled-up government funded maternal, newborn and child health project for the next four years, PWS&D continues strong work with partners in Malawi and Afghanistan who empower communities to support mothers and young children so they have what is needed for abundant life.

Every Canadian has been touched by stories on the news of the Syrian refugee crisis. PWS&D supports churches and presbyteries who seek to sponsor refugees, to provide a community, a safe home and a new start. We also keep in mind the large numbers of refugees overseas who require humanitarian assistance. By the end of February 2016 (government matching deadline), we received \$561,685 in donations for the Syria crisis. We are thankful for our membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which allows us to reach out with food assistance and to multiply Presbyterian resources thanks to the access to government funds. We are also thankful for our membership in the ACT Alliance, which allows us to extend our reach. We are blessed to participate in God’s work around the world.

PWS&D committee and staff were pleased to welcome Guy Smagghe in his new role as Director in the fall, after eighteen years of service as Program Coordinator. We look forward to working with him in the future.

Our Vision

Inspired by God’s promise of abundant life, PWS&D envisions a sustainable, compassionate and just world.

Our Values

Compassion: PWS&D walks with distressed and marginalized people, listening carefully to their stories and responding effectively.

Justice: PWS&D works for equality, empowerment, human dignity, peace and stewardship of creation. In solidarity, we affirm that all people are entitled to know their rights, to receive equal protection, and to have access to and control over resources.

Partnership: PWS&D believes in dynamic relationships that involve mutual learning, trust and shared vision. Healthy partnerships are accountable, ethical, equitable, flexible and respectful.

Our Mission

Presbyterian, ecumenical and inclusive in our practice of faith, we gladly serve women and men, young and old, according to their need and regardless of their faith. In a world with too much poverty, injustice and oppression concentrated in nations of the South, we recognize the interrelation between our affluence and the suffering of others.

We are committed to service with churches and organizations seeking sustainable transformation of their communities, upholding compassion, justice, and partnership.

We undertake development, emergency and refugee activities that restore human dignity, ease the pain of want, promote self-help and encourage community cooperation that benefits all. We are sensitive to gender issues, empowerment of the marginalized and the protection of human rights.

We promote awareness of global issues, connecting Canadians to the needs of others throughout the world.

Faithful to our calling, we respond together.

Theological Statement

The ministry of PWS&D is rooted in the living hope of Jesus Christ and inspired by God's promise of abundant life. It is an integral part of the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

God enters into faithful relationship with those who respond to the divine calling. As Micah proclaimed, God requires that we "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God" (Micah 6:8).

In Jesus, God became human for our salvation. This love for humanity expressed in Jesus' life must be demonstrated by the church and we follow him as we live for justice, mercy and peace.

We believe peace and wellbeing are God's will for creation. As we respond together to the world's pain and despair, we bear witness to the love of God among us.

We believe that injustice and inequality are an affront to the will of God and that our involvement in compassionate ministry with people throughout the world is an imperative of the Gospel.

Our Priorities

With the generous support of Presbyterians in Canada we are working with local partners around the world to address the root causes of poverty and create new futures of hope and opportunity through programs addressing:

Development

- Food Security: Communities are learning innovative and sustainable agriculture practices to increase crop yields, improve nutrition, and build resilience to environmental changes.
- Sustainable Livelihoods: Families are empowered to meet their basic needs through education, skills training and small business development. When one person becomes self-reliant they are able to improve their quality of life, shape their future, and lift up others in their community.
- Health: By ensuring mothers and children receive the medical care they need, caring for people affected by HIV and AIDS, and providing access to water and sanitation programs, families and communities are growing healthier and stronger.
- Human rights: Injustices are combated through a shared commitment to human rights, with a special focus on promoting and protecting rights for women, children, workers, subsistence farmers, persons with disabilities, and refugees.

Emergency relief

In the aftermath of conflict and disaster, immediate and long-term relief ensures the most vulnerable people have access to food, shelter and medical attention, and are able to recover from economic loss and emotional trauma.

Support to Refugees

No one is a refugee by choice. By sponsoring refugees to Canada, and advocating for and supporting refugees and displaced people around the world, families are able to rebuild their lives without fear of persecution.

Strategic Plan Extension: 2014–2018

As PWS&D neared the end of the second year of its strategic plan adopted in April 2014, it was determined that more time was necessary to achieve the goals identified in the document. Therefore, at the meeting of the PWS&D Committee in October 2015, the plan was amended, extending it to five years from three. A revised action plan for 2014–2018 has been approved.

Strategic Action in 2015

Strategic Action: Improve program effectiveness by strengthening development programs:

PWS&D adopted an updated Development Programs Policy, defining more clearly where the agency works, with whom it works and when it should end financial support for programs and partners. The partnership principles that guide PWS&D in its relationships were also brought up to date and included in the policy.

Strategic Action: Strengthen PWS&D institutionally:

PWS&D updated its Guidelines for the Nominating Committee (which guide the PWS&D Committee in the identification of potential Canadian committee member nominees) and its Guidelines for Southern Partner Representation on the PWS&D Committee (which guide the PWS&D Committee in the identification and participation of Southern partner representatives on the PWS&D Committee).

Strategic Actions: Intensify communications, engagement and fundraising with presbyteries, and congregations and individuals and improve the effectiveness of its emergency relief response:

The PWS&D Committee initiated discussion on how to move ahead on these two actions.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM PRESBYTERIANS

Every year PWS&D is blessed to receive support from individuals and congregations across Canada who are engaged in the work of the church and are compelled to make a difference in an unjust world. The committee and staff express heartfelt thanks to the numerous Presbyterians who continue to make this valuable ministry possible through their prayers, dedication and generous gifts. In 2015, PWS&D received \$3,242,228 to carry out work in development, relief and refugee sponsorship initiatives. The generous support of Presbyterians was then further leveraged to maximize the impact of our programs with partners thanks to the support of government agencies, as well as other denominations and their relief and development ministries.

Sources of Program Revenue and Areas of Program Expenditures (includes PWS&D resources and expenditures at CFGB)

The following provides a more comprehensive picture of PWS&D resources in 2015.

Where our resources came from:

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Undesignated contributions	1,306,190	1,518,814
Designated bequests	145	262
Transferred from Loaves and Fishes Fund*	304,388	282,030
Designated contributions (excluding relief projects)	365,085	408,803
Designated relief	1,266,420	342,869
Government funds from		
Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD)**	209,030	434,061
Government of the Province of Saskatchewan	21,388	24,918
Government of the Province of Manitoba	11,877	12,271
Other income – interest	34,728	35,073
	3,519,251	3,059,101

Designated and Undesignated Contributions

Undesignated donations are gifts that are not earmarked for specific programs. This allows PWS&D the flexibility to respond where the need is greatest. These donations enable PWS&D to engage with partners and to support sustainable development projects that address the root causes of poverty and empower individuals and communities with the capacity and tools to transform their lives. By having a secure source of funding, we are able to uphold long-term commitments with partners in order to implement innovative programs in food security, livelihoods, health and human rights. Undesignated donations also provide PWS&D with the means to immediately respond to disasters or humanitarian crises as they arise, and to respond to disasters for which appeals are not broadly issued. Funds can be disbursed within hours of receiving news of a flood, typhoon, earthquake or conflict directly through our partners or through our network of churches and agencies around the world. Unfortunately there are many emergencies around the world that do not receive widespread media attention or do not receive support from the broader public – undesignated funding goes towards these neglected or forgotten crises. When there is an emergency that requires prolonged attention PWS&D is able to gather more information and issue an appeal to the wider Presbyterian constituency.

Undesignated funds make it possible to support ecumenical activities and development education programs that engage the Canadian public on the struggles marginalized people face and the need for continued support and

solidarity. With undesignated support, we work in Canadian and international ecumenical networks active in development, relief and advocacy. Undesignated donations in general have been increasing, which reflects the confidence and trust supporters have in our ability to undertake development and relief work. With that said, 2015 was an exceptional year in terms of donations towards refugee sponsorship. This signified a large portion of PWS&D's end of year funding being redirected towards our refugee programming, which subsequently decreased undesignated funds for 2016.

Undesignated funds also make it possible to fund the refugee sponsorship support program, which has supported 90 congregations and presbyteries in the refugee sponsorship process in 2015.

Designated contributions are funds directed to a specific program or project. The Gifts of Change catalogue highlights a variety of PWS&D development programs that can be supported with designated donations. In times of natural disasters or conflict, PWS&D may issue a specific appeal or alert for support. When the Canadian government announced a matching fund in response to the Syria crisis, generous donations of \$347,434 from Presbyterians enabled humanitarian assistance for those affected by the Syria crisis – providing food assistance to Syrian refugees in Lebanon and to families displaced within Syria.

Every donation, whether designated or undesignated, is valued and allows PWS&D to access matching funds through various ecumenical and government channels whenever possible. Matching sources include Global Affairs Canada (formerly Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada), Canadian Foodgrains Bank, provincial governments (Saskatchewan and Manitoba), international donors (such as DISOP in Belgium), and other ecumenical relief and development agencies.

Loaves and Fishes Fund

The Loaves and Fishes Fund is a planned giving fund that receives undesignated gifts made through bequests, gift annuities, insurance policies, appreciated securities and other investments. The Loaves and Fishes Fund is a seven-year fund. One-seventh of an undesignated planned gift is used for the work of PWS&D in the year that it is given. The remaining funds are invested and during the following six years PWS&D uses the interest and portions of the principal to support development and relief work until the full amount has been expended. This mechanism facilitates a more even year-to-year distribution of undesignated funds received through planned gifts.

In 2015, \$248,922 was received in the Loaves and Fishes Fund, whose balance reached over \$2 million. Interest and market revaluation generated \$96,397. One seventh of the fund, \$304,388 was transferred into the operating budget in support of programs.

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Opening fund balance	1,882,546	1,246,114
Bequests and planned gifts	248,922	728,597
Interest and market revaluation	96,397	189,865
Transfer to PWS&D	<u>(304,388)</u>	<u>(282,030)</u>
Closing fund balance	1,923,477	1,882,546

Support from the Government of Canada

In June 2015, Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (now Global Affairs Canada) announced the approval of PWS&D's Maternal, Newborn and Child Health project in Malawi and Afghanistan for 2015–2020. With a value of \$4 million over four years, this project will scale up significantly and build upon the experience of the 2011–2014 project. In this new agreement, PWS&D will contribute 20% of the total amount of the project – a 4:1 match. This is the largest government-funded development project ever to be approved for PWS&D.

We also continued to receive support for the Building Sustainable Livelihoods program in Malawi (2012–2017). The project was restructured and is focusing on the northern region (Synod of Livingstonia). Institutional challenges in the Blantyre Synod required us to phase out our work there. In this project, funds from PWS&D are matched 3:1.

EXPENDITURES IN 2015

PWS&D spent \$3,303,248 in 2015, of which nearly \$500,000 was transferred to Canadian Foodgrains Bank. PWS&D managed \$3,036,097 in projects at Canadian Foodgrains Bank in 2015.

Where our resources went:

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Disaster, relief and rehabilitation *	1,123,862	714,028
Overseas development projects*	967,583	829,038
Relief and development programs support	545,392	478,280
DFATD – PWS&D overseas program	205,240	835,126
Memberships, partnerships and coalitions	153,401	157,204
Resources, communication, promotion and grants	135,970	165,895
Administration	171,800	251,652
	3,303,248	3,431,223

*Note: Disaster, relief and rehabilitation and Overseas development projects expenditures included transfers to CFGB. CFGB programming is further discussed in the sections below.

Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB)

PWS&D is a proud member of Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB), a uniquely Canadian ecumenical partnership of 15 denominations and church-based agencies committed to ending world hunger. CFGB focuses its programming on food assistance, agriculture and livelihoods, and nutrition. By pooling resources and expertise, member agencies effectively work together to address hunger-related issues in vulnerable communities affected by natural disasters, conflict and climate change. CFGB also works to influence national and international policies that will contribute to ending global hunger; and increase and deepen the engagement of Canadians in ending global hunger.

We are thankful for our membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank that allows us to reach out with food security programming and to multiply Presbyterian resources thanks to donations from other denominations, matching grants from CFGB, and greater access to government funds.

In 2014–2015 CFGB helped improve the lives of over one million people in 39 countries by providing \$41 million in assistance: \$27 million was provided for food assistance in 23 countries (66% of programming); \$12 million was provided for agriculture and livelihood programs in 34 countries (29% percent of programming); and \$2.4 million was provided for nutrition programming in 10 countries (6% of programming).

CFGB is funded both by donations of grains and monetary gifts, as well as government contributions. Funds contributed by members, especially related to food assistance projects are usually eligible for four-to-one government matching funds. Other agricultural and livelihood programs (food security) are generally matched three-to-one, as long as matching funds are available. Programs can also be eligible to receive General CFGB fund matching of a one to one ratio.

We are grateful for the generous support of Presbyterians involved in CFGB growing projects and fundraising initiatives which contribute equity to PWS&D's account and the General account at CFGB. PWS&D received \$2,514,127 of matched donations by the federal government at CFGB, and \$763,544 of gifts and grain donations by individuals. PWS&D managed projects at CFGB worth \$3,036,097.

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Revenue		
Government funds		
Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD)	2,514,127	194,199
Material and food resources		
Grain and gifts	763,544	441,397
Interest and other revenue		-
	3,277,671	635,596
Expenditures	3,036,097	477,828
Excess (deficiency) of Revenues over Expenditures for the Year	241,574	157,768

Contributions from other CFGB members to projects led by PWS&D

In 2015, several CFGB members contributed their resources to PWS&D led programs in Guatemala and Pakistan. Members who shared their equity at CFGB with PWS&D are: Nazarene Compassionate Ministries of Canada, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund, and the United Church of Canada. PWS&D is grateful to these member agencies at CFGB for generously contributing to our projects.

Projects led and managed by PWS&D in 2015

Country	Partner /Project	PWS&D Funds \$	CFGB Funds \$	DFATD Match \$	Total Financing \$
Africa					
Malawi	Lirangwe closing – Blantyre	2,338	2,338		4,676
Malawi	Farmer-to-Farmer Agroecology (EHAP) – AL	17,642	17,642		35,284
Malawi	Mpata Drought Mitigation Project (Livingstonia) – AL	18,984		56,951	75,935
Malawi	Nyungwe Conservation Farming (Livingstonia) – AL	17,918		53,756	71,674
Malawi	Blantyre adjustment – FA	(163.67)	(772)	(3,740)	(4,676)
Tanzania	Kishapu Food Security and Nutrition (AICT) – AL	6,580		19,740	26,320
Africa Sub-total		63,298	19,208	126,707	209,213
Asia					
Pakistan	Drought Tharparkar (CWS Asia) – FA	126,604	93,768	881,492	1,101,864
Pakistan	Floods Sajawal (CWS Asia) – FA	22,285	149,804	688,358	860,447
Pakistan	Sustainable Agriculture Badin (CWSA) – AL	14,970	34,467	148,311	197,748
Asia Sub-total		163,859	278,039	1,718,161	2,160,059
Americas					
Guatemala	Drought (ASDNA) – FA	64,635	52,564	468,795	585,994
Guatemala	Pre-planning food security – ASDENA – FA	3,095			3,095
Nicaragua	Pre-planning (CEPAD) – NU	4,225			4,225
Nicaragua	San Juan de Rio Coco (SOYNICA) – NU	11,815		47,261	59,077
Americas Sub-total		83,770	52,564	\$516,056	\$652,390
Others	PWS&D program support*	14,435			14,435
Total		325,36	349,812	2,360,92	\$3,036,09

AL: Agriculture and Livelihoods; FA: Food Assistance; NU: Nutrition

*PWS&D receives an annual contribution based on a percentage of the total value of programming work led and managed by PWS&D from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. This amount is a contribution for the expense costs assumed by PWS&D.

In 2015, PWS&D provided Presbyterian equity to support fellow CFGB members with food aid, food security and nutrition programs in the following countries: Afghanistan, India, Kenya, Laos, Lebanon, Philippines and South Sudan.

PWS&D Contributions to other CFGB Members' Projects

Country	Partner /Project	PWS&D Funds \$	CFGB Funds \$	DFATD Match \$	Total Value of PWS&D Funds \$
Africa					
Kenya	ERDO– Marsabit drought – FA	18,000	18,000		36,000
South Sudan	ADRA – FA	50,000	50,000		100,000
Africa Sub-total		68,000	68,000		136,000

America				
Haiti	MCC– Agro-forestry – AL	40,000	120,000	160,000
America Sub-total		40,000	120,000	160,000
ASIA				
Nepal	NCM– Earthquake – FA	45,000	45,000	90,000
Asia Sub-total		45,000	45,000	90,000
Middle East				
Iraq	MCC – Displaced – FA	35,000	35,000	70,000
Lebanon	MCCC – Syrians Refugees FA	105,000	420,000	525,000
Syria	MCC – Displaced – FA	50,000	200,000	250,000
Middle East Sub-total		190,000	35,000	620,000
Total		343,000	268,000	620,000
				1,231,00

AL: Agriculture and Livelihoods; FA: Food Assistance; NU: Nutrition

DISASTER, RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

Changing climate conditions and natural disasters continued to negatively impact globally. El Niño severely impacted the globe in 2015 which will last into early spring 2016. El Niño is an anomalous, yet periodic, warming of the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, which causes more erratic and severe weather patterns such as an increased incidences of drought, floods and hurricanes. PWS&D is on constant look out for areas that are being affected by these impacts whether acute, like supporting Typhoon Relief in the Philippines or food aid projects in drought affected regions in Guatemala.

The disturbing trend of long-term deadly conflicts uprooting more and more people from their homes has meant many are now in urgent need of humanitarian aid. The statistics are staggering. The UNHCR reported that the number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people worldwide exceeded 59.5 million people at the end of 2015. During the year, conflict and persecution forced an average of 42,500 persons per day to leave their homes and seek protection elsewhere, either within the borders of their countries or in other countries. Developing countries host over 86% of the world's refugees, compared to 70% ten years ago.

PWS&D is able to respond with life-saving relief and rehabilitation assistance through Canadian and international ecumenical networks and coalitions. As a member of the ACT Alliance, and Canadian Churches in Action (CCA), PWS&D can respond in communities where there are no historic or direct partnerships. ACT Alliance is a global coalition of over 140 churches and affiliated organizations collaborating together on humanitarian aid, development and advocacy issues. CCA is a Canadian coalition made up of ten CFGB members working together on non-food response efforts, thus complementing the food-related efforts of CFGB. In 2015, PWS&D supported a total of 11 relief projects in eight countries.

Country	Partner/ Project	PWS&D Funds \$
Africa/Middle East		
Malawi	Flood relief – Housing and latrines – MMH	48,948
Iraq	Support for displaced – ACT Alliance	10,000
Syria	Syria Crisis – ACT Alliance	24,392
Africa/ Middle East Sub-total		83,340
Asia		
Nepal	Earthquake Appeal – ACT Alliance	523,911
Vanuatu	Typhoon Relief – ADRA	10,000
Taiwan	Taiwan– Post-explosions Rehab – PCT	31,073
Asia Sub-total		564,984
Europe / North America		
Greece	Refugee and Migrant Support – ACT Alliance	20,000
Canada	Alberta Floods – Presbytery of Calgary MacLeod	684
Europe / North America Sub-total		20,684
Total Relief (excluding CFGB)		669,008

AFRICA DISASTER, RELIEF AND REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Malawi: Malawi Flood Response-Mulanje Mission Hospital – \$48,948

Severe flooding in southern Malawi in January 2015 affected thousands, destroying equally large numbers of homes and toilets. The loss of toilets in a flood zone is an urgent health priority, as proper health and sanitation practices are no longer possible, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases such as severe diarrhea and malaria.

With funds from PWS&D, Mulanje Mission Hospital targeted 1,000 of the most vulnerable households in the ten most affected villages. Mulanje Mission Hospital coordinated with the District Commissioner's office. The PHC Coordinator, together with the Environmental Health Officer and Health Surveillance Assistants supervised construction in each village.

South Sudan: Emergency Response Project in Budi County, Eastern Equatoria State – Adventist Development and Relief Agency Sudan (CFGB) – \$100,000

Due to the most recent armed conflict in South Sudan, 4.9 million affected people were in need of humanitarian assistance. After several years of peace, conflict raged between the government and a rebel group. About one million people have fled their homes to escape the fighting. Many of the displaced are small scale farmers who depend on growing their own food in order to survive. Now living as internally displaced persons (IDP) in refugee camps and host communities far from their farms, they are unable to plant and grow their own food. According to the United Nations, about 3.7 million people – about one third of the population – are already at risk of starvation. The UN warns that this could be the worst food crisis in Africa since the 1980s.

PWS&D partnered with ADRA South Sudan that works on the ground to implement projects that further the development of this impoverished nation while providing emergency relief amid the IDP crisis. This food assistance project targeted 11,340 vulnerable people living in rural and peri-urban areas of Budi county in Eastern Equatoria State (EES) of South Sudan. At the end of 2015 this project distributed 5,670 food commodity vouchers to IDPs suffering from food shortages, lack of personal income and employment options. These food vouchers translate to the equivalent of 285,500 metric tonnes of maize grain, 28,400 metric tonnes of beans, 17,010 metric tonnes of vegetable cooking oil and 5,670 metric tonnes of salt.

Kenya: Marsabit Food Assistance (CFGB) – \$36,000

Marsabit County is a food insecure area and much of the population is at risk of malnutrition. Crops have failed in the last two rainy seasons due to inadequate rainfall, resulting in a shortage of food and casual work. ERDO, in partnership with Kenyan NGO Sauti Moja – Kenya and with the support of PWS&D, is helping build food security through provision of livestock to widows and vulnerable single female-headed households by helping them build household herds. The initial provision of the animals is “paid back” to the project as the first born female from each animal given is then passed on to another widow. The project is located in two districts within Marsabit County. Laisamis is extremely arid – the driest area in Kenya. Marsabit Central is in the highlands where agro-pastoralism is practiced, but recent drought has affected the production of food. The food assistance project was a six-month intervention designed to protect against sale of the animals for food. The targeted food assistance provided half rations of maize, beans and oil to 690 households, as well as a small portion to share with others in need. PWS&D contributed \$18,000 to this project which was matched 1:1 by General Account funds at CFGB.

ASIA DISASTER, RELIEF AND REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Nepal: Nepal Earthquake Response – ACT Alliance – \$523,911

A devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake with its epicentre approximately 80 km north-west of the ancient Nepali capital city of Kathmandu struck on April 25, 2015. This was the most powerful earthquake to hit the region since the Bihar earthquake of 1934, and its impact was devastating in terms of loss of life and destruction of infrastructure.

ACT Alliance members – already present in Nepal prior to the earthquake, alongside a number of national partners – were able to do rapid needs assessments, both within the Kathmandu valley and in five highly impacted rural districts outside the valley. Through the ACT Appeal, PWS&D helped support 12,000 households with shelter, 15,000 with water, sanitation and health projects, 20,000 with food and non-food items, and 14,000 individuals with psychosocial support. This assistance helped save lives and restore dignity to populations affected during the earthquake emergency period, as well as contributing to early recovery after the earthquake.

Nepal: Food Assistance – Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (CFBG) – \$90,000

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (NCM) supported NCM Nepal with a three-month fast track food assistance project in Sindhupalchowk district. This project provided food assistance to 1,000 of the most vulnerable families (approximately 5,000 individuals) each month, utilizing 150 tonnes of rice, 30 tonnes of pulses, 15 tonnes of oil, 6 tonnes of sugar and 3 tonnes of salt. In three months about 1,000 households and approximately 5,000 individuals received vital food aid. PWS&D contributed \$45,000 that was matched with general account fund at CFBG.

Pakistan: Humanitarian Food Assistance to Drought Affected Families in Tharparkar District-Community World Service Asia (CFGB) – \$1,101,864

Drought is prevalent in southern Pakistan, especially in Tharparkar district of Sind province, due to declining rainfall. Tharparkar did not receive significant rainfall during the 2013 and 2014 monsoon seasons resulting in a prolonged dry spell. The start of the rainy season was delayed leading to the almost complete damage of any crops grown in the area. As a result, most of the farmers who planted were unable to recover even the seed they planted. The drought resulted in the death of 650 impoverished people in 2014, with the number predicted to increase in 2015 as food stocks were further diminished and livestock perished because of lack of drinking water and fodder. Furthermore, hundreds of children were reported to be suffering from pneumonia or diarrhea, adding to severe acute malnutrition. Community World Service Asia implemented a seven-month food assistance project from February to August in Tharparkar to benefit 1,800 drought affected households engaged in rearing livestock and seasonal crop production. The monthly food packages helped through a hunger period and provided family members with the energy to go about their daily activities. Beginning in June, the rains arrived in Tharparkar and rainfall was higher compared to previous years. The rainfall provided fodder for livestock and enabled farmers to plant their crops and harvest in September.

Pakistan: Provision of Emergency Food Assistance to Flood Affected Families in District Sajawal – Community World Service Asia (CFGB) – \$860,447

Monsoon rains struck Pakistan in July and continued across the country in August. As a result of heavy monsoon rains and melting glaciers in the north of country, there was widespread flooding in different regions of the country. The 2015 monsoon season was the worst for flooding since 2010. There were over 230 confirmed deaths and more than 1.5 million persons affected. PWS&D, in collaboration with CFBG and Community World Service Asia, supported a five-month food assistance project for 2,100 families affected in Sajawal district, Sind province. Seventy percent of the affected families rely on crop production as their livelihood strategy. The project provided wheat seed to 1,470 families engaged in crop production, enough to plant two acres of wheat. Families started receiving monthly food rations containing fortified wheat flour, pulses, cooking oil and salt in November.

The project targets 2,100 flood-affected families (approximately 10,500 individuals) who are extremely food insecure and have no resources and capacities to cope with their nutritional and routine dietary needs. While selecting the beneficiaries, special attention was given to vulnerable and marginalized groups such as households headed by women, persons with disabilities, social and religious minorities and elderly people. The ultimate goal of this project is to increase the food security by providing adequate food supply to immediately increase consumption, increase diversity of foods and increase wheat production for the target flood affected farmers.

Vanuatu: Cyclone Pam Relief – Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Canada – \$10,000

On March 14th 2015, Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Pam made landfall in the Republic of Vanuatu. Cyclone Pam brought wind gusts of up to 320 km/h and storm surges that wreaked havoc across the region. Ninety percent of the structures on Efate, the most populated of the nation's 83 islands, were damaged or destroyed. This included the devastation of many school buildings and left over 100,000 people homeless. A large percentage of the country's population has been affected; leaving 24 dead and over 3,300 displaced according to UN reports. In response to this urgent humanitarian needs, ADRA Vanuatu, with support from PWS&D and the ADRA Network of offices, distributed a WASH kit, a shelter kit and a food parcel providing supplementary nutritional needs for one week to 1,000 households (about 5,000 people). Additionally, basic hygiene information and sanitation facilities were provided to 10 evacuation centres in Efate.

Taiwan: Kaohsiung Explosions – Occupational Therapy, Presbyterian Church of Taiwan – \$31,073

On the morning of August 1, 2014, a series of gas explosions occurred in Kaohsiung, Taiwan. As a result, 32 people were killed and 308 others were injured. Many victims became physically disabled and unable to return to their

original workplace. The Presbyterian Church of Taiwan prepared a six-year project to provide assistance and occupational therapy for the victims of this disaster. The agreement was signed in 2015.

MIDDLE EAST DISASTER, RELIEF AND REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Iraq: Survival Assistance for Displaced Populations in Northern Iraq – ACT Alliance – \$10,000

Iraq currently has one of the largest populations of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world. The Sinjar Crisis triggered the most recent wave of displacement, contributing approximately 42% of the overall number of IDP families in Iraq, following intense fighting and the violent persecution of ethnic and religious minorities by Islamic State (IS) extremists. This is in addition to the 217,886 registered Syrian refugees. Most of these Kurdish ethnic refugees from Syria are being accommodated within the homes and communities of their relatives and friends, and are struggling to get back to a normal livelihood in the Kurdish region of Iraq. However, many of them have little or no means of support, and are living in several refugee camps run by the Kurdish Regional Government with the support of various international humanitarian agencies. The overall goal of this ACT response is to alleviate suffering through immediate assistance to targeted IDP families and their host communities through six interventions: ensuring food security, water supply, non-food items (including winter clothes, kitchen sets, etc.), psychosocial services, shelter, and later stage education (school rehabilitation).

Syria Humanitarian Response – ACT Alliance – \$24,932

Conflicts and a high level of violence continue throughout the Syrian Arab Republic. Aerial bombings by government forces and attacks by armed opposition, extremist and designated terrorist groups continue to result in death, injury and displacement. It is estimated that 10.8 million people in Syria remain in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, many of them trapped in hard to reach areas. Over three million Syrian refugees have fled to neighboring countries with the majority arriving in Jordan and Lebanon, countries who wrestle with their own issues with poverty, lack of infrastructure and undersized economies.

Humanitarian needs in these regions remain enormous. The delivery of humanitarian assistance, especially in hard-to-reach areas, remains extremely difficult and insufficient to meet people's needs. Violence, rapidly shifting conflict lines, administrative hurdles and underfunding continue to hamper the relief effort as needs continue to grow. ACT Jordan Syria Lebanon Forum members have identified food, non-food items, water, sanitation, health, education, and shelter as high-impact priority areas for intervention. Furthermore, refugees are facing trauma, depression and stress over providing for their families, and battling isolation and loneliness. This is particularly true of those spread throughout host communities, who feel increasing hostility directed at them from local residents. Therefore this appeal sought to provide much needed psychosocial interventions. The overall goal of this project is to reduce the vulnerability and ease the burden of people who are affected by the Syrian conflict in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon.

Lebanon: Food Assistance for Syrian Refugees – PARD (CFGB) – \$525,000

Entering its fifth year in April 2015, the armed conflict in Syria continues to move forward with no end in sight. Government forces and armed opposition groups comprised of both secularists and religious fundamentalists continue to vie for control of territory throughout the country. Ongoing violence throughout the country has led to more than 3.9 million people fleeing the country altogether, forcing Syrians to seek refuge in neighbouring countries in the region, including Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Iraq. As of March–April 2015, an estimated 1,196,000 refugees from Syria were living in Lebanon. In 2015, PWS&D supported a six-month extension of the MCC-led food assistance program for over 11,000 Syrian and Palestinian refugees from Syria in Lebanon. The project is meeting immediate food needs through the implementation of a cash-based voucher system for those living in precarious conditions. Vouchers are an appropriate system where refugees can purchase items from local stores or markets. MCC partner, Popular Aid for Relief and Development has extensive experience and oversaw and monitored the program. PWS&D contributed \$105,000 to this project that was matched 4:1 with Government of Canada funds at CFGB.

Syria: Food Aid Affected Syrians in Qalamoun Area and Rural Homs, Syria (CFGB) – \$250,000

This project seeks to preserve the lives of a total of 6,000 families who have been affected or displaced by the conflict between government forces and opposition groups. By meeting the immediate food needs of internally affected beneficiary households, this project will reduce their reliance of various detrimental coping strategies that are currently, and increasingly, being utilized by this particular population. These activities also provide a very

significant secondary benefit to the community of the Qalamoun area and Rural Homs (Fayrouze) along with local businesses, who have borne an increasing burden of hosting their displaced ‘guests’ in an environment of decreased employment, considerable inflation and increased scarcity of financial resources. Led by MCC, this project is implemented locally by the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue (FDCD). PWS&D contributed \$50,000 to this project that was matched 4:1 with Government of Canada funds at CFGB.

AMERICAS DISASTER, RELIEF AND REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Guatemala: Food Assistance due to Drought and Crop Loss – ASDENA (CFGB) – \$585,994

For over two years, a serious drought affecting different regions of Guatemala impacted the production of basic grains for subsistence farmers, putting at risk food security for thousands of families. In 2015, another severe period of drought during crucial planting and growing seasons further exacerbated food insecurity and income loss for farming families. In response PWS&D partner ASDENA provided emergency food assistance for a period of two months. This project was successfully executed from May 15 to July 15, 2015 with 4,240 families in 43 communities from the Quiché and Jutiapa Departments receiving life saving food rations that allowed them to continue with their daily lives and livelihoods without worrying about hunger and malnourishment. This food assistance project received a 4:1 match from the Canadian government at CFGB.

NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE DISASTER, RELIEF AND REHABILITATION PROJECTS

Greece: Refugees and Migrants Humanitarian Response – ACT Alliance – \$20,000

Increasing numbers of refugees/migrants are congregating in open spaces in island ports and surrounding areas owing to a lack of proper shelter and accommodation. These locations will no longer be suitable when it starts raining and the temperature drops in the fall and winter. Local police have expressed concern that poor living conditions in reception centers, inadequate food, cramped space, and a longer registration period may fuel frustration, unrest, and even violence. More refugees/migrants will potentially be staying on the islands for longer periods, and the need for accommodation, food, and sanitation was expected to increase accordingly.

Canada: Alberta Floods – Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod – \$684

Designated funds received by PWS&D after the initial response to the floods in Alberta were contributed to the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod in support of local food banks reaching out to native populations still affected by the 2013 floods.

OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

In our interconnected world, it is increasingly common to see and feel the immense human suffering and injustice around the world. This can be heart wrenching and overwhelming but at the same time it is this interconnectedness that allows us to respond in collaboration with partners at home and abroad in a profound and efficient way, the likes of which have never been seen before. It is with this optimistic perspective that PWS&D implements its robust and diverse overseas development programming. We work with local partners in developing countries to break cycles of poverty and promote sustainable long-term development initiatives. Lives are being changed one by one and stories of solidarity, hope, empowerment and self-sufficiency prevail over ones of hardship, powerlessness and despair. With PWS&D support, people from poor and marginalized communities, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity and religion, are being equipped with the skills, knowledge and resources to better their lives and the lives of their families. In 2015, PWS&D continued to support local partners who work within our four thematic areas: livelihoods, health, food security and human rights. We deepened our impact by collaborating with a strong network of partner churches and likeminded organizations to implement 35 overseas development projects in 12 countries. In addition we are blessed with the support of our Presbyterian constituency, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, as well as the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada.

Abbreviations:

- GoC: Government of Canada – Global Affairs Canada funded project with 3:1 match (formerly Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada/Canadian International Development Agency)
- PWS&D: Presbyterian constituency sole-funded project
- CFGB: Canadian Foodgrains Bank funded (PWS&D equity plus matching funds)

AFRICA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**Ghana: Garu Community Based Rehabilitation – Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PWS&D) – \$30,000**

In many countries, there are beliefs and assumptions that children and adults with disabilities have no value in society. Due to this mindset some communities believe that people with disabilities are unable to go to school, earn a livelihood, be part of meaningful relationships or participate in other aspects of life. The Garu Community Based Rehabilitation Centre supports persons with disabilities with schooling and vocational training to ensure that they have life skills and a way to support themselves. Persons with disabilities (PWDs) were actively engaged in the community based rehabilitation program and benefited from trainings and services to engage them in livelihood activities and community engagement. Functional literacy training was provided to 350 PWDs three times per week and 993 PWDs participated in leadership and advocacy skills training. Agricultural and vocational training benefited 410 PWDs and 400 PWDs received improved seeds and seedlings for crop production, while 44 PWDs received goats and roosters as well as animal husbandry training. Awareness raising sessions on disability issues were facilitated in nine communities and six schools targeting 3,571 people.

Ghana: Gambaga Outcast Home – Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PWS&D) – \$27,000

The project provided a safe refuge for women accused of witchcraft to live. Twenty women participated in bead and soap making training and used the skills for income generating activities. The village chief provided 25 acres of farm land to 50 women to grow maize, beans and vegetables, which enables the women to be food self-sufficient. Seventy four women were registered with the national health insurance scheme to ensure they had access to health services and their health needs were met. Health talks were organized for the women to increase their awareness about environmental cleanliness and healthy eating habits to prevent cholera and other contagious diseases. The project also raised community awareness about witchcraft taboos, women's human rights and brutalities against women accused of witchcraft – 2,018 women and 982 men participated in these awareness sessions. This resulted in fewer women being banished from their communities and being accused of witchcraft

Malawi: Farmer-to-Farmer Agroecology – Livingstonia Ekwendeni Hospital (CFGB) – \$35,284

Farmer Research Teams (FRTs) – made up of 113 women and 107 men – were trained on their roles and responsibilities on the MAFFA project and participated in group dynamics training including group formation, conflict management and leadership. The FRT members also participated in agroecological methodology, including crop production, planting patterns, crop residue incorporation, manure making, crop rotation and conservation agriculture training. The FRTs then took this information and trained the farmers in their respective villages through practical demonstrations, with the support of community promoters. The FRTs actively followed up with participating farmers on a continuous basis, providing support and supplementary information as needed. Many of the FRTs noted on their field visits that participating farmers were actively using the learned techniques. Farmers were intercropping with legumes and using the spacing patterns suggested by the project. In addition, farmers were increasingly adopting more agroecological practices promoted by the project including applying compost manure, rotating their land and implementing soil and water conservation strategies.

Malawi: Mpata Drought Mitigation –Livingstonia Development Department (CFGB) – \$75,935

Village level field days were organized on outstanding conservation agriculture plots to educate and demonstrate the application of conservation agriculture principles. The farmers showcased agronomic practices such as plant spacing for both maize and pigeon peas, row inter-cropping for maize and pigeon peas, and weed control using mulch. The project is made up of 166 farmers and 33 farmers not participating in conservation agriculture visited the outstanding farm plots. The farmers were very impressed with what they saw and vowed to do the same on their own plots. The impact of mulching in conservation agriculture was a key discussion point during the field days because maize from conventional plots had wilted on adjacent plots whereas the crop stand was still healthy on the conservation agriculture plots. This demonstrated the importance and benefits of mulching because drought is prevalent in the area. In addition, weeds were not present in the conservation agriculture plots whereas they were visible in the conventional plots. The conservation agriculture plots were also intercropped with lablab which provided additional learning points for the farmers.

Malawi: Nyungwe Conservation Farming – Livingstonia Development Department (CFGB) – \$71,674

The project organized a local fair in Nyungwe to acknowledge conservation agriculture champions – farmers participating in the project who were demonstrating excellent implementation of conservation agriculture practices.

Conservation agriculture champions were awarded wheel barrows, panga knives, hoes, shovels and maize seed to support the expansion of conservation agriculture in the participating villages. Another purpose of the fair was to sensitize community members about the importance and benefits of conservation agriculture and to encourage other farmers to adopt the practices. Participating farmers exhibited maize, pigeon peas and lablab grown in their plots and there was a competition for the biggest cob and best quality compost manure. Farmers participating in the project completed forms for their respective clubs evaluating how well their fellow members were engaged in the project. They evaluated each other on meeting attendance, participation in trainings, number of conservation agriculture plots planted, plot size, adherence to mulching standards, compost manure making, compost manure application and row spacing.

Malawi: Mpata Water and Sanitation – Livingstonia Development Department (PWS&D) – \$132,000

Eight boreholes were drilled in villages participating in the Mpata WASH Project increasing access to safe, clean drinking water for community members. Water Point Committees were established for each of the new boreholes to ensure the water source is well managed, the borehole is maintained, repairs are carried out when needed and families accessing the boreholes pay their user fees. Community members, especially women, were very happy to have the new boreholes constructed in their villages. Previously, women walked four kilometres each day to collect water from unsafe sources, resulting in less time for income generating activities and family members contracting water-borne diseases. The improved access to clean water in the villages has enabled women to plant vegetable gardens close to their homes, which will increase diet diversity and cash income.

Tanzania: Kishapu Food Security and Nutrition – African Inland Church of Tanzania (CFGB) –\$26,320

The Kishapu Food Security and Nutrition Project concluded in September and the project team carried out a survey to measure the impact of conservation agriculture in the participating communities. Throughout the project, farmers compared the differences between the maize and sorghum crops grown using conventional and conservation agriculture practices. Each project year, the maize and sorghum yields were higher on the conservation agriculture plots compared to the conventional plots. The farmers understood the importance of covering the soil with mulch, sufficient spacing between plants and adequate application of compost manure. Although the project has concluded, the farmers retain the knowledge and skills to grow their crops using conservation agriculture principles and will continue applying this farming system.

Malawi: Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Program 2011–2014 – Blantyre Synod Health and Development Commission and the Uchembere Network (GoC) \$37,786

With PWS&D support, Malawian partners, stakeholders and community members have worked tirelessly over a three-year period to reduce maternal and newborn deaths in three regions of the country. The initiative worked to strengthen community structures to manage maternal and pregnancy-related health issues, and empower both women and men in their roles as mothers, fathers and spouses. The program also improved access to quality health care services by training health workers in new skills and improved attitudes. Communication, referral and monitoring systems were also strengthened at health facilities.

In 36 communities across Mulanje, Nkhoma, and Embangweni, Village Safe Motherhood Committees (VSMCs) learned to monitor the reproductive health practices of families and encourage men and women in the use of health services during pregnancy, at delivery and in the postnatal period. VSMCs pass on knowledge at the community level about sexual and reproductive health rights, safe motherhood rights, nutrition and hygiene. By using bicycle ambulances and encouraging pregnant women to arrive at the clinic early, these committees ensured that the majority of births took place in the presence of a skilled health practitioner instead of at home. More women attended antenatal care sessions and men decided to actively support the health of pregnant women and newborn children once they learned of the risks associated with pregnancy and delivery. In the last program period, only one maternal death was reported in program areas and a skilled birth attendant attended 94% of deliveries. At the same time, 60% of women improved their use of antenatal care services and almost 70% of men participated in training regarding the role of the father and raising maternal health awareness. This project was matched 3:1 by Government of Canada funds.

Malawi: Building Sustainable Livelihoods Program 2012–2017 – Blantyre Synod Health and Development Commission and Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Program (GoC) \$167,453

This five-year program targets poor, vulnerable and marginalized communities in two regions of Malawi, with focused attention on orphans and vulnerable children, youth, women and people living with HIV and AIDS. The

initiative is building livelihoods and alleviating poverty by supporting beneficiaries with economic opportunities through the formation of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), vocational skills, educational support, and health, hygiene and nutrition promotion activities. PWS&D is working with the Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Program (EHAP) in northern Malawi and the Blantyre Synod Health and Development Commission (BSHDC) in southern Malawi.

The second year of the program concluded in 2014 and achievements included the establishment of 117 SHGs, with 1,920 new and existing members conducting savings and credit on a regular basis. Women access loans from their group savings to invest in family needs and to start income generating activities. This has elevated women into a new economic position since they contribute to the welfare of their entire family. In the past year, 57 women have paid school fees for their children attending secondary school and 112 women have been able to purchase school supplies.

EHAP and BSHDC continued to support 133 orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and youth with their academic studies. EHAP supported a total of 87 OVC in both secondary school (36 girls and 44 boys) and at Embangweni Teachers Training Colleges (2 girls and 5 boys). In Blantyre, BSHDC was able to support 23 secondary school students (11 girls and 12 boys) in year one and the community identified 23 primary school students (10 girls and 13 boys) to be supported. These students were provided with writing materials, school shoes and uniforms. In Ekwendeni, EHAP collaborated with stakeholders on child protection issues and developed strategies for improvement. It involved 65 people including the Senior Traditional Authority (TA) Mtwalo, District Health Office representatives, Ministry of Gender, women, child welfare and community services district representatives, volunteers, youth representatives, Area Development Committee representatives, Livingstonia Synod AIDS Program, the head teachers from different secondary and primary schools, Ekwendeni Congregation, the Ekwendeni police child protection representatives, the hospital management representatives and staff. This project is matched 3:1 by Government of Canada funds.

Malawi: Tidzalerana Disabled Children's Program – Mulanje Mission Hospital (PWS&D) \$12,000

Vulnerable people with disabilities and their caregivers received support through this volunteer operated program. The program provides a safe space of belonging for members and caregivers to support each other. For those who are often excluded and marginalized, it provides a means of inclusion, purpose and community. In 2015, about 120 members participated every week, with about 12–21 members needing support with weekly hospital visits for people with physical disabilities or to receive their anti-retro viral treatments for AIDS. The program has received support from Sandi Rehabilitation, a local occupational therapy organization. They provide weekly group physiotherapy sessions in mobility and auditory impairment. The program also applies art therapy as a tool to help members improve dexterity and entertainment, with a continued exploration of new crafting and income generating activities for its members.

Malawi: Neno Girls Secondary School –Blantyre Synod Education Department (PWS&D) \$41,100

Neno Girls Secondary School is an all-girls school in a remote and isolated area of Malawi. It is one of 380 schools overseen by the Education Department of Blantyre Synod. In 2015, PWS&D supported 15 vulnerable girl students with bursary support. Three of the bursary students sat for their examinations in June 2015 and were thus replaced by new students. The Blantyre Synod Education Department has continued to work closely with Neno Girls School to increase the scholastic capacity and academic achievement at the school, which has increased demand for enrolment as well as promoted the school's positive reputation.

Malawi: Orphan Care – Mulanje Hospital Primary Health Care (PWS&D) – \$56,000

In 2015, this project entered the second of a three-year orphan care initiative in partnership with Mulanje Mission Hospital. The program provided medical care and the nutritional supplement Likuni Phala to approximately 350 orphans while ensuring that each child along with their caregivers receives counseling and support services. The program continued to support 60 of the most vulnerable orphans that attend Apatza School. Twenty orphans and their households received a goat, along with education on the long term benefits of keeping livestock, such as the ability to sell the offspring in coming years and the use of manure in kitchen gardens for growing vegetables. This is a strong incentive and encouragement in households which often provide homes to multiple orphans and struggle to meet the basic needs of each child. The program also reached out to the local communities to reduce stigma and discrimination against those living with or affected by HIV or AIDS.

Malawi: Integrated Orphans And Vulnerable Children, Home Based Care and Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT) Program (PWS&D) – \$73,900

In 2015, EHAP and PWS&D integrated previously separate projects into one larger cohesive program that serves orphans and vulnerable children and people living with HIV, including pregnant women. Volunteer leaders and community members in local village level committees are mobilized to work alongside EHAP staff in supporting the objectives of ensuring health and safety and improved educational achievement for girls and boys, as well as improved health and food security among Home-based care (HBC) patients and HIV positive women. The new three-year program includes all four theme areas and will focus on 2,586 direct beneficiaries and 16,400 community members in 121 villages.

Malawi: Malaria Control Program – Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Program (PWS&D) – \$15,000

In northern Malawi, EHAP and the Ekwendeni hospital continue to encourage malaria prevention through awareness campaigns and the promotion of key prevention methods – the consistent and proper use of bed nets and early diagnosis followed by effective and appropriate treatment. The program is supported through the efforts of over 200 volunteers, 100 hospital staff and 30 health surveillance assistants who provide a direct link between communities and the health system. With this vast network the program is targeting over 13,600 direct beneficiaries and indirectly benefiting a population of almost 130,000 people. Along with government support, the project under Ekwendeni Hospital is aiming to ensure that 6,800 households own bed nets and that there will be less than 3,000 cases of malaria in the first year.

Malawi: Support to Vulnerable Groups – Livingstonia Synod AIDS Program (PWS&D) – \$25,000

In this two-year program, LISAP worked with the community of Elunyeneni to promote ownership and sustainability of local initiatives to prevent spread of HIV and to promote health and increased quality of life for children and people living with HIV. Through mobilization of 91 stakeholders and cooperation of the District Health Office, outreach services are now available for the entire community. During the seasonal tobacco market, tobacco growers, their spouses, and sex workers are at higher risk for spread of HIV. LISAP conducted dialogue sessions targeting 60 participants including tobacco growers, vendors and vulnerable women. Two committees were established to raise awareness campaigns and promote prevention measures through public gatherings and places such as local bars. The two committees are supported by the local health centre which provides condoms and health services. Economic empowerment is mainstreamed through village savings and loans, which has increased the capacity of individual members and encouraged local village savings and loans to use their social welfare fund to sustainably provide food and financial resources for the needs of the local child care centre. Parent committees of the CBCCs receive committee trainings, learn to mobilize resources for the running of care centres and initiate projects such as moulding bricks, construction of child friendly toilets, and kitchen and communal gardens for soya and maize. Community participation has allowed for construction of centres in six different communities.

AMERICAS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Bolivia: Ecumenical Chagas Project – Canadian Baptist Ministries (PWS&D) – \$15,000

This CCA collaborative initiative in Bolivia is combating Chagas disease – a tropical disease caused by the protozoan parasite, *Trypanosoma cruzi*. The parasite is transmitted to humans and animals by triatomine bugs. These bugs are usually found living within the roofs and walls of homes constructed with mud, adobe and straw, where the poorest people live. Chagas disease affects over seven million people worldwide (mainly in Latin America) and if left untreated, can lead to debilitating effects such as cardiac disorders and neurological and digestive problems. The project is following WHO guidelines to prevent and control the disease: improving housing conditions to prevent transmission, promoting use of insecticides in and around the home, employing good sanitation and hygiene practices, using bed nets and encouraging early screening, diagnosis and treatment. The project seeks to change the attitude of people regarding this disease by making both parents aware of the dangers of the Chagas infection and teaching their children good habits. The improvement of their homes not only benefits adults, but children as well, as they will likely inherit the property in the future and will live there with their own families. PWS&D support for this project ended in 2015 but will continue on through CCA for an undetermined time.

El Salvador: Women's Participation to Achieve Equal Rights – Institute for Women's Research, Training and Development (PWS&D) – \$35,045

The Institute for Women's Research, Training and Development (IMU) was founded in 1986 as a grassroots movement to fight against social, economic and political discrimination affecting rural Salvadoran women. IMU promotes women's empowerment and rights through advocacy and training, helping facilitate the mobilization of women's groups and associations across the country. PWS&D closed the final year of a three-year program seeking social justice and equality by promoting changes in the institutional and political frameworks to support women's rights. The organization helps to improve the quality of life of women through holistic health, food security and economic empowerment initiatives. IMU facilitated workshops, forums and conferences focusing on themes of sexual and reproductive rights, food sovereignty and security, and nutrition. In 2015, after 25 years of collaboration with IMU, PWS&D phased out of work with IMU to pursue programming on women's empowerment in other countries in the region.

Guatemala: School Support for Vulnerable Children – Francisco Coll School (PWS&D) – \$25,000

Located in Guatemala City, the Francisco Coll School sits on a landfill site opposite from the garbage dump. Settlements have sprung up in the area and families make ends meet from searching through the dump – collecting, recycling and selling trash. It is also a violent neighbourhood due to the linkages between poverty and criminality – domestic assaults, robberies, extortion and gang activity are commonplace. Francisco Coll provides and facilitates comprehensive education and training to children with very limited resources in a safe and nurturing environment. They implement educational strategies which promote innovative and dynamic pedagogy that take into account their student's socio-economic context. PWS&D offered operational support as the school continued to ensure that underprivileged girls and boys from the dump receive a comprehensive education in a safe and nurturing environment. In 2015, the school year commenced with 302 students (154 boys and 148 girls) with eight students being pulled out and 18 held back in their grades, thus having a rate of 92% who passed their respective grades. A total of eight scholarship students were supported, with all graduating to the next level.

Guatemala: Women Development – Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas (PWS&D) – \$25,000

The Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas (FPM) has been helping empower marginalized women for nearly three decades. This organization works in solidarity with indigenous Maya women from Mam, Quiche and Kakchiquel communities to build their spiritual, economic and social capacity. The heart of their programming centres on promoting self-esteem, values and leadership among women participants. PWS&D annually supports various programs that benefit 44 women's groups (approximately 600 women) with training and education in health and nutrition, environmental awareness and socio-productive entrepreneurship in nine different municipalities. Revolving group loans and business management skills enable the women to start income generating ventures such as livestock rearing, organic gardens and artisanal production. They now contribute to their household capital, send their children to school buy basic necessities and have greater control over assets and decision making. There is a large focus on nutrition and health and reclaiming ownership of local medicinal plants and natural methods for treating common illnesses. FPM promotes the idea of using local plants, vegetables and fruits in order to cultivate more diverse, accessible and affordable diets for household that do not have the financial capacity or access to healthy foods.

Guatemala: Livelihood for Vulnerable Families – New Dawn Association for Community Health and Development (ASDNA) (PWS&D) – \$116,143

This PWS&D supported program completed its first year and is building on the achievements of past initiatives. Seventeen vulnerable communities in the municipalities of Cunén, Uspantán and Chicaman in Quiché are targeted in this intervention which strengthens livelihoods. In this phase, promoters who established their integrated model farms in previous years now help families replicate the process to start farms of their own. These farms promote sustainable ecosystems, and beneficiaries must contribute inputs to ensure ownership. Forty-two promoters (some new to the program) are responsible for overseeing a group of families and are accompanied by field technicians. They share their skills, experience and inputs with other participants through training opportunities, visits and exchanges. A total of 300 families are targeted. Components include raising and caring for livestock (cows, rabbits and goats), organic farming, production of natural fertilizers and pesticides, income generating activities for women's groups, fruit tree nurseries and conservation agriculture techniques. In 2014, the Belgian organization, DISOP signed a three-year agreement with PWS&D and ASDENA to provide a four-to-one match of PWS&D funds. PWS&D also provided supplementary funds towards this programming in 2015. This project receives 4:1 matching funds from the Government of Belgium through DISOP.

Nicaragua: Preparing for Food Security – Council of Evangelical and Protestant Churches (CEPAD) (PWS&D) – \$737

In 2015, PWS&D supported CEPAD with funds for a preplanning evaluation of their food security project proposal to benefit 672 families in 14 rural communities. This project seeks to improve food security by providing families with improved farming techniques, which focus on sustainable agriculture methods through improvements made to the soil, natural pest management, conservation of water and the use of certified seeds with higher yields. The proposed project will also focus on providing families with different types of seeds to plant fruits and vegetables they are currently not consuming through establishing community plant nurseries. This will allow families to increase the production of basic grains, fruits and vegetables which will alleviate problems of food insecurity and chronic malnutrition. CEPAD has spent the past year working closely with PWS&D to fully realize the proposal.

Nicaragua: Nutrition and Food Security – SOYNICA (CFGB) – \$59,077

PWS&D supported partner SOYNICA is in its second year of a three-year nutrition project in 11 communities in the Municipality of San Juan de Rio Coco, Madriz. Most of the families participating in the project depend on coffee production as their principal source of livelihood but also produce basic grains (maize and beans). The intervention areas have high chronic malnutrition rates and people have poor dietary habits. This project works with 40 promoters to improve the health and nutrition of 440 families: improving dietary habits, dispelling myths about local foods, developing recipes, increasing food consumption and diversity, and promoting exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months. In 2015, promoters conducted 88 accompaniment visits with mothers who were part of the breast feeding classes in the previous year. Health promoter's capacity was strengthened through classes on nutrition, health and cooking which they put into practice in workshops with participating community members. This project was matched 4:1 from Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada.

Haiti: Treatment and Prevention of Gender-based Violence – Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWS&D) – \$15,000

PWS&D contributes to a three-year gender-based violence prevention project led by PWRDF (Anglicans) and implemented in Haiti by Zamni Lasante (Partners in Health). Gender-based violence (GBV) against girls and women in Haiti is a serious health and human rights issue. In Haiti, women are known as the "poto mitan" – the "central pillars" of the family and community and yet are the most underserved and at-risk members of the community, frequently vulnerable to sexual violence and restricted in their options to seek justice. Access to care, health and psychosocial services, and legal remedies are severely limited by lack of resources, political will, economic insecurity, gender power imbalances and widespread poverty. The lack of reliable data on the prevalence, nature and consequences of sexual violence in Haiti is also an obstacle to the development of strategies to empower women, to sensitize men to GBV issues, to endorse penalties for abusers and effectively meet the needs of victims. In addition, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and Women's Rights is not adequately resourced and needs support. This project is a collaborative effort between Anglicans, Nazarenes and Presbyterians in Canada, with partners in Health Canada and Zamni Lasante in Haiti to help increase the network of health care services to women who are victims of GBV, promote a more open discussion about GBV within communities and amongst health care centre and finally to promote the proper tracking and reporting of incidences of GBV so that this issues can be better addressed at an institutional level.

Haiti: Climate Change Resilience and Food Security– ACT Alliance Forum (PWS&D) – \$24,356

Climate change is a major threat to the livelihood of most Haitians. In particular, it poses new and serious technological, economic, administrative and organizational challenges to farmers and other users of natural resources. Moreover, the poor are the most vulnerable to its consequences and their resilience and adaptation capacity is very low. Haiti is classified as one of the 10 most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change. Only 43% of national food needs are covered by local agricultural production while the figure was 80% in 1981, and 1.3 million people are considered food insecure.

ACT Alliance Forum in Haiti have decided to combine their efforts and resources with Service Chretien Haiti (SCH), a registered Haitian organization, to launch a project to strengthen the capacity of civil society to influence and pressure authorities on the resilience of vulnerable communities to food insecurity. SCH also works as a coalition of Protestant Churches in Haiti that promote human rights through building up civil society and increasing food security and standards of environmental protection. PWS&D is proud to support this essential intervention from 2015–2017, which will strengthen the Civil Society Platform on Climate Change (PSC-CC) and the resilience of farmers and vulnerable communities who are affected by food insecurity, through advocacy and agricultural adaptation to climate change in order to organize and reinforce the food production systems.

ASIA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**Afghanistan: Girls Education Project – Community World Service Asia (PWS&D) – \$60,000**

Improving the quality of education is a key component of the Girls Education project. To promote this objective and increase sustainability, the project trained 33 female and 48 male teachers as master trainers in the participating schools. The master trainers have the skills and knowledge to train and mentor teachers in their schools on teaching methods and pedagogical skills to improve the quality of learning for students. After the master trainers facilitate trainings, they observe how the teachers integrate the training in their classroom. The master trainers provided constructive feedback to the teachers on what methods worked well and how to better integrate teaching methods and resources into the classroom. Teachers and students appreciate the teaching methods and resources because the approaches are more participatory and learner focused, which results in students being more engaged in learning.

Nepal: Jumla Leprosy and TB Referral Clinic – International Nepal Fellowship (PWS&D) – \$20,000

The primary beneficiaries of the project are people infected and affected by TB and leprosy. Through timely diagnosis, treatment and referral services, many people are living an improved quality of life and the project has reduced the transmission channel of these diseases. By providing complication management services, many people affected with leprosy complications have been able to improve their health and learn how to prevent such complications in future. The project has also contributed to reducing susceptibility to disability among leprosy patients and decreasing stigma against the disease. The secondary beneficiaries of this project are government health workers, community leaders and students who are key players in controlling the spread of TB and leprosy.

Pakistan: Sustainable Agriculture for Marginalized Farmers – Community World Service Asia (CFGB) – \$197,748

Agriculture is the backbone of Pakistan's economy and is one of the major livelihood sources of rural communities of the country. It contributes to 21.4% of national GDP and employs 45% of the country's labour force. The majority of farmers have less than five hectares of land, which barely meets their subsistence level needs because of lack of irrigation water, energy crises, frequent floods, inequitable distribution of resources and unsustainable agriculture practices. Realizing the unmet chronic food security needs and gaps related to improving agriculture production of small-scale farmers, the project started in October and is expected to engage 650 farmers over a three-year period. The farmers will learn sustainable farming practices to improve their yields. Farmers will learn about recommended application rates which will reduce the amount of money they borrow for inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, tractor services). Field staff will mentor the farmers to ensure they have ample support to implement what they learn in the trainings. Women will learn how to prepare kitchen gardens, which is expected to increase the amount and diversity of vegetables families eat. A nutrition officer will raise awareness in the communities about healthy eating practices, including the importance of eating vegetables.

India: Community Health and Self-Reliance – Church of North India, Central Regional Board of Health Services (PWS&D) – \$78,405

In 2015, the Central Regional Board of Health Services entered the final year of a three-year program targeting 27 villages in Barwani, Hatpipliya and Ratlam regions, in western Madhya Pradesh. The community health and self-reliance project is working through village level committees to promote improved livelihoods via agricultural, water and health activities of the community. This is done through the promotion of kitchen gardens, water harvesting and techniques to prevent soil erosion. Sanitation and hygiene awareness is promoted through monthly health camps at the schools, while health is promoted with the planting of fruit trees to provide dietary support and improve nutrition. Women are participating in self-help groups focused on improving their economic situation and social mobility. New program planning continues in the Mendha region. A monitoring visit by PWS&D in February 2016, assessed the level of achievements in the project. Important and repeated delays in reporting may jeopardize the possibility of future funding.

India: Women, Children and Youth Empowerment – Institute for Development Education (PWS&D) – \$40,143

IFDE supports better academic achievement, increased literacy and vocational skills, and mobilization of communities to access resources available from the government. After decades of work together, PWS&D and IFDE entered a transitional phase-out period, through which a final grant from PWS&D of \$35,000 was made available to support programming needs and to mobilize additional local and international resources for partnership. IFDE used the funds to supplement another year of programs in the Tamil Nadu area, where a change in the local government

programs has increased support for the self-help programming, which IFDE has years of expertise in promoting. IFDE and PWS&D will develop a comprehensive narrative portraying the achievements of many years of work together, which will be shared with the Presbyterian constituency in Canada. As PWS&D is phasing out of its work in Tamil Nadu state, this was the last year of support for IFDE.

India: Sustainable Livelihood and Empowerment – Madurai Non-Formal Education Centre (PWS&D) – \$40,075

PWS&D supported MNEC in 2015 with a transitional grant and support to build capacity within the organization to mobilize local and international resources for its programming. The MNEC Director attended workshops on resource mobilization and strategic planning management in New Delhi, while the balance of those funds was used to support ongoing programs in the Madurai slums and villages where MNEC works. These programs strive to alleviate poverty in vulnerable communities through the promotion of gender equality, economic opportunities and health services. The key strategic tool in mobilizing communities has been the formation and support of women's self-help groups through which women and their communities are empowered in their legal and human rights and through government funded assistance programs, which would otherwise be unknown to them. With MNEC's support, over 20,000 women and their communities mobilize regularly to receive government services and infrastructure, such as installation of street lights and sanitation and sewage systems. As PWS&D is phasing out of its work in Tamil Nadu state, this was the last year of support for the Madurai Non-Formal Education Centre.

India: Building Sustainable Livelihoods – Roofs for the Roofless (PWS&D) – \$37,638

In 2015, PWS&D supported RFR with a transitional phase-out grant, made available after many years of direct program support. The transitional grant provided opportunity to support core budget costs while also exploring alternative sources of local and international funding. In May 2015, the founder and director of RFR, Mrs. Savithri Devanesen, passed away. Mrs. Devanesen was recognized widely for her commitment and dedication to the community and rural development in Tamil Nadu. Through her leadership and networks of support in India, Canada and Australia, the Executive Committee and staff of Roofs for the Roofless will continue to maintain the community-based livelihoods programs and Rural Community College for disadvantaged youth. As PWS&D is phasing out of its work in Tamil Nadu state, this was the last year of support for Roofs for the Roofless. In December 2015, Guy Smagge and Leah Adema were given the honorary title of Ambassadors for Roofs for the Roofless in Canada, based on the years of collaboration with the organization.

REFUGEE MINISTRY

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” (Matthew 25:35)

Throughout 2015, the number of people displaced by conflict and persecution continued to rise. They had, in recent years, already reached record numbers in the post-World War II era. In June, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported a total of 60 million people, up 8.3 million over the previous year, and the numbers continued to grow in 2015. After Palestinians, who are dealt with differently in the United Nations' refugee system, Syrian refugees remained the world's largest refugee population, their number increasing from over three million at the end of 2013 to some 4.6 million at the end of 2015.

Over the course of the year, interest in responding to refugees within congregations and presbyteries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) increased progressively and then dramatically over the fall. At year end, there were 57 sponsorships officially active: from having been filed and awaiting arrival to having concluded their twelve-month term. This was up from 47 at the end of 2014. Perhaps more significantly, at year end there were some 50 pending applications to sponsor refugees known to sponsoring groups and 30 groups waiting to sponsor refugee cases under the Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) refugee program (refugees referred for resettlement by the United Nations via Canadian visa offices overseas).

The 2015 Presbyterian response included efforts to sponsor refugees from Burma (Myanmar), Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria and Venezuela. Sponsoring groups were established with members from different congregations, from different denominations, with participants from service organizations and other faiths, and with participation from town or city councils.

This remarkable response notwithstanding, there was a growing sense that the increasing numbers of refugees were being abandoned by the international community and by Canada. In July, António Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, was moved to say of Syrians, “This is the biggest refugee population from a single conflict in a generation. It is a population that deserves the support of the world but is instead living in dire conditions and sinking deeper into abject poverty.” On September 3, the Moderator, Karen Horst, following on motions adopted at the 2015 General Assembly, wrote to Prime Minister Stephen Harper to express “our hope that our government will act immediately and generously to upgrade its response to the UNHCR’s resettlement requests,” to “urge that Canada increase its annual contribution to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees” and to ask “Canada to do significantly more in refugee resettlement and humanitarian assistance.”

Syria Crisis

As the year progressed, popular awareness grew of the situation of Syrians and other refugee groups. However, in late summer everything changed. In the early hours of September 2, a camera captured images of three-year-old Alan Kurdi, a “boat person” whose body had washed up on a beach in Turkey, and the world awoke to the urgent plight of Syrian refugees. All political parties involved in the Canadian federal election at the time adopted positions favouring an increase in the numbers of Syrian refugees to be resettled in Canada. A strong desire to help emerged in the church and broader society, as well. Between the beginning of September and year end, 15 presbyteries and 117 congregations from across Canada were in touch with the sponsorship coordinator in the national offices of the church. At year end, 19 applications to sponsor Syrian refugees had been filed, four applications were being developed and there were 30 sponsoring groups on a waiting list hoping to be matched with Syrian or non-Syrian refugees referred for resettlement via Canadian visa offices overseas. Two families, one co-sponsored by the Presbytery of Pickering and Life in Christ Ministry, the other sponsored by a group of churches led by St. Andrew’s Humber Heights (Toronto) were aboard the first Canadian military aircraft bringing Syrian refugees to a new life in Canada that landed in Toronto on December 10.

Forty percent of people of Syrian descent in Canada live in Quebec, mainly in Montreal. Thus, Action Réfugiés Montréal (ARM), who manages The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Anglican Diocese of Montreal’s ententes-cadre (sponsorship agreements) with the Quebec government, was also part of this sponsorship response throughout the year. Under their memorandum of understanding with The Presbyterian Church in Canada, sponsorships using the Presbyterian sponsorship agreement require the involvement of a congregation. ARM is also supporting through *Presbyterians Sharing* program which complements our relationship. ARM executive director, Mr. Paul Clarke, met with members from St Andrew’s Church (St-Lambert), the Arabic Church and The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul regarding sponsorship. Other congregations sought information and offered help. The St. Lambert congregation joined an ecumenical project, which included seven churches that welcomed a Syrian family in December 2015. Meanwhile, under the Anglican agreement, ARM submitted 64 sponsorship applications to sponsor 152 people with relatives in Quebec accepting responsibility for resettlement. Both the sponsorship coordinator in the national offices of the church in Toronto and ARM staff in Montreal were very involved in media outreach throughout the autumn of 2015, in English and in French.

Non-Syrian Refugees

Sponsorship efforts continued on behalf of non-Syrians as well. Since 2012, the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program outside of Quebec has been subject to quotas, referred to as “caps”, imposed by the federal government. These caps do not apply to visa office referred cases and, since the beginning of 2015, have not applied to Syrian or Iraqi refugees, but do apply to all other refugee populations. Since the caps for 2014 were not announced until the end of July in that year, the deadline to utilize them was set as December 31, 2015. For The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the 2014 cap was set at 28 persons. The 2015 cap, announced in early February, was set at 11 persons. (The rationale for the lower 2015 number was the removal of the cap on Syrians and Iraqis.) Sponsorship applications were submitted to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC – formerly Citizenship and Immigration Canada) to utilize all of the denomination’s 2014 and 2015 allocated spaces, while a waiting list was established for groups wishing to sponsor refugees for whom there were no remaining spaces. As well, in order to avoid the caps, two groups worked to develop applications outside of the church’s sponsorship agreement with the government, drawing on the support of the national office.

**Sponsorship applications submitted under the PCC agreement
with the federal government using 2014 and 2015 allocated spaces**

	Number of active sponsorships in 2015	
	Cases	People
PSR 12-month sponsorships: filed pre-2014 awaiting arrival	2	2
PSR 12-month sponsorships: filed in 2014-15 awaiting arrival	26	55
PSR 12-month sponsorships: arrived in 2014 or 2015 / active in 2015	15	40
BVOR 12-month sponsorships: filed in 2015 awaiting arrival	5	24
BVOR 12-month sponsorships: arrived in 2014 or 2015 / active in 2015	9	39
Totals	57	160

PSR = Privately sponsored refugees

BVOR = Blended visa office referred refugees

We are very grateful to the following congregations, presbyteries and other groups who were involved in sponsorship in 2014 and 2015: preparing for sponsorship of refugees known to them or for BVOR cases, developing applications, awaiting arrival and/or assisting with the first year of settlement in Canada. (Some participating congregations may not appear in this list in light of their participation under the umbrella of a presbytery or another congregation.) They include:

Almanarah Mission, Hamilton	Paulin Memorial, Windsor
Almonte, Almonte	Presbytery of Hamilton
Arabic Church, Montreal	Presbytery of London
Beaches, Toronto	Presbytery of Niagara
Bethel, Riverview	Presbytery of Oak Ridges
Calvin, Kitchener	Presbytery of Ottawa
Calvin, Toronto	Presbytery of Peace River
Central, Cambridge	Presbytery of Pickering (25 congregations with LinC Ministry)
Central, Hamilton	Presbytery of Seaway Glengarry
Chapel Place, Markham	Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington
Comox Valley, Comox	Presbytery of Winnipeg
Crieff Hills Community, Crieff Hills	Richmond Hill, Richmond Hill
Erskine, Hamilton	Rosedale, Toronto
First, Brockville	St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal
First, Collingwood	St. Andrew's, Barrie
First, Edmonton	St. Andrew's, Brampton
First, Thunder Bay	St. Andrew's, Coldwater
Glenview, Toronto	St. Andrew's, Dartmouth
Grace, Calgary	St. Andrew's, Fredericton
Grace, Orleans	St. Andrew's, Guelph
Grace, St. John	St. Andrew's, Kingston
Grace (West Hill), Toronto	St. Andrew's, Kitchener
Innerkip, Innerkip	St. Andrew's, Ottawa
Kerrisdale, Vancouver	St. Andrew's, Owen Sound
Knox, Bracebridge	St. Andrew's, Penticton
Knox, Calgary	St. Andrew's, Sackville
Knox, Cranbrook	St. Andrew's, St. John's
Knox, Georgetown	St. Andrew's, St. Lambert
Knox, Goderich	St. Andrew's, Saskatoon
Knox, Grand Valley	St. Andrew's (King St.), Toronto
Knox, Guelph	St. Andrew's (Humber Heights), Toronto
Knox, Kincardine	

Knox, Oakville	St. Andrew's (Islington), Toronto
Knox, Ottawa	Church of St. David, Halifax
Knox (Spadina), Toronto	St. Giles, Calgary
Knox Leamington (with the Leamington Area Ecumenical Refugee Committee)	St. Giles, Ottawa
Knox, Waterdown	St. James, Stouffville
Knox, Waterloo	St. John's, Bradford
Knox-Calvin, Harriston	St. John's, Medicine Hat
Lakeshore St. Andrew's, Tecumseh	St. Mark's (Don Mills), Toronto
Leaside, Toronto	St. Paul's, Ottawa
Life in Christ (LinC) Ministry, Toronto (with Presbytery of Pickering)	St. Paul's, Prince Albert
Living Faith Community, Baxter	St. Timothy's, Toronto
Morningside High Park, Toronto	Strathcona Park, Kingston
New St. James, London (With the London Ecumenical Refugee Committee)	Trinity Community, Oro
Paris, Paris	Valleyview Community Church, Calgary
Parkwood, Ottawa	Varsity Acres, Calgary
	West Vancouver, West Vancouver,
	Westmount, Edmonton

RESOURCES, COMMUNICATION, PROMOTION AND GRANTS

In 2015, PWS&D Communications continued to place focus on ensuring the PWS&D website, WeRespond.ca, was a place for supporters to have easy access to current information on PWS&D programs, stories and downloadable resources. People are also able to sign up for PWS&D communications such as the e-newsletter and quarterly print newsletter through the website.

Resources for Congregations

Every fall, a package of resources is sent to congregations and designated PWS&D advocates containing worship resources and promotional materials. The 2015 package focused on Abundant Life – taken from PWS&D's vision statement. It included Advent and Lent liturgies, placemat, poster, offering envelope, annual report, bulletin cover and bulletin insert. Congregations and advocates are encouraged to use and broadly distribute materials from the fall package in order to keep constituents informed about the work of PWS&D programs around the world and to show how donations are being used to make a difference in our global village.

PWS&D produces a variety of free resources for congregations to use during worship, for youth ministry, fundraisers and other special events. New resources from 2015 include:

- Downloadable bulletin inserts for World Food Day/Thanksgiving, the Syria conflict and the Be a Peacemaker campaign.
- A Thanksgiving/World Food Day worship resource, produced in collaboration with Canadian Foodgrains Bank
- Good Soil campaign brochure

These materials are all available on the website and can be ordered through the Resource Centre at 1-800-619-7301.

Emergency and Special Appeals

PWS&D sends out special appeals to supporters in the wake of natural disasters and emergencies. In 2015, PWS&D continued to appeal to congregations and individuals for support through our Be a Peacemaker campaign. This campaign raised funds to aid people affected by violent conflict around the world. After the Government of Canada announced matching funds in response to the ongoing crisis in Syria, an appeal was issued and the Presbyterian constituency responded generously – \$456,441 was raised in 2015, of which \$321,727 was eligible to be matched.

PWS&D also sent out a special appeal following the devastating earthquake that struck Nepal in April 2015. Presbyterians freely gave in response to the appeal, raising almost \$593,848 of which \$368,206 was eligible to be matched by the Government of Canada.

Appeals were issued through the PWS&D website, email, newsletter and other church mailings. Bulletin inserts were made available to raise awareness among congregations.

Speaking Engagements

PWS&D staff and committee members continue to represent PWS&D through speaking engagements across the country. These engagements provide a valuable opportunity for people to hear first-hand news and stories of impact from overseas programs.

In 2015, PWS&D completed 69 speaking engagements that included Sunday worship services, presbytery meetings, WMS gatherings and youth events. A number of these engagements took place in response to the ongoing refugee crisis with groups, congregations and presbyteries interested in learning more about refugee sponsorship. Daniel Kolbila from The Presbyterian Church of Ghana participated in PWS&D's committee meetings in October and shared his experiences with congregations and groups across Canada while in the country.

Churches interested in requesting a PWS&D speaker are encouraged to give at least two months notice and should contact Karen Bokma (kbokma@presbyterian.ca or 1-800-619-7301 ext. 240).

ECUMENICAL COALITIONS

World Council of Churches (WCC) – \$15,000

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is a worldwide fellowship of over 300 churches and denominations in more than 100 countries dedicated to Christian unity. This movement encourages common witness and action by churches, as well as cooperation and sharing between members. Currently, the WCC focuses its work in three program areas: Unity, Mission, and Ecumenical Relations; Public Witness and Diakonia; and Ecumenical Formation.

PWS&D supported the Ecumenical HIV and AIDS Initiative in Africa (EHAIA) that began in 2002 as a concerted effort to enable churches, theological institutions, organizations and lay people to work together to deal with HIV and AIDS issues in their communities. It strongly promotes the eradication of stigma and discrimination as a key factor in helping combat HIV transmission and ensuring quality of life for people living with HIV and AIDS.

PWS&D funding also supports the World Council of Churches' Migration and Social Justice Program. It provides an ethics-based global perspective to empower churches to engage in solidarity, advocacy and ministry with uprooted people. The historic high numbers of people uprooted from their home communities requires greater world attention. The program fosters critical partnerships with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees through participation in executive and standing committee meetings and with the International Organization for Migration. The Global Ecumenical Network on Migration acts as an advisory group to the WCC with representatives from Africa, Asia, Australia, Canada, the Americas, the Middle East, Europe and the USA.

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives – Women of Courage Program – \$65,000

KAIROS is an ecumenical organization working with partners in Canada and internationally for human rights and ecological justice. With programs like Women of Courage focused on Indigenous rights and gender justice, KAIROS is committed to working for practical solutions to global human rights struggles; deepening research; conducting education; building networks; and increasing partner capacity. KAIROS has a long history of working with and accompanying the most marginalized populations, including women and Indigenous people, in the Global South and in Canada.

KAIROS is in the sixth year of its Women of Courage Program. Beginning with a six-woman delegation to Colombia in 2010, Women of Courage has grown into a multi-country project responding to systemic violence against women and sustaining the work of women human rights defenders. Co-developing projects in the global south, KAIROS and our partner organizations have enabled the successful implementation of projects that directly respond to gender-based violence and contributing social factors in the communities and countries in which our partners work.

PWS&D contributed \$65,000 to KAIROS' Women of Courage program. PWS&D also supported KAIROS with \$25,000 for core support.

Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance – \$13,128

Founded in 2000, the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) is an international network of 80 churches/church-based agencies and Christian organizations advocating for policies and practices to achieve a just, peaceful and

sustainable world. The EAA recognizes the importance of campaigning, raising awareness and policy engagement, and regularly collaborates with the ACT Alliance and World Council of Churches. Current programs are focusing on HIV and AIDS with the “Live the Promise” campaign and Sustainable Food Systems with a human rights-based approach with the “Food for Life” campaign.

Canadian Council for International Cooperation

The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) is a coalition that represents Canadian civil society organizations working globally to achieve sustainable human development. CCIC seeks to end poverty and to promote social justice and human dignity for all. CCIC has worked with DFATD on its policy of partnership with civil society organizations.

The council’s broad vision of development as articulated in the 10-Point Agenda to End Global Poverty and Injustice is reconfirmed – not as a work plan for the CCIC Secretariat but as a guiding framework for CCIC as a whole and as a situating document to help inform the way in which council spokespersons characterize the positions of the sector writ large. The 10-Point Agenda to End Global Poverty and Injustice asserts development in a human rights framework. PWS&D is a member of the three regional working groups at CCIC: the Americas Policy Group, the Africa-Canada Forum and the Asia-Pacific Working Group.

CCIC: Americas Policy Group

The Americas Policy Group (APG) is a Canadian civil society policy group focused on development and social justice issues in the Americas. It brings together approximately 40 international development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights groups, labour unions, research institutions, church and solidarity groups. The APG’s mandate is to articulate coordinated positions on Canadian foreign policy towards Latin America and promote dialogue with the Canadian government and other bodies. Key areas of interest are: democracy, governance, and human rights; rights-based approaches to trade and investment policy; and corporate accountability. The APG has worked to fulfill its mandate through monitoring the human rights situations specifically in Mexico, Honduras and Colombia. It also takes action by informing MPs and by writing press releases to flag situations that require action from the Canadian government.

CCIC: Africa-Canada Forum

The Africa-Canada Forum (ACF) is a Working Group of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation and brings together NGOs, churches, unions and solidarity groups from across Canada that have a specific interest in development issues and social justice in Sub-Saharan Africa. Its purpose is twofold: 1) to improve the quality and impact of the work of participating groups through reflection and analysis of current programming relationships in Africa; and 2) to improve the coordination of policy development and strategies for joint action and advocacy, in dialogue with African counterparts and colleagues. ACF’s mandate is to develop collaborative strategies for policy development, dialogue, and advocacy with the Canadian government and multilateral institutions; enhance the capacity of members to undertake policy work concerning Sub-Saharan Africa; facilitate the sharing of lessons on programming issues to improve the quality and impact of members’ work, sharing the experiences of participating groups and their African partners; participate collectively in relevant national and international bodies; provide advice to the CCIC Policy Team and Board of Directors on Africa-related policy issues and actions; monitor and share information and produce analysis on development and human rights issues in Africa, in dialogue with African counterparts and colleagues; and provide venues for joint reflection, debate, and for the building of common platforms.

CCIC: Asia – Pacific Working Group

The Asia-Pacific Working Group (APWG) brings together approximately 30 NGOs, human rights groups, faith-based organizations, labour unions and solidarity groups from across Canada that have a specific interest in development, social justice, and human rights in Asia. The main objectives of the APWG are: to provide a Canadian civil society voice on the Asia – Pacific Region by sharing information, monitoring Canadian policies toward the region and engaging in policy dialogue and development, and to facilitate a space for collaboration, joint learning and reflection by Canadian civil society organizations active in the region. Countries of particular focus at the moment include the Philippines, Myanmar, Afghanistan and Indonesia.

Canadian Council for Refugees

In 2015, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) continued its leadership in promoting and defending the rights of refugees and other vulnerable migrants. In recognition for their work on the cutting edge of mission, the CCR

received the E.H. Johnson award at the 2015 General Assembly in June. Key CCR initiatives over the course of the year included promoting a vision of protection and welcome for refugees and newcomers in Canada: making status in Canada secure; calling for a broad, inclusive and effective resettlement program; ensuring access to protection; providing speedy family reunification; securing rights and dignity for all; demanding accountable immigration enforcement and offering welcoming communities. Until the change of government, the CCR continued to lobby for a significant response by Canada to Syrian refugees; while the call for improvements in processing of private sponsorship procedures for other refugees, which can take over five years, continued. The CCR's focus on human trafficking continued in 2015, with the production of a national assessment tool, and the CCR Youth Network organized another very successful gathering of refugee and immigrant youth and their allies, this year in Vancouver. An important initiative over the last two years has been to create space for inter-faith dialogue and exploration on faith-based response to refugees, seeking to deepen understanding while providing ideas for action to build bridges across faiths.

Inter-Agency Coalition on AIDS and Development

PWS&D is a member of the Inter-Agency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD), a coalition made up of approximately 100 Canadian international development NGOs, faith-based organizations, educational institutions, AIDS service organizations, and individuals working together to address the global HIV and AIDS pandemic. Through public policy, leadership and awareness raising, ICAD helps Canadians engage in HIV and AIDS initiatives and communicates to Canadian organizations the lessons learned from global responses to HIV and AIDS. This is intended to improve prevention, care and support services and ultimately reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS on individuals and communities, as well as eliminate stigma and discrimination in society.

Manitoba Council for International Cooperation

The Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC) is a coalition of more than 40 regular and affiliate members organizations involved in international development who are committed to: “respect, empowerment and self-determination for all peoples; development that protects the world’s environment; global understanding, cooperation and social justice.” MCIC’s mission as a coordinating structure is to promote public awareness of international issues, to foster member interaction, and to administer funds for international development.

In 2015, PWS&D received \$11,877 in MCIC funding to support the DFATD Building Sustainable Livelihoods Program in Malawi. This program equips vulnerable youth, women and men with opportunities to build sustainable livelihoods for themselves and their families. Economic empowerment is fostered through vocational skills, education, and savings/financial management through Self Help Groups. Productivity is bolstered through volunteer care groups and awareness of maternal and child health services, improving health, hygiene, and nutrition.

Ontario Council for International Cooperation

This provincial association coordinated network and strategy meetings with PWS&D and 60 other organizational members as well as a range of capacity building sessions in which PWS&D staff participated. OCIC also provided regular international development updates and public outreach to nearly 200,000 people, especially to youth. OCIC has facilitated meetings with and about the government department responsible for international development, DFATD. OCIC also brought members together to review multi-stakeholder partnerships (usually meaning including private sector), which has been a major shift by DFATD and, therefore, an area of analysis and debate for NGOs.

Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation

SCIC is a coalition of more than 60 full and associate member organizations committed to international development and relief efforts. Its mission statement declares that it is “committed to the recognition of the dignity of all people and their right to self-determination, to the protection of the world’s fragile environment, and to the promotion of global understanding, cooperation, peace and justice.” In 2015, PWS&D received \$21,388 from SCIC to support the DFATD Building Sustainable Livelihoods Program in Malawi.

Recommendation No. 14 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That individuals, congregations and presbyteries be commended for their involvement in refugee sponsorship and for their support for refugees who remain overseas and who require humanitarian assistance.

Recommendation No. 15 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That individuals, congregations and presbyteries be commended for their prayers, generosity of spirit and resources to support the life-saving work of PWS&D in emergency assistance, in particular for the generous responses to the Nepal earthquake relief and to the Syria crisis, and life-transforming work in development programs responding to communities suffering from hunger, disease, disaster, conflict and injustice around the world.

Recommendation No. 16 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That individuals, congregations and presbyteries take note that PWS&D continues to be a separate fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As such all are encouraged to meet their *Presbyterians Sharing* allocation and to consider making separate contributions in support of the development, relief and refugee work of the church.

PWS&D COMMITTEE

PWS&D has a governing committee that approves the annual budget, sets policies and priorities and ensures the proper functioning of PWS&D in the pursuit of its mission and vision. Members are both clergy and lay people with diverse backgrounds, qualifications and experiences who offer their skills, knowledge and time for the effective functioning of the agency and its programs. Two in-person meetings are held, in April and October, as well as teleconferences that are regularly scheduled for the Executive Committee – comprised of five members. The Executive carries on the work of the committee throughout the year, particularly on financial matters and responses to emergencies, as well as providing regular guidance to the director.

The Rev. Lara Scholey led the committee as convener in 2015. She provided support and continuity while PWS&D experienced changes in director and in staff. The previous director, Ken Kim, submitted his resignation effective March 13, 2015. The Rev. Lara Scholey took part as a member of the Search Committee for a new Director of PWS&D.

Canadian members of the PWS&D Committee (*member of the Executive): the Rev. Ian Fraser* (Pointe-Claire, Quebec), the Rev. Mark Gaskin* (Brantford, Ontario), the Rev. Laura Kavanagh* (Victoria, British Columbia), Mr. Steve McInnis (Woodstock, Ontario), Mr. Rob Robertson (Ottawa, Ontario), Ms. Janice Rodda (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan), the Rev. Lara Scholey* (convener – Scotsburn, Nova Scotia), the Rev. Dr. Sarah Travis* (Oakville, Ontario), Ms. Erin Whittaker (Winnipeg, Manitoba), Mr. Geoff Zakaib (Calgary, Alberta)

Southern partner: Daniel Kolbilla (Presbyterian Church of Ghana);

Ex-officio Members: the Rev. Karen Horst (Moderator of the 141st General Assembly), Mr. Stephen Allen (Justice Ministries); the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald (Life and Mission Agency); Ms. Karen Plater (Stewardship and Planned Giving); Ms. Elsa Furzer (WMS); Mrs. Linda MacKinnon (AMS); the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams (International Ministries); Mr. Stephen Roche (Treasurer/CFO)

The Rev. Lara Scholey

STEWARDSHIP AND PLANNED GIVING**RECOMMENDATIONS****Consent Recommendations**

That Recommendations Nos. 17 and, 18, (identified by ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 17

That sincere appreciation be expressed to the individuals and congregations who faithfully supported *Presbyterians Sharing* in 2015. (see p. 12.1.84)

► Recommendation No. 18

That all congregations develop an intentional plan to work towards meeting and exceeding the 10% *Presbyterians Sharing* Allocation in 2016. (see p. 12.1.84)

REPORT

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Karen Plater
	Associate Secretary:	Herb Gale (until December 31, 2015)
	Program Coordinator:	Sheryl Sutton (until February 10, 2016)
	Program Coordinator:	Heather Chappell
	Mission Trip and Youth in Mission Coordinator:	Matthew Foxall

INTRODUCTION

“So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth”
1 Corinthians 3:7

The ministry of stewardship and planned giving is a work of planting and harvesting. Sometimes we plant the seeds that others will harvest. Sometimes we harvest crops grown from the seeds others have planted. But whoever plants and whoever harvests, it is really God who provides both the initial impetus and the growth.

On September 1, 2015, the Stewardship and Planned Giving departments were amalgamated. The new Stewardship and Planned Giving Department encourages generous giving to The Presbyterian Church in Canada through annual, major and planned gifts and help congregations, specialized ministries, presbyteries and synods access sustainable financial resources to participate in God’s mission. The executive staffing of the department was overseen by the Rev. Dr. Herb Gale and by Ms. Karen Plater, until Herb’s retirement at the end of December 2015. Karen continues the work into 2016.

This department has the happy task both of helping the most generous people in the church – and in Canada – to give to and leave enduring legacies for the church and its ministry and helping congregations and specialized ministries receive those gifts and utilize them most effectively. The department works hard to encourage a culture of generosity in congregations as we help them find the resources, volunteer and financial, to further enhance their ministries. We encourage healthy stewardship habits and help congregations and specialized ministries develop sustainable financial practices for the immediate future and long term. We encourage participation in our common ministry through gifts to *Presbyterians Sharing* and legacy gifts through bequests, annuities and gifts of securities. We help people connect with the joy that flows from generosity and the excitement that comes as we use the gifts – time, skills, resources – God has given us to do God’s mission and ministry at local, national and international levels.

Significant time in 2015 was devoted to building on the work of the two departments and finding new ways to encourage generous giving through annual, major and planned gifts. This has included drafting new job descriptions for support staff, reviewing and updating resources, finding new ways to support congregations and planning new strategies for raising funds to support the mission and ministry that we do together through The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

EQUIPPING CONGREGATIONS AND LEADERS

Educational Opportunities

The Stewardship and Planned Giving department provided opportunities for congregational leaders to develop stewardship knowledge and skills.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s Stewards By Design conference helps congregations discover how to nurture generous giving and expand their ministry. Participants learn about different ways people give – including annual, planned and spontaneous gifts and how to nurture faithful giving and abundant living. They explore how stewardship is not just a financial matter, but also a spiritual matter concerned with all aspects of life. The next Stewards By Design will be held April 7–10, 2016 in Orillia, Ontario. Congregations send teams of 4, including their minister.

We provided grants to help congregational leaders, lay and clergy, attend conferences organized by the Ecumenical Stewardship Center. The ESC’s Leadership Seminar in December 2015 explored issues of wealth and poverty. Its North American Conference on Christian Philanthropy in April 2015 helped congregations explore how the stewardship of accumulated assets connects with annual gifts.

Stewarding Your Stuff – a practical tool to help plan gifts

The Presbyterian Church in Canada began a pilot project with the Canadian National Christian Foundation (CNCF) in which congregations and specialized ministries have access to the Stewarding Your Stuff program. This includes a Bible study or phone seminar and an opportunity for congregational members to have confidential consultations with CNCF's estate planners. Congregations pay \$500 to participate in the program, which allows for a detailed estate plan for up to 10 members/supporters. These plans help people discover ways to give to their congregation and other charities through planned giving vehicles such as bequests, annuities, gifts of securities etc. and could normally cost up to \$2000 per plan. Between March and December 2015 three congregations in the Guelph area participated in the Bible study and one congregation in the Ottawa region participated in phone seminars. Seventeen people participated and eleven estate plans were developed, with \$408,000 being raised for Presbyterian congregations and ministries and \$717,000 raised for other charities.

The ProVisionaries Congregational Network

The ProVisionaries Network is designed to support congregations and specialized ministries in their development of an intentional ministry of planned giving. The amalgamated department is looking at how to further develop this network to provide coaching and mentoring and integrate ways to encourage generous giving through annual, major and planned gifts.

Educational Resources for Congregations

The following resources can be ordered by contacting the Presbyterian Church in Canada's Resource Centre. Many are also available for download.

Annual Stewardship Resources

For 2015–2018 the theme is a four year emphasis based on 'Take hold of the life which really is life' (1 Timothy 6:18–19). The four years emphasize living freely, simply, generously and courageously. Each year builds upon the next. The theme helps congregations share the stewardship message in a new way. The multiple year format provides an opportunity for congregations to build upon and develop the theme.

Presbyterians Sharing

New resources for congregations to promote *Presbyterians Sharing* were developed, including poster, thermometer chart, annual report cover and worship resources. The video "One Mission, Two Funds" was updated to show how *Presbyterians Sharing* and PWS&D are making an impact. General *Presbyterians Sharing* bulletin inserts were translated into Korean and French. All can be downloaded at presbyterian.ca/sharing. They can be used around *Presbyterians Sharing* Sunday (the last Sunday in September) and at annual general meetings.

Stories of Mission

The format of this great resource was revised. It highlights twelve ministries supported by *Presbyterians Sharing* and includes a reflective devotional on each ministry. It could be used in a Bible study group, WMS program, mission moment, sermon illustration, or series.

Stewardship Moments

These stewardship quotes at presbyterian.ca/stewardship-moments will get people in your congregation thinking about how they can use the gifts God has given them – time, talent, and treasure – to participate in God's mission. The weekly quotes are available as photo images for projecting in your church. They are posted weekly on Facebook or can be found at flickr.com/photos/pconnect/sets

Planned Giving

- Worship resources to help congregations celebrate Planned Giving Sunday are available for download at presbyterian.ca/provisionaries/resources. Planned Giving Sunday is the third Sunday of November, to coincide with National Philanthropy Day. However, it can also be done at any other time of year.
- The three-minute video, Growing Generosity, continues to introduce concepts of planned giving and explains the benefits of fostering a spirit of generosity. Use the video during worship to show how we can

- all make generosity a part of who we are and allow a true spirit of Christian stewardship to take root. Download at presbyterian.ca/provisionaries/pg-video.
- For those interested in developing an intentional ministry of planned giving in their congregations, the Planned Giving Office has prepared a step-by-step guide entitled, “Developing a Vital Planned Giving Ministry in Your Congregation”. The booklet contains a checklist to help gauge the vitality of your congregation’s planned giving ministry. It can be downloaded from presbyterian.ca/resources-pg.
 - There are new resources and ideas for promoting gift annuities in congregations, including bulletin inserts, pew cards, short text for worship bulletins and PowerPoint, personal testimonies from our annuitants and small group gatherings to talk about gift annuities in an informal setting. A video on gift annuities will be released shortly.
 - With proper education and promotion, gifts of publicly traded securities can provide an important additional stream of income to fund the life and mission of local congregations and the larger church. A PowerPoint presentation and printed brochures highlighting the Gift of Publicly Traded Securities are available free of charge.
 - A series of brochures highlighting the Mission Priority Funds and the various ways of making a planned gift are available free of charge. The set uses the ProVisionaries theme – “Planting seeds of hope. For generations to come”. It is designed to allow congregations to add their own planned giving resources and contact information.

Mission Experiences

We continue to send groups – congregational, presbytery, synod, national, youth – to visit and accompany our mission partners. These trips help Presbyterians engage in meaningful mission, support our international and Canadian mission partners and learn about work supported by Presbyterian World Service & Development and *Presbyterians Sharing*. In addition, we help Presbyterians apply for opportunities with our ecumenical partners, including the World Council of Churches, The Caribbean and North America Council for Mission and Canadian Foodgrains Bank. All these experiences change people’s lives: the choices they make about the way they live, their outlook on life and their faith journey. In March 2015, a study tour group travelled to visit our partners in India. In October, Knox Church in Oakville travelled to Ghana. Three Youth in Mission trips went out in the summer of 2015, working with our mission partners in Taiwan, Cuba and Hungary/Ukraine.

There are currently four mission opportunities planned for 2016: an intergenerational trip exploring life and mission in Malawi, a study tour looking at the complex issues of the Middle East and Youth in Mission experiences in Taiwan and Romania. Because this is a Canada Youth year, we will also be organizing the experience of the international youth visitors to visit and experience mission in Canada.

ENCOURAGING GENEROSITY

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

In 2015, Presbyterians across Canada gave over \$10.3 million to support the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Congregations and individuals gave \$7,101,582 to *Presbyterians Sharing* to support the church’s mission and ministry in Canada and around the world, \$2,937,695 to PWS&D for international development and relief programs and \$204,642 to special projects of International Ministries and Canadian Ministries. In addition, over \$1,160,000 in major gifts were given to The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s ministries including \$1,021,087.26 for congregations and \$248,922 for PWS&D’s Loaves and Fishes Fund.

The largest portion of funds for the General Assembly budget comes from gifts congregations and individuals make to *Presbyterians Sharing*. In 2015 congregations from across Canada donated \$6,956,787 for *Presbyterians Sharing*, (budget was set for \$7,300,000) and individuals gave \$144,794 (budget was set for \$200,000). Additional contributions from the WMS, AMS, interest, rent and bequests raised the total to over \$7.7 million.

Presbyterians Sharing

This was the second year of the new *Presbyterians Sharing* allocation based on 10% of a congregation’s dollar base.

10% Formula Analysis; Total 897 congregations and missions

- 155 congregations/missions (17%) gave above their 10% expected allocation, giving a total of \$407,453.66 above the goal
- 63 (7%) gave at their 10% goal
- 656 (73%) gave less than the 10% allocation
- 23 congregations/missions (3%) have no expected allocation and gave nothing (15 congregations/missions with no expected allocations gave something.)

Of the 155 congregations who gave above 10%

- collectively they gave a total of \$2,170,823; 31% of gifts from congregations
- 61 congregations increased their giving by \$77,452, giving 178,054 above what was asked for
- 21 maintained their gifts, giving \$54,814 above what was asked for
- 73 congregations reduced their gifts by \$139,187, still giving \$174,585 above what was asked for

Of the 63 who gave at their 10% goal

- 12 congregations gave more than 2014, giving \$18,156 more than 2014
- 25 congregations gave at the same level as 2014
- 26 congregations reduced their gifts by \$62,699 from 2014

Of the 656 congregations who gave less than 10%

- 210 congregations increased their giving by \$255,967
- 174 congregations maintained their giving
- 272 dropped their giving by \$404,938
- Note: 45 congregations gave nothing, despite having an expected allocation

Comparing 2015 gifts from congregations to 2014:

- 283 congregations (31.5%) gave MORE, for a gain of \$351,575 (58 were already giving over 10%)
- 220 congregations (24.5%) gave the SAME.
- 371 congregations (41.4%) gave LESS, for a total loss of \$606,823 (70 were giving above 10%)
- 23 congregations gave nothing in 2014 and 2015 (2.6%)

Other Observations

The largest drops came from ten congregations who collectively declined \$152,291. Of those ten, three were giving at the 10% formula, two gave more than the 10%, and five gave less than the 10%.

In addition, nine congregations went inactive (closed or amalgamated) and gave \$15,942. In 2014 we had received over \$106,000 from congregations which have either closed or amalgamated, the largest \$75,000 from the sale of Strathcona Church.

Many congregations continue to cite the increase in the pension and benefits assessment and increased overall costs with decreased attendance as reasons why they are unable to give the expected allocation.

Planning to Meet Expected Allocations

In the past three years, contributions to *Presbyterians Sharing* have declined by \$1 million. In 2012 the revenue from congregations was \$7.95 million and in 2015 it was \$6.95 million. This decline in total revenue follows the decline in overall membership of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, so on a per capita basis, members are actually giving about the same per member as they were three years ago. However, membership records also may be less accurate than donation dollars.

If all congregations were meeting the expected allocation – 10% of their dollar base – we would have more than enough to fund the mission and ministry we are doing collectively. It is noted that there is an increasing trend towards cutting *Presbyterians Sharing* from the congregational budget and “sending in what comes in” for *Presbyterians Sharing*. Unfortunately this is often accompanied by a decline in funds sent in. This should be accompanied by an intentional plan for ways to meet the expected allocation. When the General Assembly budget is passed, a commitment to raise the funds to support the ministry is also passed. Congregations need to take seriously the responsibility to try to meet or exceed their expected allocation.

This does not need to be a dreary prospect! Congregations can make it fun. An intentional plan to meet the expected allocation should include providing educational resources and connecting people to the mission and ministry we are doing together. It may include special invitations to give, an event which builds community and connects people to the mission and more. Share your plans with the Stewardship and Planned Giving office and we will share them to inspire others.

Gifts of Change

The 2016 *Gifts of Change* catalogue provides ideas for giving gifts that change people's lives, both in Canada and around the world. These gifts build on and support the ministry being done through International Ministries, Canadian Ministries and Presbyterian World Service & Development. The catalogue can be ordered free of charge to distribute to congregational members. Additional projects can be found at presbyterian.ca/donate.

Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) Plan

Automatic debit plans help people give consistently, proportionately and intentionally to God and to the church. Our PAR program, administered by The United Church of Canada, is an economical way for congregations to receive gifts. PAR congregations and givers have been growing each year. We currently have 362 congregations on PAR, with 6,863 households participating.

Publicly Traded Securities

The tax benefits of giving securities that have appreciated in value directly to the church are substantial. When individuals sell a stock privately, they owe tax on fifty percent of the capital gains. However, if the securities are gifted to charity the tax on capital gains is eliminated. Donors are also entitled to a donation tax receipt for the full market value of the securities on the day they are received by the charity. The Presbyterian Church in Canada will facilitate the gifts of anyone wanting to make a gift of securities to any ministry within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, including their own congregation. Transfer forms are available from presbyterian.ca/resources-pg or can be filled out online.

Since the Federal government eliminated capital gains taxes on charitable gifts of publicly traded securities in 2006, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has received over \$7.3 million in donations of appreciated securities from over 500 donors. In 2005, only \$252,240 worth of stocks was donated to the church. The year the tax law changed, that amount tripled to \$791,00. In 2014, for the first time, we surpassed \$1.3 million worth of stocks and mutual funds.

In 2015, 80 generous Presbyterians donated gifts of 30,577 shares of stocks and mutual funds totaling over \$1,168,081.24, of which 83.88% was designated to congregations; 11.57% to PWS&D, 3.38% to the Mission Priority Funds, 0.36% to *Presbyterians Sharing*, 0.58% to Evangel Hall, 0.17% to Knox College and the remaining 0.06 % to other ministries.

Charitable Bequests

Statistics indicate that half of all Canadians do not have a legal will. Without a legal will, the government determines the beneficiaries of someone's estate, and it is government policy that nothing will go to charity. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is grateful for the number of people who decided making a gift for the ongoing mission and ministry of their church was important in their will.

In 2015, The Presbyterian Church in Canada received \$425,000 in charitable bequests for the ministry of the church and received notification of bequests from the estates of the following people listed in alphabetical order: Agnes Hill Chidgey, Jean McQueen Dancey, Gysbertas deKoning, Lachlan Campbell Evans, Agnes Linea Hanson, Edna Jean Howie, Myrtle Elizabeth Inglis, Robert Victor Keith, Joan C. Laird, Ian Alistair MacKenzie, James Douglas Monteith, Elspeth Margaret Christina Newall, Mary M. Ritchie, William Donald Ross, and Marion Caroline Wilson. We thank God for the generosity and foresight of these people and are grateful for the legacy of faith and hope they have bequeathed to the church. Their generosity will be celebrated during the 2016 General Assembly.

Gift Annuities

Gift annuities are a way that Canadians 60 years of age and older can make a gift to the church to fund the ministries of their choice and in return receive a guaranteed annual income for life, the majority or all of that income tax-free. There are presently 131 annuitants (including both individuals with single annuities and couples with joint annuities)

who have acquired 145 gift annuities with contributions of more than \$3.2 million designated for various ministries within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Of these 41% was designated for congregational use, 27.99% for PWS&D, 16% for *Presbyterians Sharing*, 3.26% for Colleges, 2.75% for Evangel Hall, 2.72 for the Mission Priority Funds and the remainder for International Ministries, Canadian Ministries, Winnipeg Inner City Missions, Boarding Homes Ministry and camps.

During 2015, 8 new gift annuities were acquired for a total value of \$19,930.00.

Life Insurance

There are several ways people can give a gift of life insurance to the church. The gift of a current life insurance policy provides the church with a substantial gift upon the death of the donor, while the heirs benefit from a substantial tax credit. When donors give a paid-up policy to the church by naming it as the owner and beneficiary, the donor receives an immediate income tax receipt for the paid-up cash value of the policy. Donors can also purchase a new policy, name the church as the owner and beneficiary, and receive a tax receipt for the value of the annual premiums.

At the time of writing this report, twenty-four people have chosen ministries within the church as the beneficiary of life insurance policies for a total value of nearly \$1 million, however, no insurance policies were assigned to the church in 2015. A pamphlet detailing the benefits of life insurance as a gifting vehicle is available free of charge through the Resource Centre.

The Mission Priority Funds

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has six funds to channel planned gifts into vitally needed areas of ministry and mission called Mission Priority Funds. It is expected that these funds will change over time as The Presbyterian Church in Canada's ministry needs and opportunities change.

In 2015 a couple wanted to support these funds but couldn't decide which one to support. After consulting with Herb Gale, they established the Priorities for Mission Fund – a new fund that will channel financial support to any or all of the Mission Priority Funds, wherever it is most needed in any given year. They made an initial contribution of mutual funds from their non-registered investment portfolio. They also pledged to contribute additional gifts to the fund in future years, including the proceeds from a life insurance policy. The capital is invested in The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Consolidated Portfolio which will continue to grow their investment over time. The Priorities for Mission Fund will allocate 10% of its total value each year into one or more of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Mission Priority Funds. The Life and Mission Agency Committee will direct the annual disbursements into the areas of greatest need and opportunity.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Mission Priority Funds:

- *Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund* provides congregations and other groups within the church with additional money for expanding their ministry with children and youth.
- *Growing Churches Fund* helps presbyteries in their work of planting new congregations using new models of church growth and offers strategic support to those engaged in new church development.
- *Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Fund* provides professional church workers with the support they need to function optimally in the midst of the stresses of pastoral ministry in a rapidly changing world.
- *Living Links Missionary Endowment Fund* ensures ongoing support for the appointment of long-term international mission staff living and working with our partner churches and agencies around the world.
- *Mission Connections Fund* facilitates short-term exposure tours and volunteer mission experiences with our international mission partners.
- *Healing & Reconciliation – The Journey Continues Fund* supports local initiatives for Presbyterians to build stronger relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada so that the journey of healing and reconciliation continues.

If you would like to learn more about how your planned gifts can expand the mission of the church for generations to come, visit the website at presbyterian.ca/mission-priority-funds. Printed brochures providing additional information on the Mission Priority Funds are available free of charge.

Raiser's Edge Database

The Presbyterian Church in Canada implemented a new database in 2015. The migration of data from our previous database to the new one, and the process of setting it up to do what we were previously able to do, took much longer than anticipated; however, we are seeing the potential that this system has for improving our communication and fundraising abilities.

We have redesigned the congregational remittance report to meet needs identified by treasurers and bookkeepers. The new format shows gifts to *Presbyterians Sharing*, PWS&D, International Ministries, Canadian Ministries, Healing and Reconciliation, *Gifts of Change* etc., plus loan repayments and contributions for speaking engagements, conferences, seminars and mission trips. The bottom of the report summarizes a congregation's gifts to *Presbyterians Sharing* and PWS&D, including expected allocation, what a congregation has accepted, what has been sent in to date and the balance remaining of the accepted allocation.

We also moved to annual consolidated receipts which will be issued for all of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's ministries including *Presbyterians Sharing*, PWS&D, International Ministries, Canadian Ministries and General Assembly. Annual donation receipts help reduce paper, save money and cut down on mailings.

We plan on using the database to tailor communications to donors, members and participants in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Recommendation No. 17 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That sincere appreciation be expressed to the individuals and congregations who faithfully supported *Presbyterians Sharing* in 2015.

Recommendation No. 18 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That all congregations develop an intentional plan to work towards meeting and exceeding the 10% *Presbyterians Sharing* Allocation in 2016.

***Stewards By Design* Advisory Committee**

The Rev. Ken MacQuarrie (convener), Mrs. Doris Eaglesham, the Rev. Peter Ma, the Rev. Karen Dimock, the Rev. Sean Astop, the Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie, the Rev. Dr. Herb Gale.

Planned Giving Advisory Committee (to December 2015)

Ms. Sandra Dow; Ms. Betty Kupeian; Mr. Richard Daugherty; the Rev. Kirk Summers.

Wendy Paterson
Convener

Ian Ross-McDonald
General Secretary

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT
LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY
RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 19

That the terms of reference for the Stewardship and Planned Giving Department be approved. (see p. 12.1.85)

PROGRAM SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

AMALGAMATION OF THE STEWARDSHIP AND PLANNED GIVING DEPARTMENTS

In March 2015 the Life and Mission Agency Committee approved an amalgamation of the Stewardship and Planned Giving departments. The union of the two departments became effective on September 1, 2015 with the following terms of reference approved by the Life and Mission Agency Committee:

Purpose

The Stewardship and Planned Giving department will help individuals, congregations, presbyteries and synods discover the ways that they can best use their resources to participate in God's mission in creation and redemption by:

- helping congregations to better understand the linkages between money and faith and foster an understanding of generosity as a spiritual discipline and as a way to share in God's mission;
- equipping clergy and lay leaders with the skills, materials and opportunities they need to nurture financially healthy churches with strong annual giving programs, year round stewardship and planned giving opportunities, and how to effectively use their facilities for ministry;
- encouraging individuals, congregations, presbyteries and synods to support mission locally, nationally and internationally as one way of participating in God's mission;
- helping the church understand and support the annual budget of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (Presbyterians Sharing);
- encouraging and enabling individuals to make gifts of their accumulated resources to all levels of the church through a strong planned giving and major gifts program.

Mandate

The Stewardship and Planned Giving department shall be grounded in the theology of stewardship and the ethos and mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The department will encourage generous giving from individuals and congregations to the ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada through Presbyterians Sharing, Gifts of Change, accumulated assets and major gifts. It will help individuals, congregations, presbyteries, synods, and specialized ministries find sustainable financial resources to participate in God's mission today and in the future.

Tasks

The department will:

- nurture annual, major and planned gifts from congregations and individuals to support the mission and ministry we do together through Presbyterians Sharing, Gifts of Change and special funds;
- hold educational and equipping events (eg: Stewards by Design, regional workshops, congregational consultations) to equip congregations to nurture a culture of generosity in support of the ministry of the church – locally, regionally and nationally;
- develop and support networks of resource people who are equipping congregations in healthy financial stewardship and planned giving and are encouraging gifts to national ministry;
- research, adapt and prepare electronic and printed educational materials – including best practices, templates for policies, assessment tools, worship material and congregational strategies – to help congregations, specialized ministries and presbyteries develop sound financial stewardship and planned giving strategies based on technology appropriate for the Presbyterian context.

Recommendation No. 19

Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the terms of reference for the Stewardship and Planned Giving Department be approved.

BODY, MIND AND SOUL STUDY GUIDE

In 2015 the General Assembly tasked the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) to "...prepare a joint study guide on the topics of human sexuality, sexual orientation and other related matters raised in the overtures to be posted on the church's website by the end of October, 2015..." (A&P 2015, p. 46). After the General Assembly, discussions began between the convener of the Committee on Church Doctrine and the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency seeking to set a process for pursuing this goal. The following terms of reference for the Design Team were settled in July of 2015:

Purpose

The Design Team established by Committee on Church Doctrine (CCD) and LMA representatives will serve as the editorial body for the writer of a study guide that will be created to help equip the denomination for study and discussion on issues of human sexuality and sexual orientation in the life of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The team will offer guidance, direction, and advice as the writer prepares the resource. In working relationship with the writer, the design team will have the final authority about content, organization, and the presentation of the publication. The design team will submit the document to the LMA and CCD for their input before it is made available to the denomination.

Timeline

It is expected that this study guide will be available for distribution by October 31, 2015 (at the latest). Therefore, the following timeline is proposed:

- The team meets and determines principles, values, and the scope, objectives and main components of the resource
- The team meets with the writer to review principles, values, the scope of the study, the timeline, and to answer questions and determine some future meeting dates
- The writer creates the study guide and submits drafts periodically for feedback
- The study guide is presented to the CCD and LMA Committees for input no later than the first week of October
- Layout and or production
- By October 31, 2015 the final copy of the study guide is made available to the church on the web and in written form

Writer

The CCD and LMA representatives will recruit and engage a writer who will prepare the study guide.

Framework for the Study Guide

This guide will address primary points of relevance for the church on this topic at this time, rather than being an exhaustive study on all aspects of the matter. The study guide will help the church move forward as it considers these matters. The Team may suggest that the writer employ an organizational frame like The Wesleyan Quadrilateral¹ or the resource used at General Assembly (2015).

Elements

The study guide will have an introductory section that acknowledges the complexity of the issue and emphasizes the importance of respectful listening and speech. This section will refer to the process and material used at the meeting of the General Assembly (Vancouver 2015).

- The study guide will reference PCC statements and study material on this subject, especially the 1994, 2000 and 2003 documents.
- The study guide will refer to scripture passages and theological principles cited in some of the overtures submitted to the General Assembly and those the team considers relevant.
- The guide will offer some reflection that engages material from relevant fields of scientific study.
- The study guide will include a bibliography.
- The study guide will include a means by which users of the study guide can submit responses to the CCD and LMA as the bodies prepare responses to the overtures.

Endnote

1. wikipedia.org/wiki/Wesleyan_Quadrilateral

JUSTICE MINISTRIES

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

Justice Ministries prepared this summary to fulfill the terms of the following motion adopted by the Life and Mission Agency Committee in March 2016:

That Justice Ministries submit a supplementary report to General Assembly with a summary of responses received regarding human sexuality.

Justice Ministries prepared this summary after reviewing all the material submitted to the Committee on Church Doctrine and to Justice Ministries on the topic of sexuality. Some responses commented only on the *Body, Mind and Soul* resource while other responses were on broader topics related to the discussion of same sex marriage and ordaining ministers in same sex relationships.

In 2015 the General Assembly adopted the following motion (A&P 2015, p. 46):

That the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) prepare a joint study guide on the topics of human sexuality, sexual orientation and other related matters raised in the overtures to be posted on the church's website by the end of October, 2015 and that congregations, sessions, presbyteries and synods be invited to share the result of their conversation with both the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) prior to March 31, 2016.

A design team that included three individuals from the Committee on Church Doctrine and three individuals representing Justice Ministries was created. The design team provided oversight and direction to the writer. The Associate Secretary for Justice Ministries provided planning and organizational support to the design team and to the writer.

Justice Ministries takes this opportunity to thank the leaders who planned and led discussions in sessions, congregations and presbyteries. These individuals facilitated challenging and sometimes painful as well as divisive conversations in some cases. A few people explained that facilitating discussions came at the expense of relationships with church friends. Justice Ministries is also grateful to the sessions, congregations, presbyteries and individuals who submitted comments and suggestions.

SUMMARY REVIEW OF RESPONSES

This is not a comprehensive statistical review of the material. It is only possible to provide a synopsis of the received responses, which is an unreliable sampling. While every congregation, session, presbytery and synod was invited to respond, the majority have not.

Every response that was submitted is accounted for in the categories listed below. In some cases, a court or group submitted a response and then individual members also submitted their own personal responses. Both the response from the court and the response from individuals of that court or group were counted. In some cases, a response was both mailed and emailed. A few responses are likely accounted for twice. More than 50% of those that submitted a response did not express a position on same-sex marriage or ministers or candidates for ministry in same-sex relationships.

- 463 responses were received as of April 21, 2016. Justice Ministries continues to receive responses.
- The majority of responses indicated no consensus or did not declare a position on same-sex marriage or blessing and ordaining a minister in a same-sex relationship.
- There were responses from: 1 synod; 16 presbyteries; 115 sessions; 72 congregations or congregational study groups; 91 responses were from individuals who participated in congregational or presbytery discussions; 124 responses indicated they did not participate in group discussions; 1 youth group; 1 congregation noted that it had spoken to their youth group but no comments from the youth group were submitted; there were no responses from the theological colleges.
- 157 responses affirmed the current church policy; 56 of these were sessions, congregations or study groups in congregations.

- 85 responses affirmed that gay and lesbian people in same-sex relationships be allowed to serve as ministers and affirmed recognition of same-sex marriages by the church; 31 of these were sessions, congregations or study groups in congregations.
- 332 respondents commented exclusively on *Body, Mind and Soul*.
- 131 respondents commented on human sexuality but not on *Body, Mind and Soul*.
- Some commented on both *Body, Mind and Soul* and on The Presbyterian Church in Canada's policies on human sexuality.
- 2 youth responded (12 years old, one older teen).
- Several people shared personal experiences regarding family or friends who are LGBT and reflected how it has impacted their faith journey.

WHAT SOME RESPONSES SAID

Note: Anything within quotation marks is a direct quote from a respondent.

General Comments

- Presbyterians approach biblical interpretation differently. Some said "let scripture speak for itself" and "don't explain it". Some said that information in the study guide about how scripture is interpreted was helpful.
- Some stated that the Bible is "infallible".
- Several responses said that the heart of this discussion is not about same-sex unions but about different approaches to biblical interpretation.
- Some respondents said *Body, Mind and Soul* was biased.
- The Presbyterian Church in Canada's pension plan and benefits programs are currently available to those in a same-sex relationship who request these benefits.
- Many respondents said "homosexuality is a sin" according to the Bible.
- A few respondents suggested that ministers who officiate at same sex marriages and ministers, or candidates for ministry who are in same sex marriage not be disciplined.
- A few respondents asked if homosexuality is being treated differently than adultery or divorce.
- Many people fear this issue will divide the church or that people will leave.
- Several responses said "this isn't an issue, why are we discussing it?"
- It was noted that biblical recognition of maleness and femaleness is not a reason to exclude other gender identities as legitimate within God's creation.

Some Comments about *Body, Mind and Soul*

- Many responses indicated that the "traditional/progressive" language was inadequate and divisive.
- Many said the guide was "clear" and helpful for facilitating or starting conversation. Others said that the material was "dense" and "overwhelming".
- It was noted that *Body, Mind and Soul* did not address how a congregation can be welcoming but not affirming of same sex relationships.
- Many appreciated the inclusion of policies of other denominations. Some would welcome the policies of Orthodox denominations, The Church of Scotland and Indigenous perspectives of "Two-spirited" or "Two-spirit". (Two-spirit refers to a person who has both a masculine and a feminine spirit, and is used by some First Nations people to describe their sexual, gender and/or spiritual identity. The term is a translation of the Anishinaabemowin term niizh manidoowag, two spirits.)
- Some found the guidelines for the Listening Circles Group helpful. In one congregation, the minister had bowls of water at each table as a symbol of baptism as a reminder that we are all baptized. In another congregation a person could speak when they were holding a seashell.
- Many indicated that their conversations were respectful.

Some Ideas and Suggestions that Emerged from the Submissions

- Many respondents asked for more time to consider the matter.
- Some responses requested resources on bi-sexual and transgender people.
- Several responses suggested the local option. This means that each session would have the option to decide whether or not same-sex marriages would be celebrated in the church. Likewise, each presbytery would have authority to decide about ministers and candidates for ministry in same-sex relationships.
- Any proposed policy changes should include conscience clauses.
- Having LGBT people involved in discussions is helpful.
- One congregation asked for liturgical resources for same-sex marriage ceremonies.

- Several respondents asked for resources for elders providing pastoral care to church members hurt by or struggling with this issue.
- There were requests for a clear communication plan for dealing with this issue, especially when changes to policy are discussed and if changes are made.
- One respondent commented that all people have inestimable value because they are made in the image of God. Acknowledging this truth can help to build common ground amidst conflict.

Some Quotes from Respondents

Below are some quotes drawn from the submissions that reflect the spectrum of the material received. Many of the reflections were passionate and reflected prayerful study or discussion.

Some responses made claims that were inaccurate or invoked information that is outdated or untrue. For example, it is not true that homosexuality is listed as a disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association. It was delisted in 1973.

Some responses fell short of respectful commentary or made inappropriate suggestions. For example it was asserted that homosexual people who care for children in the church should be monitored. Some respondents stated that homosexual orientation or behaviour is consistent with or correlative to pedophilia.

- One contributor reminds us that “the way we speak and listen to one another is at least as important as the actual decisions we make on this or that controversial topic”.
- “We affirm the equal value of homosexuals and their right to love, respect and dignity. We welcome them in our midst with full love and acceptance. We oppose...homophobia...But we can't approve or condone homosexual practice. Homosexuals and heterosexuals are brothers and sisters in humanity.”
- “I...believe that we are all wonderfully made; created in the image of God...that includes all genders and orientation.”
- “The Church can (and must!) find the middle road of communicating care, love and acceptance, without affirming a lifestyle that it has concluded to be problematic vis a vis the Scriptures.”
- “I grew up confident in the knowledge that God hated me. In my twenties I attended church with my partner. We were treated as lepers.”
- “I was skeptical going into the roundtable discussions. I know what I believed and wasn't really too keen to listen to others. But after having sat through that experience, I must say that it was incredible! It opened my eyes to the value and importance of listening, and to (and especially to!) those who differ from us.”
- “I particularly appreciated [the invitation] to think about the ways that churches hold diversity together – the things that we disagree about, but that we can live with, and stay together anyway. I really think we need to talk about this unity question a lot more...can we live with that difference, and respect each other, and love each other, and stay together in our diverse church family?”
- “Hopeful that fear will not stop people from further discussions on this topic”.

MINISTRY AND CHURCH VOCATIONS

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND RECEPTION

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

That recommendation Nos. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31 (identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 20

That the case of Patricia Ramkhelawn be dropped (see p. 12.1.93).

► Recommendation No. 21

That permission be granted to the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry to examine Ms. Reine Boghos for certification for ordination, subject to no competent objections being raised by a presbytery of this church by July 31, 2016 and subject to satisfactory completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include, Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, Reformed Worship and a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (see p. 12.1.93–94)

► **Recommendation No. 22**

That permission be granted to the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington to examine Ms. Diane E. Boyd for certification for ordination, subject to no competent objections being raised by a presbytery of this church by July 31, 2016 and subject to satisfactory completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include, Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, pastoral care and a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation (other than her home congregation) of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (see p. 12.1.94)

► **Recommendation No. 23**

That permission be granted to the Presbytery of Western Han-Ca to examine Mr. Jonghwa (Joshua) Kim for certification for ordination, subject to satisfactory completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include, Reformed Theology, Reformed Sacraments, Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, and a supervised theological field education placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation. (see p. 12.1.94)

► **Recommendation No. 24**

That the application of Mr. Saturnin Espoir N. Ndandala for eligibility for examination for certification for ordination not be approved. (see p. 12.1.94)

► **Recommendation No. 25**

That Mr. Elkanah K. Shekari be declared eligible for reception as a Certified Candidate for Ordination of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, and the supervised theological field education placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation currently in progress. (see p. 12.1.94)

► **Recommendation No. 26**

That the Rev. Pamela J. Carlson be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to no competent objections being raised by a presbytery of this church by June 30, 2016, and subject to the successful completion of 1 semester (5 semester courses or equivalent) at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada History, Presbyterian Church in Canada Government, and 3 further courses with a focus on the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition. (see p. 12.1.94)

► **Recommendation No. 27**

That the Rev. Dr. Robert J. Dean be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 1 semester (5 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, a supervised theological field placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation, and study in areas such as Reformed worship, ecclesiology and sacraments. (see p. 12.1.94–95)

► **Recommendation No. 28**

That the Rev. Eok Kim be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history and Presbyterian Church in Canada government. (see p. 12.1.95)

► **Recommendation No. 29**

That the Rev. Samuel Suyong Kim be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history and Presbyterian Church in Canada government. (see p. 12.1.95)

► **Recommendation No. 30**

That the Rev. Carnot Jacy Roque Jr. not be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (see p. 12.1.95)

► Recommendation No. 31

That the Rev. Dr. Kye Won Lee be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 1 semester of theological study (5 semester courses or equivalent) at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government and a supervised theological field education placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation. (see p. 12.1.95).

REPORT

The Committee on Education and Reception reviews applications of Presbyterian Church in Canada certified candidates for ministry with three types of educational backgrounds: mature students lacking a university undergraduate degree, diaconal ministers seeking ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments, and graduates of non-Presbyterian Church in Canada theological colleges. It is also the committee's responsibility to review the applications of ministers from other denominations who wish to work within this branch of the church.

The guidelines the committee uses in reviewing applications are found at p. G-11 to G-14 in the Book of Reports. They were last revised and approved by the General Assembly in 2011 (A&P 2011, p. 382-94). A brief overview is provided here.

The normal educational preparation for the Ministry of Word and Sacraments or for Diaconal Ministry is a general Arts or equivalent university undergraduate degree followed by the Master of Divinity degree and the diploma of a college of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This standard is used as a benchmark in recommending the educational assignments for applicants to the Committee on Education and Reception, upon approval of their application. While the educational requirements outlined below are given in terms of full-time study, the equivalent amount of part-time study is also possible.

Certified candidates for ministry between the ages of 35 and 59 years who lack a university undergraduate degree, upon approval of their application, may be assigned a General Assembly Special Course. Their life experience is counted towards their Arts studies, reducing their undergraduate studies from a full three-year degree to either one or two years of Arts, depending on their age. The Arts studies must be completed with a minimum of a B average. These are followed by three years of theology in the M.Div. program of a college of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (fulfilling most of the requirements of the M.Div., but not always qualifying to receive the degree). Certified candidates younger than 35 years of age are ineligible for a General Assembly Special Course; they are required to complete a university undergraduate degree before entering M.Div. studies.

Certified candidates for ministry with M.Div. degrees (with a minimum B average) from theological colleges outside The Presbyterian Church in Canada (following the prerequisite university undergraduate degree), upon approval of their application, are assigned theological study in a Presbyterian Church in Canada college. Graduates of theological colleges affiliated with Reformed churches are typically assigned one semester plus a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Graduates of other theological colleges are normally assigned two semesters at one of the colleges of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, with courses to include a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Candidates for ministry in this category of application must have been members of a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for at least the two years preceding their application.

Ordained ministers and candidates certified for ordination in other Reformed churches, upon approval of their application, are typically assigned examinations in Presbyterian Church in Canada history and Presbyterian Church in Canada government. Normally receiving presbyteries may tutor and examine such ministers using local resources or may require them to study at one of our denominational colleges. Ordained ministers and candidates certified for ordination in all other churches, upon approval of their application, are typically assigned two semesters of study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

CASES IN WHICH ACTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED**Special Course Candidates, Certified for Ordination by Presbyteries as Shown**

1. Lisa Dolson (Brimblecombe), Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington
2. Ernest Naylor, Presbytery of Huron-Perth
3. Mikal C. Schomburg, Presbytery of London

Graduates of Other Theological Colleges, Certified for Ordination by Presbyteries as Shown

1. Allan Brouwer, Presbytery of Kootenay
2. Carluci Dos Santos, Presbytery of East Toronto
3. Teresa (Terry) McWhirter, Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland
4. Megan Purdy, Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland
5. Joseph Qian, Presbytery of Westminster

Ministers of Other Churches, Received by Presbyteries as Shown

1. Joseph Choi, Presbytery of Pickering
2. Nelson Imsung Lee, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca
3. Augustus Oku, Presbytery of West Toronto
4. Nagi Said, Presbytery of Oak Ridges

Ministers of Reformed Churches, Received by Presbyteries as Shown

1. Jong Woog Kim, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca

CASES IN PROGRESS

Special Course Candidates

1. Sean A. Angel, Presbytery of Barrie
No information
2. Shelly Chandler, Presbytery of Westminster
Continuing studies in Theology
3. Janice G. Dawson-Doyle, Presbytery of Hamilton
No information
4. Glynis Faith, Presbytery of Prince Edward Island
Continuing studies in Theology
5. Istvan C. Farkas, Presbytery of Essex-Kent
Continuing studies in Arts
6. Patricia D. Heidebrecht, Presbytery of Niagara
Continuing studies in Theology
7. Robert G. Howard, Presbytery of West Toronto
Continuing studies in Arts
8. Angela M. Kirton, Presbytery of Barrie
No information
9. Guy Laberge, Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry
Continuing studies in Theology
10. Seon Ok Lee, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca
Continuing studies
11. Debora A. Lim, Presbytery of Brampton
No information
12. William David McFarlane, Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew
No information
13. Samuel Silwamba, Presbytery of Westminster
Continuing studies in Arts
14. Francis Owusu, Presbytery of West Toronto
Continuing studies in Theology
15. Janet L. Taylor, Presbytery of Westminster
Continuing studies in Theology

Graduates of Other Theological Colleges Applying for Eligibility for Certification for Ordination

1. Nam Sun Choi, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca
Continuing studies in Theology
2. Suyeon Jin, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca
Continuing studies in Theology
3. Alvin Eu-Shin Kim, Presbytery of East Toronto
Continuing studies in Theology
4. Hyung Jun Kim, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca
No information
5. Nancy I. Mostert, Presbytery of Hamilton
No information

Members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries Applying for Eligibility for Certification for Ordination

1. Terrie-Lee Hamilton, Presbytery of East Toronto
Studies on hold

Ministers of Other Churches Applying for Eligibility for Reception

1. Elizabeth A. Chan, Presbytery of Ottawa
Completed studies
2. Phye-Huat (Pye) Chew, Presbytery of Brampton
Completed studies
3. Mahendra Christi, Presbytery of Brampton
No information
4. Niven Harrichand, Presbytery of Pickering
Not currently studying
5. Tai-Hun David Oh, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca
Withdrawn from studies
6. Nicolae Pavel, Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington
No information
7. Andras Rameshwar, Presbytery of London
Not currently studying
8. Jaekil Yang, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca
No information
9. Hounsek 'Joel' You, Presbytery of Calgary-MacLeod
Continuing studies
10. Ibrahim Zabaneh, Presbytery of Winnipeg
No information

CASES TO BE DROPPED

Recommendation No. 20 Adopted/Defeated/Amended
That the case of Patricia Ramkhelawn be dropped.

NEW APPLICATIONS

Graduates of Other Theological Colleges Applying for Eligibility for Certification for Ordination

1. Reine Boghos, Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry

Recommendation No. 21 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry to examine Ms. Reine Boghos for certification for ordination, subject to no competent objections being raised by a presbytery of this church

by July 31, 2016 and subject to satisfactory completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include, Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, Reformed Worship and a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

2. Diane E. Boyd, Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington

Recommendation No. 22 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington to examine Ms. Diane E. Boyd for certification for ordination, subject to no competent objections being raised by a presbytery of this church by July 31, 2016 and subject to satisfactory completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include, Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, pastoral care and a supervised theological field education placement in a congregation (other than her home congregation) of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

3. Jonghwa (Joshua) Kim, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca

Recommendation No. 23 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That permission be granted to the Presbytery of Western Han-Ca to examine Mr. Jonghwa (Joshua) Kim for certification for ordination, subject to satisfactory completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include, Reformed Theology, Reformed Sacraments, Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, and a supervised theological field education placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation.

4. Saturnin Espoir Ntamba Ndandala , Presbytery of Montreal

Recommendation No. 24 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the application of Mr. Saturnin Espoir N. Ndandala for eligibility for examination for certification for ordination not be approved.

Certified Candidates applying for Eligibility for Reception

1. Elkanah Shekari, Presbytery of Montreal

Recommendation No. 25 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That Mr. Elkanah K. Shekari be declared eligible for reception as a Certified Candidate for Ordination of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, and the supervised theological field education placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation currently in progress.

Ministers of Other Churches Applying for Eligibility for Reception

1. Pamela J. Carlson, U.S.A.

Recommendation No. 26 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Rev. Pamela J. Carlson be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to no competent objections being raised by a presbytery of this church by June 30, 2016, and subject to the successful completion of 1 semester (5 semester courses or equivalent) at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada History, Presbyterian Church in Canada Government, and 3 further courses with a focus on the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition.

2. Robert J. Dean, Presbytery of Pickering

Recommendation No. 27 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Rev. Dr. Robert J. Dean be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 1 semester (5 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government, a supervised theological field placement in a

Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation, and study in areas such as Reformed worship, ecclesiology and sacraments.

3. Eok Kim, Presbytery of Montreal

Recommendation No. 28 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Rev. Eok Kim be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history and Presbyterian Church in Canada government.

4. Samuel Kim, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca

Recommendation No. 29 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Rev. Samuel Suyong Kim be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 2 semesters (10 semester courses or equivalent) of theological study at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history and Presbyterian Church in Canada government.

5. Carnot Jacy Roque Jr., Brazil

Recommendation No. 30 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Rev. Carnot Jacy Roque Jr. not be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Ministers of Reformed Churches Applying for Eligibility for Reception

1. Kyo Won Lee, Australia

Recommendation No. 31 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Rev. Dr. Kye Won Lee be declared eligible for reception as a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, subject to the successful completion of 1 semester of theological study (5 semester courses or equivalent) at one of the colleges of this church, with courses to include Presbyterian Church in Canada history, Presbyterian Church in Canada government and a supervised theological field education placement in a Presbyterian Church in Canada congregation.

Ministers and Certified Candidates of Reformed Churches Declared Eligible for Reception

The following applicants have been declared eligible for reception, however in some cases their eligibility for reception has not yet come into effect. In all cases, presbyteries are circularized with information about the applicants and given opportunity to raise competent objections, based on their knowledge of the individuals. Until the period for raising objections has elapsed, applicants are not permitted to apply for calls and presbyteries are not permitted to place their names on the roll.

With respect to educational requirements, all are required to complete successfully examinations in Presbyterian Church in Canada history and Presbyterian Church in Canada government, prior to induction. In cases when only this study is assigned, Book of Forms sections 248.12 to 248.12.6 apply. However in other cases, Reformed Church applicants are assigned additional studies that must be completed successfully before the applicant is permitted to apply for calls or before a presbytery is permitted to place the applicant's name on its roll.

For these reasons, presbyteries are advised to confirm details with the Committee on Education and Reception before making a decision to receive one of the applicants named below.

1. Johann Heinrich Botha, Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland
2. SungBin Enoch Cho, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca
3. Sabino Diok, Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod
4. Ching-Hsi (Jonah) Lin, Taiwan
5. Sarina Odden Meyer, Presbytery of Montreal
6. Robert Paul, Presbytery of Westminster
7. Freddie Saleh, Presbytery of Oak Ridges
8. Gabriel Snyman, South Africa
9. Johan van den Heever, South Africa

Committee on Education and Reception

The Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset, Mr. Woon-Yong Chung, Mr. Brent Ellis, Ms. Jennifer De Combe, The Rev. Dr. Roland De Vries, The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart, The Rev. Heather Malnick (Convener), Ms. Anne Phillips, The Rev. Dr. Lynda Reid, The Rev. Susan Shaffer (Secretary), and The Rev. Dr. John Vissers

Wendy Paterson
Convener

Ian Ross-McDonald
General Secretary

MACLEAN ESTATE COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

Forty years and still strong! Over that period of time, people from all ages, backgrounds and nationalities have come to Crieff Hills to enjoy the wonderful facilities with which we are blessed. Crieff Hills Community is the national retreat and conference centre of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The centre is located south of Guelph Ontario on 250 acres of beautiful rolling hills, forest and fields in the rural community of Puslinch Township.

Our Mission statement says, “Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre provides an eco-friendly place apart for spiritual renewal and leadership development. This Christian community welcomes individuals, families, congregations, businesses, schools and agencies to enjoy God’s creation”. Our Mission statement helps to set goals for the future and together the staff and board work hard to live it out.

Through the excellent management of Crieff Hills and the dedication of the staff, Crieff Hills is known for its hospitality, programs, partnerships, facilities, organization and, of course, the wonderful food. The current activities at Crieff are well established and form the core of the conference centre. We will continue to provide the aspects of Crieff that we are known for and proudly serve our community of faith.

As we move forward, the board and staff will be looking at new forms of outreach as well as establishing relationships throughout the church and in the communities in which we reside. We are encouraged by being a place of choice for many but we also know we need to expand to other areas of life as a Christian witness within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

We are pleased to report that we are looking ahead from a stable financial footing. In 2008, we began borrowing external and internal funds as well as launching the “BUILDING a place apart” campaign. On December 31, 2015, we paid back all outside loans as well as replaced all internal funds, and have more cash in the operating bank account than we did January 1, 2008! During this seven year period we also replaced the shingles on conference centre buildings and have \$36,000 cash in the Accessibility Fund as we prepare to do a project on the Conference Hall.

Other reasons why we are able to move forward is based on the collaboration of the staff and board along with the support of program partners and the groups that are hosted in the facilities at Crieff. Each year there is an annual retreat day that brings together the Crieff Hills staff and board for discussion and planning for the future. At a recent retreat a “brain storming” time took place to consider all those things we do well. There were many accomplishments identified. We also understand that as the world changes, there are new areas of ministry. Crieff Hills is in a position to adapt and embrace these new directions. Any “Reinvention” of Crieff Hills will be done carefully, always considering who we are within The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Christian community.

The passage John 21:6 is the account of casting the nets to the other side of the boat. Many interpretations of that passage indicate that sometimes the old ideas work well but there are times to reach out and try something new. We do not throw out one to try another but rather continue to be the best we can be in all areas.

The ideas we have are many and varied. Some examples are:

- Partnerships: They could be through educational institutions, businesses, senior groups, environmental groups and others.
- Short term “in house” groups that would stay at Crieff for a longer period of time such as a week or more and would have a designated area on the site. Some ideas are a wellness centre, caregiver respite space, music focus group, students and/or staff from educational institutions, environmental and naturalist groups.

We are grateful for the tremendous support we have received from many churches, community groups and individuals over the years. This has allowed us to build new buildings, maintain other buildings, administer

programs and serve our church and the outside community. We ask for your continued support as we continue our mission and vision at Crieff Hills. We will always remember our past, continue with our excellent reputation in the present and look forward to a future that is challenging, exciting and fulfilling. We will continue to “cast our nets” and try the other side of the boat as we seek to respond to the vision of Col. Maclean, the donor of the property in 1950, “as a model and example to other communities”.

The purpose of our report for the 2016 General Assembly is three fold:

1. God’s blessings continue to be with us at Crieff Hills and his beauty and presence abound.
2. All is well at Crieff Hills and we are very pleased with the work of Lawrence Pentelow and the excellent staff.
3. We look forward to a future that will be exciting innovative and challenging at times.

David Phillips
Convener

Lawrence Pentelow
Managing Director

COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE STANDING COMMITTEES

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation 1

That the above be the membership of the standing committees of the General Assembly. (see p. 14.1.7)

Recommendation 2

That thanks be expressed to those members of a standing committee whose service concludes with this General Assembly. (see p. 14.1.7)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is to be

*Disciples of Christ
Empowered by the Spirit
Glorifying God
and
Rejoicing in Service!*

All committees of the church are called to assist in fulfilling this mission. The responsibility of the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees is to present to the General Assembly a slate of names for membership on each of its standing committees. The committees are varied and it is a serious responsibility to find members from across our denomination whose skills and gifts will contribute to the up-building of the church in its work and mission. The Committee to Nominate is aided in our work by the nominations offered by courts and committees, for which we are grateful.

The Terms of Reference for our committee urge us to carry out our duties “with discretion, fairness and balance, seeking to build up the church, to reflect the ethnic diversity of the denomination and challenge members to service.” As with all committees of the church, the Committee to Nominate Standing Committees is a gathering of the Body of Christ seeking God’s will and celebrating God’s presence. We pray that in our work we are shaped by and reflect the works of the Spirit which include peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).

NOMINATIONS TO STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY – 2016

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is blessed with a rich diversity of gifts, experience and wisdom among our members. The Committee to Nominate thanks God for the commitment and diligence of all who agree to serve on committees. In this spirit of gratitude and hope, we present the following slate for the consideration of the 2016 General Assembly.

The “years” reflect an individual’s current membership (beginning to end) and term (I for first term and II for second term). The new nominations for 2016 are in bold print. Those being nominated as a re-appointment for a second term are in bold with two asterisks **. The regulations for membership state that “a six-year limit on membership applies to all individuals unless the General Assembly makes an exception.” (A&P 2012, p. 451) The Moderator of the General Assembly is a member ex-officio of all Assembly standing committees per Book of Forms section 285.

ASSEMBLY COUNCIL

Category 1 – 8 Church-at-Large Members

Years	Name
2011–2017 (II)	Ms. Christina A. Ball, Ottawa, ON
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Capt. Daniel H. Forget, Kingston, ON
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Dr. Robert H. Smith, Calgary, AB (convener)
2013–2018 (II)	Rev. Dr. J. Gregory Davidson, Hamilton, ON

2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Dr. David W. Sutherland, Bible Hill, NS
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Mark R. McLennan, Woodstock, ON**
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. John Barrett, Charlottetown, PE**
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. A.R. Neal Mathers, Newmarket, ON**

Category 2 – 15 Presbytery Members (position only for 3 years)

Years	Name and Presbytery
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Carol Stymiest, Miramichi, NB (New Brunswick)
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Sherwin (Sherry) A. McDonald, Fort St. John, BC (Peace River)
2015–2017 (I)	Rev. T. Hugh Donnelly, Toronto, ON (Pickering)
2014–2017 (I)	Mr. David Munro, Pictou, NS (Pictou)
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Bradford E. Blaikie, Summerside, PE (Prince Edward Island)
2016–2018 (I)	Ms. Gayle Rodger, Corunna, ON (Lambton-West-Middlesex)
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Donald P.J. McCallum, Listowel, ON (Huron-Perth)
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Gina Farnell, Quebec, QC (Quebec)
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Harold Hunt, Thunder Bay, ON (Superior)
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Colleen Walker, Englehart, ON (Temiskaming)
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. Gordon A. Kouwenberg, Sooke, BC (Vancouver Island) – minister/diaconal
2016–2019 (I)	Dr. M. Wilma Welsh, Kitchener, ON (Waterloo-Wellington) – lay
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. John-Peter C. Smit, Toronto, ON , (West Toronto) – minister/diaconal
2016–2019 (I)	Mr. David Jennings, North Vancouver, BC (Westminster) – lay
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Robert J. Murray, Pinawa, MB (Winnipeg) – minister/diaconal

Category 3 – 8 Synod Members (position only for 3 years)

Years	Name and Synod
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Cheryl Weeks, Dartmouth, NS (Atlantic Provinces)
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Harold H.A. Kouwenberg, Ingleside, ON (Quebec and Eastern Ontario)
2015–2017 (I)	Mr. David Brackenridge, Millbrook, ON (Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda)
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Thomas J. Kay, Leamington, ON (Southwestern Ontario)
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. Vic Falk, Brandon, MB (Manitoba Northwestern Ontario)
2016–2018 (I)	The Rev. Jay Song, Weyburn, SK (Saskatchewan) – minister/diaconal
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Sandra Cameron Evans, Calgary, AB (Alberta and the Northwest) – lay
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Christopher Clarke, Duncan, BC (British Columbia) – minister/diaconal

Category 4 – 5 Ex-officio – voting

President of Atlantic Mission Society or designate
 President of Women's Missionary Society or designate
 Convener of Life and Mission Agency Committee
 Moderator, Past General Assembly
 Moderator, Previous General Assembly

Category 5 – 4 Ex-officio – non-voting

General Secretary, Life and Mission Agency
 Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
 Principal Clerk, General Assembly
 One of the Heads of the Colleges

CHURCH DOCTRINE COMMITTEE**15 Members and 6 Corresponding Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. James T. Hurd, Ottawa, ON
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Dr. H. Christine O'Reilly, Port Franks, ON
2012–2017 (II)	Mr. Dennis Mercier, Cambridge, ON
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Jennifer Geddes, Comox, BC
2015–2017 (I)	Rev. Jin Sook Kang, Toronto, ON

2012–2018	(II)	Rev. Bradley Childs, Vancouver, BC
2012–2018	(II)	Rev. Matthew E. Ruttan, Barrie, ON
2015–2018	(I)	Rev. Mark Chiang, Spruce Grove, AB
2015–2018	(I)	Rev. Dr. Robert N. Faris, Toronto, ON
2015–2018	(I)	Dr. Alexandra Johnston, Toronto, ON
2013–2019	(II)	Rev. Dr. Cynthia J. Chenard, Dartmouth, NS**
2013–2019	(II)	Rev. Dr. Roland DeVries, Montreal, QC**
2013–2019	(II)	Rev. Paul D. Johnston, Markham, ON**
2016–2019	(I)	Rev. Jeffrey Murray, Sackville, NB
2016–2019	(I)	Rev. M. Helen Smith, Calgary, AB
2013–2017	(I) cm	Mr. Glen Teskey, Amherstburg, ON
2014–2017	(I) cm	Rev. Hugh N. Jack, Lethbridge, AB
2012–2018	(II) cm	Rev. Dr. John C. Carr, Edmonton, AB
2012–2018	(II) cm	Rev. Dr. Mark Godin, Cambridge, ON
2011–2017	(II) cm	Ms. Myrna Talbot, Toronto, ON**
2016–2019	(I) cm	Rev. Maureen Walter, Toronto, ON

“cm” = corresponding member

Ex-officio – 3 members

Rev. Dr. Victor Gavino, Representative, Presbyterian College
 Rev. Dr. Charles Fenshaw, Representative, Knox College
 Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand, Representative, St. Andrew’s Hall/Vancouver School of Theology (convener)

ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

6 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Arlene L. Hartford, Englehart, ON
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Mark A. Tremblay, Calgary, AB
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Samy Said, Montreal, QC
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Diane R. Hayman, Westville, NS
2012–2016 (II)	Rev. Amanda Currie, Saskatoon, SK (convener)**
2016–2019 (I)	Dr. Richard Allen, Toronto, ON

Ex-officio – 2 members

Principal Clerk, or designate
 General Secretary of Life and Mission, or designate

By Correspondence – 6 members

Representative to Canadian Council of Churches
 Delegate representative to last Council of Caribbean and North America Area Council of World Communion of Reformed Churches
 Delegate representative to last General Council of World Communion of Reformed Churches
 Delegate representative to last Assembly of World Council of Churches
 Representative from Women’s Missionary Society
 Representative from Board of Directors of Presbyterian Record

HISTORY COMMITTEE

6 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2012–2017 (I)	Dr. Kenneth Munro, Edmonton, AB
2016–2017 (I)	Mr. Scott MacDonald, Charlottetown, PE (filling a term for one year)
2012–2018 (II)	Ms. Marilyn Repchuck, Hamilton, ON, (convener)
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. John Vaudry, Pembroke, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod, Brighton, ON**
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. Timothy F. Archibald, New Minas, NS

By Correspondence – 9 members

2016–2019 (I) **Mr. Al Clarkson, Toronto, ON**
8 synod conveners

Ex-officio – 6 members

Professor of History, Knox College
Professor of History, The Presbyterian College
Professor of History, Vancouver School of Theology
Archivist/Records Administrator
Assistant Archivist
Curator of National Presbyterian Museum

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

6 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2014–2017 (I)	Mr. Jacques Dalton, Ottawa, ON
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Huda Kandalaft, Ottawa, ON
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Wendy Adams, Armstrong, BC (convener)
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Rafael Vallejo, Toronto, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dale Henry, Mississauga, ON**
2015–2019 (I)	Mr. Farid Ayoub, Chelsea, QC**

Ex-officio – 7 members

Five persons appointed by Life and Mission Agency
Representative of Atlantic Mission Society
Representative of Women’s Missionary Society

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE

12 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Dr. Alfred H.S. Lee, Pitt Meadows, BC
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Chuck Moon, Port Elgin, ON
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Ginny-Lou Alexander, 100 Mile House, BC
2015–2017 (I)	Mr. R. Aubrey Hawton, Moonstone, ON
2012–2018 (I)	Ms. Nancy Harvey, Summerside, PE
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Vivian Ketchum, Winnipeg, MB
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Douglas U. Schonberg, Niagara Falls, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Dr. Jo Szostak, Regina, SK
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. Thomas Billard, Brampton, ON (convener)**
2013–2019 (II)	Ms. Judy Dodds, Ottawa, ON**
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Jeffrey R. Lackie, Thorborn, NS
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Cindy Stephenson, Calgary, AB

Assembly Council Appointments – 3 members

Three members of the Assembly Council

Ex-officio – 4 members

Two appointees of the Women’s Missionary Society
Appointee of the Atlantic Mission Society
Appointee of the Presbyterian World Service and Development

MACLEAN ESTATE COMMITTEE

12 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Johannes Olivier, Guelph, ON

2013–2017	(II)	Rev. Gordon E. Timbers, Orillia, ON
2014–2017	(I)	Ms. Anne F. Church, Dundas, ON
2015–2017	(I)	Ms. Anne Wilson, Guelph, ON,
2013–2018	(II)	Rev. Kathy A. Fraser, Kincardine, ON
2012–2018	(II)	Ms. Gwen MacRobbie, Guelph, ON
2015–2018	(I)	Ms. Moira Forbes, Burlington, ON
2015–2018	(I)	Mr. David Phillips, Uxbridge, ON, (convener)
2013–2019	(II)	Mr. James D. Allan, Burlington, ON**
2013–2019	(II)	Mr. James Jackson, Simcoe, ON**
2013–2019	(II)	Rev. Heather Paton, Dorchester, ON**
2016–2019	(I)	Rev. Kristine E. O'Brien, Oakville, ON

COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE STANDING COMMITTEES

9 Members (named by synods and based upon a 3 year rotation)

Year	Name and Synod
2014–2017	Rev. E.M. Iona MacLean, Pictou, NS, (convener) (The Atlantic Provinces)
2014–2017	Ms. Anita Mack, St. Lambert, PQ (Quebec and Eastern Ontario)
2014–2017	Mr. Gordon Walford, Ottawa, ON (Quebec and Eastern Ontario)
2015–2018	Rev. Christopher Jorna, Duck Lake, SK (Saskatchewan)
2015–2018	Ms. Sandi Churchill, Calgary, AB (Alberta and the Northwest)
2015–2018	Rev. Elizabeth McLagan, Langley, BC (British Columbia)
2016–2019	Mr. Bill McGowan, Toronto, ON (Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda) – lay
2016–2019	Rev. R. Ian Shaw, Simcoe, ON (Southwestern Ontario) – minister/diaconal
2016–2019	Ms. Carole Bilyk, Winnipeg, MB (Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario) – lay

PENSION AND BENEFITS BOARD

9 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2012–2017 (II)	Rev. Peter G. Bush, Winnipeg, MB
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. J. Cameron Bigelow, Orillia, ON (convener)
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Ann Hysert, Merrickville, ON
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Katharine Michie, Prince George, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Ingrid Chingcuanco, Toronto, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Patricia A. Main, Toronto, ON
2011–2017 (II)	Mr. Woon Chung, Toronto, ON**
2013–2019 (II)	Rev. Dr. Lawrence Mawhinney, Lunenburg, NS**
2016–2019 (I)	Mr. John Bonnell, Halifax, NS

Ex-officio – 2 members

Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
Convener of Trustee Board, or alternate

TRUSTEE BOARD

12 Members (no less than 7 and no more than 15, of whom 3 are ex officio; 6 year term)

Years	Name
2011–2017	Ms. Drusilla Bryan, Roxboro, QC
2011–2017	Mr. Gordon Marshall, Toronto, ON

2012–2018	Ms. Diane Cameron, New Glasgow, NS
2013–2019	Mr. Timothy Herron, Thornhill, ON (convener)
2014–2020	Mr. Richard Anderson, Eckville, AB
2015–2017	Rev. J. Cameron Bigelow, Orillia, ON, (convener, Pension and Benefits Board)
2015–2021	Rev. Dr. Victor Gavino, Montreal, QC
2015–2021	Mr. Bruce Templeton, Outer Cove, NL
2016–2022	Mr. Peter McDougall, St. Lambert, QC
2016–2022	Mr. Abel Pandy, Thornhill, ON
2016–2022	Ms. Kathleen Boose, Georgetown, ON
2016–2022	Mr. Rick Johnston, Toronto, ON

Ex-officio – 3 members

Principal Clerk
 Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer
 Convener of Assembly Council

KNOX COLLEGE, GOVERNING BOARD**15 Members (3 year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2011–2017 (II)	Mr. Dorian Persaud, Toronto, ON
2011–2017 (II)	Dr. Peter Ross, Aurora, ON, (convener)
2011–2017 (II)	Rev. Brad Shoemaker, Mississauga, ON
2013–2017 (II)	Rev. Daniel Cho, Toronto, ON
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Joan Stellmach, Calgary, AB
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Dr. P.A. (Sandy) McDonald, Dartmouth, NS
2015–2018 (II)	Mr. Trevor Van Nest, Niagara Falls, ON** (filling a term for 2 years)
2014–2018 (I)	Mr. Michael Nettleton, Toronto, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Laurie Spencer Bannerman, London, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Dr. Nancy Calvert-Koyzis, Hamilton, ON
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. Peter McKinnon, Toronto, ON**
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. Glen R. Thompson, Mississauga, ON**
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Angie Song, Toronto, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Megan McLean, Mississauga, ON
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Dr. Dong Ha Kim, Brandon, MB

Ex-officio – 3 members

Principal
 One Faculty Member
 One member of Knox-Ewart Graduate Association

THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, BOARD OF GOVERNORS**12 Members (three year term, option for 2nd term)**

Years	Name
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Paul Wu, Montreal, QC
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Joel Coppieters, Montreal, QC
2015–2017 (I)	Rev. Douglas Paterson, Toronto, ON
2012–2017 (II)	Rev. Dr. J. Kevin Livingston, Toronto ON,** (filling a term for 1 year)
2012–2018 (II)	Rev. Denise Allen-MacCartney, Ottawa, ON
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. Jay Hewlin, Montreal, QC
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Lydia E. MacKinnon, Marion Bridge, NS
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Jill M. Turnbull, Portland, ON
2012–2018 (II)	Mr. Donald Walcott, Montreal, QC**
2013–2019 (II)	Mr. Howard Davidson, Montreal, QC**
2016–2019 (I)	Mr Tom Park, Longueuil, QC
2016–2019 (I)	Ms. Sharon Dworzak, Laval, QC

Ex-officio – 5 members

- Principal
- Director of Pastoral Studies
- One other Faculty Member
- Student Representative
- Representative, Graduates Association

ST. ANDREW’S HALL, BOARD

12 Members (three year term, option for 2nd term)

Years	Name
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Dr. Peter D. Coutts, Calgary, AB
2014–2017 (I)	Ms. Paula (Polly) Long, North Vancouver, BC
2014–2017 (I)	Rev. Rebecca Simpson, Mission, BC
2015–2017 (I)	Mr. Ian Rokeby, Burnaby, BC
2012–2018 (II)	Ms. Caroline Bonesky, Westminster, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Rev. Dr. Gerard Booy, Maple Ridge, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Ms. Karen Dylla, Richmond, BC
2015–2018 (I)	Mr. Steve Norris, Vancouver, BC
2016–2019 (II)	Mr. Rod Thompson, Abbotsford, BC (convener)**
2016–2019 (II)	Ms. Joyce C. Huang, Vancouver, BC**
2016–2019 (II)	Rev. Glen C. Soderholm, Guelph, ON**
2016–2019 (I)	Rev. Kerry J McIntyre, Ladysmith, BC

Ex-officio – 3 members

- Representative from Vancouver School of Theology
- Principal, Vancouver School of Theology
- Dean, St. Andrew’s Hall

Recommendation 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above be the membership of the standing committees of the General Assembly.

APPRECIATION

Membership Completed

Each year some members complete their terms of service on the standing committees, either after six years or in some cases a shorter span. Each retiring member receives a letter of appreciation from the General Assembly for sharing their time and talents with the denomination through their work on a standing committee of the Assembly.

Recommendation 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That thanks be expressed to those members of a standing committee whose service concludes with this General Assembly.

Committee to Nominate Standing Committee Retiring Members

The membership terms for Ms. Elaine Allen of London, the Rev. Duncan Cameron of Scarborough, and the Rev. David Wilson of Brandon end with this Assembly. Each member offered leadership and guidance on the committee and we are grateful for their faithful service.

GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP AND NOMINATION PROCESS

The “Guidelines for Membership of General Assembly Standing Committees and Nomination Process,” approved in 2012, are on the website at presbyterian.ca/gao/committee-to-nominate, and in Section H of the Book of Reports.

2017 NOMINATIONS DEADLINE

The submission deadline for the 2017 nominations from sessions, presbyteries, synods, and standing committees will be February 28, 2017.

E.M. Iona MacLean
Convener

THE COMMITTEE TO NOMINATE STANDING COMMITTEES – 2016

AMENDMENT FORM FOR NOMINATIONS

Council, Committee, Board _____

Replace the Name of _____

With the Name of _____
Title (Rev./Dr./Mr./Ms.) First Name Middle Initials Last Name

Postal address _____

Telephone Number: _____(Home) _____(Work) _____(Cell)

Email _____ Congregation _____

The person has been contacted and has agreed to accept the nomination.

Short Biography (if new nomination) _____

Reason for the Amendment _____

Name of Commissioner

Name of Commissioner

Presbytery of

Presbytery of

Signature

Signature

Give this form to: convener, the Rev. E.M. Iona Maclean, or to Ms. Terrie-Lee Hamilton at the Assembly Office no later than 12 noon, Saturday, June 4, 2016, in order to have your amendment considered by the committee.

NOMINATIONS

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

MODERATOR OF THE 142ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand	Ottawa
The Rev. J. Wesley Denyer	East Toronto, Waterloo-Wellington
Mr. Brent Ellis	Hamilton
The Rev. Dr. J. Kevin Livingston	Ottawa
The Rev. Dr. H. Christine O'Reilly	Pictou
The Rev. Douglas H. Rollwage	Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Montreal, Lindsay-Peterborough, Pickering, Oak Ridges, Paris
The Rev. M. Helen Smith	Pictou

ASSOCIATE SECRETARY, CANADIAN MINISTRIES

Ms. Jennifer Bell	Halifax and Lunenburg, Prince Edward Island
The Rev. Peter G. Bush	Halifax and Lunenburg
The Rev. Giancarlo Fantechi	Montreal
The Rev. William G. Ingram	Pickering
The Rev. H. Christine O'Reilly	Halifax and Lunenburg

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER AND TREASURER

Mr. Richard Moy	East Toronto
Mr. Fraser Sinclair	Brampton

DIRECTOR, PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

The Rev. Karen R. Horst	Montreal
Mr. Richard Phillips	Ottawa

2016 PENSION AND BENEFITS BOARD REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendations

That Recommendation Nos. 1 and 3 (identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 1

That the action of the Pension and Benefits Board in the administration of pension benefits be sustained. (see p. 16.1.2)

Recommendation No. 2

That the prayer of Overture No. 27, 2015 re Health and Dental Plan membership options be answered in terms of this response. (see p. 16.1.3)

► Recommendation No. 3

That the above sections of the Constitution of the Pension Plan of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be revised and amended. (see p. 16.1.6)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Pension and Benefits Board administers The Presbyterian Church in Canada Pension Plan, Group Benefits Plan and other benefit programs on behalf of the General Assembly. The board met in October 2015 and March 2016. Committees of the board also met by conference call and through email consultations.

CHANGES IN THE STATUS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PENSION PLAN

Applications to Receive Pension

2015

May	The Rev. Dr. Daniel J. Shute	October	Mrs. Helen Reid Anderson
June	Ms. Berendina Cost Budde		The Rev. George W. Beals
	Mr. D. Mervyn Games		The Rev. Dennis J. Cook
	The Rev. Janice Hamalainen		Ms. Grace-ann McIntyre
	The Rev. Morag McDonald		The Rev. R. Ian Shaw
	Ms. Gladys Stover	November	The Rev. William A. Elliott
July	The Rev. Dr. Douglas McQuaig		The Rev. E.M. Iona MacLean
	The Rev. Wendy Paterson		The Rev. Harold M. Wiest
August	The Rev. Kathy J. Brownlee	December	The Rev. Douglas M. Cameron
	The Rev. John A. Fraser		The Rev. Erik W. Kraglund
	The Rev. Dr. Wayne R. Hancock		The Rev. Dr. P.A. (Sandy) McDonald
	Ms. Norma McIntyre		The Rev. Susan Moore
	The Rev. Robert R. Sinasac		Mr. Joseph Taylor
September	Mrs. Margaret Bucknole		Ms. Mary C. Tucker
	The Rev. Dr. Philip M. Wilson		

2016

January	Dr. Rick Allen	March	The Rev. Robert J. Haven
	The Rev. Jeanette G. Fleischer		The Rev. Dr. Richard W. Fee
	The Rev. Sandy D. Fryfogel		The Rev. Dr. Herbert F. Gale
	The Rev. Arlene L. Hartford		The Rev. Douglas R. Johns
	The Rev. Douglas Scott	April	The Rev. Dr. Glen Matheson
	The Rev. Michael J. Stol		
February	The Rev. Candice J. Bist		
	The Rev. Beverley Shepansky		
	Mr. Donald S. Slade		

Pensioners Deceased**2015**

January 1	Mrs. Nancy Bhe	October 5	Mrs. Eileen Horne
April 6	Mr. Cecil Burrige	October 10	Mrs. Vera Lewis
April 15	Mr. Anthony Pucci	October 11	Mrs. Fay Robertson
April 17	Ms. Jean M. Walker	October 12	Mrs. Maureen E. Lewis
May 4	The Rev. Dr. Peter Gilbert	October 15	The Rev. Robert Little
May 16	Mrs. Grace McGill	October 15	The Rev. Alexander S. MacDonald
May 18	The Rev. Hector W. Rose	November 2	The Rev. Walter Allum
August 14	The Rev. Murdock J. MacRae	November 7	Mr. Lloyd Ewing
August 17	The Rev. Donald J. Herbison	November 21	Mrs. Muriel C. Farris
September 23	The Rev. Dr. Lawrence J. Brice	December 9	Mrs. Constance Rowland
September 23	Mrs. Anna Neill	December 24	Mrs. Dorothy E. Locke
October 2	The Rev. Ian S. Rennie	December 29	The Rev. Siu-Man Lee
October 3	The Rev. Kenneth S. Barker	December 30	Ms. Lynda Garland
		December 31	Mrs. Dorothy Smith

2016

January 15	The Rev. Dr. L. George Macdonald	February 11	The Rev. Sheila Fink
January 17	The Rev. William M. Barber	February 18	The Rev. Dr. Donovan G. Neil
February 5	The Rev. Donald R. Sinclair	February 21	Mrs. Joy “Jessie” Armour
February 9	The Rev. Clifford Johnson	February 23	Mr. Gary N. Little
February 9	Mrs. Katherine Reichelt		

Active Members Deceased

May 2, 2015	The Rev. Jeff Veenstra
February 13, 2016	The Rev. Barbara McGale

Deferred Member Deceased

June 27, 2015	The Rev. Joseph Vasarhelyi
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Recommendation No. 1**Adopted/Defeated/Amended**

That the action of the Pension and Benefits Board in the administration of pension benefits be sustained.

HEALTH AND DENTAL PLAN**Pulpit Supply Insurance**

Congregations may apply for pulpit supply insurance benefits when their minister is unable to work due to illness or injury. This benefit is funded by the Health and Dental Plan through premiums paid by congregations and other employers where a ‘health and dental position’ has been established by the presbytery.

Until now this benefit was only available to congregations served by a full time minister. The board conducted a review of full-time and part-time positions across the denomination, and agreed that in support of equalizing pulpit supply insurance benefits to all congregations supporting a health and dental position as established by the presbytery, congregations that are served by ministers in part-time positions (half time or more) also be eligible to claim this benefit.

Congregational treasurers may access a pulpit supply insurance claim form at presbyterian.ca/pensionandbenefits.

OVERTURE NO. 27, 2015 (A&P 2015, p. 602–603)**Re: Health and Dental Plan membership options**

The Pension and Benefits Board has been asked by the 2015 General Assembly “to permit opting out for church workers who are already members of another benefits plan while permitting access to The Presbyterian Church in Canada benefits plan for any other eligible staff in a congregation, or other agency related to The Presbyterian Church in Canada”.

The board feels this overture touches on two distinct issues: the requirement of the Pension and Benefits Board to adhere to the Health and Dental Plan as arranged with the insurer as well as to create and maintain fairness among congregational employees.

Health and Dental Plan History

When the Health and Dental Plan was implemented in 1986, the General Assembly stated that all full time professional church workers and 50 Wynford staff be enrolled in the plan. In 1990 the policy was opened to include part-time (50% or more) professional church worker positions.

In 1997, the Health and Dental Plan was further amended to allow participation in the category of non-clergy full-time and part-time (20 hours or more) staff, conditional upon participation of all such employees in a congregation and the congregation providing the required premiums. (A&P 1998, p. 219).

In determining how congregations should share the plan's expense, the founders of the plan decided that the total cost would be shared equally among all congregations and other employers based on a 'per health and dental position' premium, regardless of the member's marital status or spousal benefits, and without differentiating provinces. (A&P 1986, p. 210) In other words, the cost of the plan which is paid by congregations and other employers is based on a 'health and dental benefit position', not for a specific employee.

Plan Participation

A group benefit plan is designed to provide coverage to 'groups' or 'classes' of individuals rather than specific persons. To be cost effective and limit risk, the plan depends on continuing membership in the group and has certain characteristics in place to avoid adverse selection against the plan. For this reason, all professional church workers and 50 Wynford staff must be enrolled in the plan as provided by employment. Moreover, it is desirable for the church to maintain fair and equitable personnel standards and provide equal coverage to all employees of the named group.

Congregational Employee Classification

Using the same principles that are applied to the professional church worker and support staff classification, the classification of congregational employees requires that when a congregation agrees to utilize the Health and Dental Plan for the classification of non clergy employees, the congregation must agree to enroll all of their eligible non clergy employees.

The decision of a congregation to include benefits to congregational employees as part of employee compensation lies with the individual congregation. Some congregations provide only for the statutory government plans (Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance) while other congregations develop personnel policies to include additional benefits provision for their non-clergy staff. Group benefits cannot be differentiated because of age, gender or marital status of the employee or their dependent(s).

There are currently 11 congregations that have enrolled multiple eligible employees (more than 1 employee) in the Health and Dental Plan. There are 17 congregations where only one staff member has been enrolled as eligible in the plan.

The Pension and Benefits Board maintains that in keeping with the original 1997 church policy, participation of non-clergy employees be conditional upon participation of all such eligible employees in a congregation. The Pension and Benefit Board encourages all congregations to exercise best practices and maintain equitable benefit policies for their staff.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the prayer of Overture No. 27, 2015 re Health and Dental Plan membership options be answered in terms of this response.

Group Benefits Review

The Pension and Benefits Board agreed to undertake a detailed analysis of the current Group Benefits Plan in terms of benefit adequacy and funding sustainability. The board will also include a review of any ancillary benefit policies.

PENSION PLAN FINANCIAL STATUS

Pension Plan financial status as at December 31, 2015

The following table shows the going concern and solvency (wind-up) position of the Pension Plan as at December 31, 2015, with comparative information as at December 31, 2014 and March 31, 2014, the date of the last filed actuarial valuation.

There has been improvement in the going concern funded status of the plan over the last year due to strong investment performance in the fourth quarter. However, the solvency (wind-up) position of the plan has steadily deteriorated since March 31, 2014, despite strong investment earnings in 2014 and 2015. The primary reason for the deterioration of the solvency position of the plan continues to be the decrease in the discount rates used to value liabilities, which have offset any asset gain over the period.

Estimated Pension Plan Financial Status as at December 31, 2015

	March 31, 2014 (filed)	December 31, 2014	December 31, 2015
Going Concern Position			
Surplus/(deficit)	\$1,930	\$6,767	\$15,314
Wind-up Position			
Surplus/(deficit)	\$(37,479)	\$(65,384)	\$(67,453)
Solvency ratio	85.2%	77.7%	78.1%

(all amounts shown in thousands)

Because the Pension Plan remains in a solvency deficit position, the church must remit additional special payments in addition to member and congregations/other employer contributions. In 2016 the additional special payments are approximately \$708,000 or \$59,000 per month which must be found from within the financial resources of the church.

Ontario Solvency Relief

In November 2015, the Ontario government announced their plan for a new round of temporary solvency relief measures, similar to those introduced in 2009 and 2012. The new relief measures will be for a three-year period, starting with actuarial valuations dated December 31, 2015. At the date of this report, it is expected that options will be consistent with prior relief measures, that is, the church will be able to choose between the following options:

- Consolidate existing solvency special payments into a new five year schedule; and/or
- Extend the five-year period to make solvency special payments of any new solvency deficiency to a maximum of 10 years, subject to plan member consent.

Financial monitoring of the Pension Plan

The Pension and Benefits Board monitors the financial position of the plan on a quarterly basis. The next actuarial valuation is due to be filed no later than March 31, 2017.

Pension Plan Sustainability Study Update

The Pension and Benefits Board continues to review the sustainability of the pension plan. This includes confirming that projected predictions are matched by the actual results. Also, enhanced assumptions shall be put into the study given both present economic and church financial contexts.

Retiree Pension Audit – Payment Confirmation

As part of responsible governance, we periodically reach out to our pensioners to verify they are receiving the benefits to which they're entitled. A Payment Confirmation Form was mailed to each pensioner in July 2015 requesting they review the payment amount and beneficiary information for accuracy.

The results of the audit confirm that all pensioners are receiving the correct pension amounts.

The board would like to remind pensioners and/or their powers of attorney to contact the Pension and Benefits Board office when there is a change to their beneficiary information or a change of address. The board office is required to maintain current address information for payment and reporting purposes.

PENSION PLAN CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the Constitution – Supplement for the Province of Nova Scotia

A change in Pension Legislation in the Province of Nova Scotia effective June 1, 2015, requires a change in the Supplement for that province in the Pension Plan Constitution. The first change, section 1.27, indicates that there is

a change in the definition of 'spouse' and the second change, section 16.1, indicates that all new active members are immediately vested upon joining the pension plan.

The following amendments to the Pension Plan Constitution apply to that province:

The Supplement applicable to service in the Province of Nova Scotia is amended by replacing section 1.27 with the following:

- 1.27 "Spouse" of a Member on any date means a person, who:
- (a) is married to the Member,
 - (b) is married to the Member by a marriage that is voidable and has not been annulled by a declaration of nullity,
 - (c) has gone through a form of marriage with the Member, in good faith, that is void and is cohabiting with the Member or, where such person has ceased to cohabit with the Member, has cohabited with the Member within the 12-month period immediately preceding the date of entitlement,
 - (d) is a domestic partner of the Member within the meaning of Section 52 of the Vital Statistics Act, or
 - (e) not being married to the Member, cohabited in a conjugal relationship with the Member
 - (i) for a period of at least three years, if either the Member or such person is married, or
 - (ii) for a period of at least one year, if neither the Member nor such person is married.

The Supplement applicable to service in the Province of Nova Scotia is amended by adding new sections 16.1 and 16.2 as follows:

- 16.1 This Section shall not apply to Nova Scotia Members.
- 16.2 A Member who ceases to be in Pensionable Service for any reason other than death, Retirement or Disability shall become a Deferred Vested Member entitled to receive from normal retirement date the pension which has accrued in respect of such Member under Section 8.

Amendment to the Plan Constitution – Supplement for the Province of British Columbia

A change in Pension Legislation in the Province of British Columbia effective September 30, 2015, requires a change in the Supplement for that province in the Pension Plan Constitution. The change indicates that all new active members are immediately vested upon joining the pension plan. New members are no longer required to reach two years of membership before they are entitled to the pension they have earned.

The following amendment to the Pension Plan Constitution applies to that province:

The Supplement applicable to service in the Province of British Columbia is amended by adding new sections 16.1 and 16.2 as follows:

- 16.1 This Section shall not apply to British Columbia Members.
- 16.2 A Member who ceases to be in Pensionable Service for any reason other than death, Retirement or Disability shall become a Deferred Vested Member entitled to receive from normal retirement date the pension which has accrued in respect of such Member under Section 8.

Amendment to the Constitution effective January 1, 2016 – Changes to the Pension Plan

The 2015 General Assembly adopted a recommendation that in support of equalizing pensions earned under the new (2013) 1.5% career average earnings formula, grandfathering of the 'greater of' pre-1990 pension formula be rescinded effective January 1, 2016. It is important to note that pension earned based on the 'greater of' pre-1990 formula for grandfathered members up to December 31, 2015 will remain in place. The change will take place starting January 1, 2016.

Members potentially affected by this change were notified by a letter from the convener of the board on July 10, 2015, and via a newsletter for active members of the pension plan in November 2015. The following amendment is required:

Section 8.4 is deleted and replaced with the following:

- 8.4 Notwithstanding Section 8.2, the monthly amount of the normal retirement pension payable to a Member who was contributing to the Plan on December 31, 1989 shall be the sum of the following amounts:
- (a) In respect of the Member's periods of Pensionable Service on or before December 31, 2015, the greater of:

- (i) the amount of normal retirement pension that would have been payable to the Member under the terms of Constitution in effect on December 31, 1989, calculated only for periods of Pensionable Service on or before December 31, 2015; or
 - (ii) the amount of normal retirement pension determined in accordance with Section 8.2, calculated only for periods of Pensionable Service on or before December 31, 2015.
- (b) The amount of normal retirement pension determined in accordance with Section 8.2 calculated only for periods of Pensionable Service after December 31, 2015.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above sections of the Constitution of the Pension Plan of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be revised and amended.

COMMUNICATION

The Pension and Benefits Board informs members of plan changes and of the financial status of the Pension Plan and Group Benefits Plan through regular newsletters. *Window* on your Pension and Benefits is distributed each spring and fall to actively working members of the Pension Plan and Health and Dental Plan. *Contact* is distributed each July to retirees of the plans. The *Treasurer's Bulletin* informs congregational treasurers and payroll administrators of annual updates and other information required by treasurers. The board welcomes member feedback.

These publications are available on the church's website, along with member booklets and online forms at presbyterian.ca/pensionandbenefits.

The Pension Plan Constitution and the Pension Plan Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures are available for review by contacting pension@presbyterian.ca.

MEMBER STATEMENTS

The 2015 Annual Pension and Group Benefits Statements were distributed in May. Members are encouraged to review their statements carefully and report changes to their personal or contact information to the Pension and Benefits Office via pension@presbyterian.ca.

APPRECIATION AND THANKS

The Pension and Benefits Board is especially grateful for the dedication and service of our staff who along with the Chief Financial Officer, Stephen Roche, so often are called to go beyond the call of duty. We acknowledge the helpful guidance and direction given by the Senior Administrator, Judy Haas, as well as the conscientious dedication of Patty Panagiotopoulos, Administrator, and Olive Clarke and Liane Maki, Pension and Benefits clerks.

This year, only one board member is completing six years of service, Eugene Craig from the Presbytery of New Brunswick. Eugene served on both the Technical Committee and the Group Benefits Committee, and his expertise as a chartered accountant is very much appreciated.

At the same time, we thank those board members who are continuing or shall be re-elected for their hard work and resolve when a commitment to administering the pension funds is so vital in a time of economic uncertainty.

Cameron Bigelow
Convener

Judy Haas
Senior Administrator

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Presbyterian Church Building Corporation (the corporation) originated with individual Presbyterians in congregations, sessions, presbyteries, synods and General Assembly. In 1968, General Assembly created the corporation as a separate corporate entity to fulfill the mandate as guarantor of loans given by General Assembly to the corporation and was amalgamated with prior synod corporations. The corporation thankfully acknowledges its origins and faithfully fulfills the mandate. Continuity with its origins is maintained by directors and employees of the corporation who are Presbyterians and members of congregations, sessions, presbyteries and synods.

In 1968, Letters Patent were granted to the corporation. The corporation was incorporated, without share capital, under Part II of the Canada Corporations Act, and the corporation is registered as a charity under the Income Tax Act. In 2011, the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations Act (the NFP Act) came into force and replaced Part II of the Canada Corporations Act, and the corporation was required to continue under the NFP Act, a mandatory legal requirement. In 2014, during the annual meeting of the corporation, directors and members of the corporation agreed unanimously to continue the corporation under the NFP Act, and accordingly, transition of the corporation to the NFP Act occurred as of March 28, 2014.

The following are the directors of the corporation:

The Rev. Margaret W. Bell, Corunna, Ontario
Dr. Mary E. Brabston, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Judge Jamie S. Campbell, Halifax, Nova Scotia
Mr. Neil F. Coutts, Mississauga, Ontario
The Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Farris, Vancouver, British Columbia
Mr. Alex R. Grant, Calgary, Alberta
Ms. Sheila H. Limerick, Toronto, Ontario
The Rev. Dr. Basil C. Lowery, Fredericton, New Brunswick
The Rev. Ian A. Ross-McDonald, Toronto, Ontario
The Rev. Dr. J.P. (Ian) Morrison, Scarborough, Ontario
Mr. David Phillips, Uxbridge, Ontario
Mr. Siegfried Quickert, Scarborough, Ontario (Chairman)
The Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal, Ajax, Ontario
The Rev. Matthew Sams, Thornhill, Ontario
Mr. Kenneth Sheward, Beamsville, Ontario
Ms. Sandra Steadman, Beaconsfield, Quebec
Mr. Thomas H. Thomson, Toronto, Ontario
Ms. Nancy Thornton, Toronto, Ontario
The Rev. Thomas G. Vais, Thornhill, Ontario
Mr. Kenneth Wilson, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Mr. Leslie G. Young, Edmonton, Alberta

The corporation continues to fulfill its mission of Christian charitable activities by providing assistance with housing to nine retired servants of the church and also by providing assistance with church building and renovation projects to 15 congregations, with five loan applications approved during the year, for the following congregations:

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Moncton, New Brunswick
Trafalgar Presbyterian Church, Oakville, Ontario
Arabic Presbyterian Church, Montreal, Quebec
Calvin Presbyterian Church, Abbotsford, British Columbia
Wellspring, Presbyterian Church, Prince Edward Island

We are pleased to congratulate Forbes Church in Grande Prairie, Alberta, and Chapel Place in Markham, Ontario, both of which retired their loans during the year.

As at December 31, 2015, the financial statements of the corporation were audited by KPMG LLP Chartered Accountants and the auditors' report thereon is unqualified. Administration and management of the affairs, business, and operations of the corporation were attended to daily by the General Manager. The General Manager also serves as Co-ordinator, Lending Services, for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. During 2015, nine loan applications were approved for processing through the Lending Fund of the church.

We also wish to note the retirement this year, of Mr. Thomas H. Thomson, who has served with distinction as a director of the corporation for 36 years. During that time he also served as chairman and as a member of the executive committee, always providing insightful advice and counsel in his quiet and humble manner. We thank him for his extraordinary contribution and wish him well.

Siegfried Quickert
Chairman

William B. Collier
General Manager

Financial Statements of

**THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
BUILDING CORPORATION**

Year ended December 31, 2015



KPMG LLP
Yonge Corporate Centre
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Toronto ON M2P 2H3
Canada

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of The Presbyterian Church Building Corporation

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Presbyterian Church Building Corporation, which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2015, the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on our judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, we consider internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Presbyterian Church Building Corporation as at December 31, 2015, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

March 18, 2016
Toronto, Canada

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Statement of Financial Position

December 31, 2015, with comparative information for 2014

	2015	2014
Assets		
Cash	\$ 197,082	\$ 231,831
Investments (note 2)	4,848,047	4,802,125
Residential properties (note 3)	284,584	284,584
	\$ 5,329,713	\$ 5,318,540
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities:		
Accrued liabilities	\$ 39,876	\$ 41,018
Promissory notes payable (note 4)	293,300	338,300
	333,176	379,318
Net assets:		
Invested in residential properties	284,584	284,584
Restricted for endowment purposes (note 5)	197,421	197,421
Internally restricted (note 5)	827,018	881,210
Unrestricted	3,687,514	3,576,007
	4,996,537	4,939,222
Contingent liabilities (note 6)		
	\$ 5,329,713	\$ 5,318,540

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

On behalf of the Board:

 Director
 Director

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Statement of Operations

Year ended December 31, 2015, with comparative information for 2014

	2015	2014
Revenue:		
Investment income (note 2)	\$ 246,214	\$ 571,730
Rental	16,500	16,500
Donations	–	50,000
	262,714	638,230
Expenditures:		
Salaries and benefits	116,581	120,915
Housing expenses and rent subsidies	47,838	55,754
Professional fees	13,538	29,449
General Manager travel	7,106	–
Interest on promissory notes	6,269	8,000
Directors travel	5,864	3,868
Office and other	5,512	5,165
Annual meeting	2,691	2,180
	205,399	225,331
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ 57,315	\$ 412,899

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year ended December 31, 2015, with comparative information for 2014

	Invested in residential properties	Restricted for endowment purposes (note 5)	Internally restricted (note 5)	Unrestricted	Total	
					2015	2014
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 284,584	\$ 197,421	\$ 881,210	\$ 3,576,007	\$ 4,939,222	\$ 4,526,323
Excess of revenue over expenditures	-	-	-	57,315	57,315	412,899
Internally imposed restrictions (note 5)	-	-	(54,192)	54,192	-	-
Net assets, end of year	\$ 284,584	\$ 197,421	\$ 827,018	\$ 3,687,514	\$ 4,996,537	\$ 4,939,222

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended December 31, 2015, with comparative information for 2014

	2015	2014
Cash provided by (used in):		
Operations:		
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ 57,315	\$ 412,899
Items not involving cash:		
Unrealized gain on investments of consolidated portfolio of the Presbyterian Church in Canada	(86,948)	(392,921)
Investment income reinvested	(158,974)	(178,318)
Change in non-cash operating items	(1,142)	(13,938)
	(189,749)	(172,278)
Financing:		
Repayment of promissory notes payable	(45,000)	(96,019)
Investments:		
Withdrawals of investments	200,000	400,000
	(34,749)	131,703
Increase (decrease) in cash	(34,749)	131,703
Cash, beginning of year	231,831	100,128
Cash, end of year	\$ 197,082	\$ 231,831

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Notes to Financial Statements

Year ended December 31, 2015

The Presbyterian Church Building Corporation (the "Corporation") was incorporated without share capital under the Canada Corporations Act and was continued under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act in March, 2015. Its principal functions include the issuance of guarantees to a financial institution which funds loans to congregations for capital purposes and financial assistance with housing for retired servants of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Corporation is classified as a charitable organization under the Income Tax Act (Canada). The Corporation is exempt from income taxes under provisions related to not-for-profit corporations, provided certain requirements under the Income Tax Act (Canada) are met.

1. Significant accounting policies:

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Canadian Accounting Standards for Not-For-Profit Organizations ("ASNPO") in Part III of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada Handbook.

(a) Revenue recognition:

Investment and rental income are recognized on the accrual basis. Donations are recognized when received.

Endowment contributions are recognized as direct increases in net assets.

(b) Financial instruments:

Financial instruments, other than investments, are recorded at fair value on initial recognition and are subsequently recorded at cost or amortized cost, unless management has elected to carry the instruments at fair value. The Corporation has not elected to carry any such financial instruments at fair value.

The carrying values of cash and accrued liabilities approximate their fair values due to the relatively short periods to maturity of these financial instruments or because they are receivable or payable on demand. Promissory notes payable are recorded at amounts that approximate their fair values given interest approximates current market rates.

Investments are stated at fair value. In determining fair values, adjustments have not been made for transaction costs as they are not considered significant. The unrealized gain or loss on investments, being the difference between cost and fair value, is included in investment income in the statement of operations.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2015

1. Significant accounting policies (continued):

(c) Residential properties:

Residential properties are recorded at cost and consist of land and buildings. Amortization is not provided on the buildings. Office furniture and equipment are expensed in the year of purchase.

(d) Use of estimates:

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with ASNPO requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenditures during the year. Actual amounts could differ from those estimates.

2. Investments:

Investments in the consolidated portfolio of The Presbyterian Church in Canada have characteristics of diversity and quality to comply with investment guidelines and benchmark yields and consist of the following:

	2015	2014
Short-term notes and bankers' acceptances	1%	5%
Canadian bonds:		
Government	24%	21%
Corporate	20%	19%
Pooled funds	3%	3%
Canadian equities	19%	23%
Foreign equities	33%	29%
	100%	100%

Investment income consists of the following:

	2015	2014
Bank interest	\$ 292	\$ 491
Investment income	158,974	178,318
Change in value of consolidated portfolio of The Presbyterian Church in Canada	86,948	392,921
	\$ 246,214	\$ 571,730

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2015

3. Residential properties:

	2015	2014
Guelph	\$ 87,075	\$ 87,075
Tillsonburg	141,153	141,153
Saint John	56,356	56,356
	<u>\$ 284,584</u>	<u>\$ 284,584</u>

4. Promissory notes payable:

Promissory notes payable bear interest at approximately 2% (2014 - 2%) per annum and are due as follows:

	2015	2014
2015	\$ –	\$ 131,000
2016	90,000	90,000
2017	43,300	43,300
2018	30,000	30,000
2019	44,000	44,000
2020	86,000	–
	<u>\$ 293,300</u>	<u>\$ 338,300</u>

5. Restrictions on net assets:

The Corporation defines its capital as the amounts included in its net asset balances. The Corporation's objective when managing its capital is to safeguard the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern so that it can continue to provide the appropriate level of benefits and services to its stakeholders. A portion of the Corporation's capital is restricted.

(a) Restricted for endowment purposes:

	2015	2014
Penman Estate	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Charles Brine are restricted for use in Alberta only	40,000	40,000
Giollo Kelly	57,421	57,421
	<u>\$ 197,421</u>	<u>\$ 197,421</u>

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2015

5. Restrictions on net assets (continued):

(b) Internally restricted:

	2015	2014
Max Bell Foundation	\$ 191,433	\$ 191,433
Deferred maintenance	25,000	25,000
Reserve for guaranteed bank loans	610,585	664,777
	<u>\$ 827,018</u>	<u>\$ 881,210</u>

Under the Corporation's Guidelines as approved at the Annual Meetings on April 7, 1989, March 23, 1990 and March 22, 2013, the Corporation's directors have agreed to keep a specified reserve fund to cover 20% of the guaranteed congregational loans referred to in note 6.

The Corporation has issued guarantees in favor of a financial institution as a security for loans funded by a financial institution. The outstanding loan balances are reported as contingent liabilities (note 6). Guarantees are limited to a maximum of \$1,000,000 per congregational loan up to a combined total for the Corporation of \$10,000,000. Maximum gearing or leverage is limited to 4:1 and based on that ratio, the total of all guarantees is not to exceed four times the net assets of the Corporation.

Loans are restricted to a maximum term of 15 years, with the exception of St. David's, Campbellville, which is for 17 years. Interest on the loans is calculated dependent on the term of the loan and the prevailing rate of interest as follows:

First five years	Prime
Second five years	Prime plus 0.25%
Third five years	Prime plus 0.50%
Thereafter	Prime plus 0.50%

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2015

6. Contingent liabilities:

The Corporation has issued guarantees in favor of a financial institution, which has funded loans to the following congregations:

	Maturity date	2015	2014
Almanarah, Mississauga, Ontario	August 7, 2024	\$ 523,055	\$ 536,388
Chapel Place, Markham, Ontario	November 30, 2022	–	50,000
Cornerstone, Kleinburg, Ontario	September 20, 2021	328,397	398,397
Forbes, Grande Prairie, Alberta	October 14, 2019	–	24,407
Gale, Elmira, Ontario	January 20, 2027	300,658	300,658
Mississauga Chinese, Mississauga, Ontario	November 13, 2017	22,772	32,772
Paulin Memorial, Windsor, Ontario	December 23, 2018	31,191	51,191
St. Andrew's, Huntsville, Ontario	August 17, 2016	220,857	296,482
St. Andrew's, Moncton, New Brunswick	December 21, 2026	765,000	765,000
St. David's, Campbellville, Ontario	August 17, 2016	72,000	76,000
St. John's, Bradford, Ontario	June 16, 2019	114,200	122,200
St. Mark's, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island	December 31, 2016	14,593	28,543
Summerside, Summerside, Prince Edward Island	July 11, 2026	27,599	34,666
Trafalgar, Oakville, Ontario	December 30, 2030	90,000	36,435
Varsity Acres, Calgary, Alberta	April 29, 2025	542,605	605,411
		\$ 3,052,927	\$ 3,358,550

7. Risk management:

Guarantees, which represent irrevocable assurances that the Corporation will make payment in the event that a congregation cannot meet its obligation to the bank, carry the same credit risk as loans.

Guaranteed amounts listed in note 6 represent the potential amount of future payments owed to a financial institution, based on the outstanding loan balances owing by the congregations at year end. Guaranteed congregational loans generally have a term of 15 years, with the exception of St. David's, Campbellville, which is for 17 years. At year end, the maturity dates of these loans ranged from August 17, 2016 to December 30, 2030. In the event the guarantee is exercised, the Corporation has legal rights and remedies, which are contained in the mortgage documents, to recover the funds paid.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BUILDING CORPORATION

Notes to Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended December 31, 2015

7. Risk management (continued):

Risk management relates to the understanding and active management of risks associated with all areas of the business and the associated operating environment. Investments are primarily exposed to interest rate and market risks. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has formal policies and procedures that establish target asset mix. The Presbyterian Church in Canada's policies also require diversification of investments within categories, and set limits on exposure to individual investments.

8. Comparative information:

Certain comparative information has been reclassified to conform with the financial statement presentation adopted in the current year.

PRESBYTERIAN RECORD INC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

Rapidly declining circulation, especially over the past seven years, has pushed the *Presbyterian Record* to the point where it may not be able to publish in 2017. Last year, seven congregations came off the Every Home Plan. Along with other congregations not renewing subscribers, circulation dropped 17 per cent (down approximately 2,000 subscribers).

The *Presbyterian Record's* market is challenging.

- Membership in The Presbyterian Church in Canada has been declining for several decades. In 1989, it was about 163,000. Twenty-five years later it was 93,500. That means the denomination has been losing about 2,800 members every year for the past 25 years. Not surprisingly, over the same period, the *Record's* circulation has fallen almost 2,100 a year.
- A high proportion of the denomination's members are on fixed incomes. Combined with declining numbers, national church revenue, in terms of *Presbyterians Sharing*, has been falling for several years.
- Canadians over 65 – the majority of our subscribers – read about half the number of magazines as those under 65.
- And those older Canadians read only three magazines a month on average.
- Additionally, print publishing in Canada and the United States is facing decline all around. Major newspapers and magazines have been folding for the past several years as advertising money goes to the web. Google, Facebook and Amazon are doing well; publishers are not.
- The country as a whole is just now climbing out of the Great Recession of 2008–2012, the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

We have responded to these changes by executing a number of high-quality marketing efforts over the past several years. Our success rates are generally at or above industry standards. Additionally, reader feedback is consistently positive.

Unfortunately, with a limited market, it is simply not possible to make up for lost circulation through marketing. For example, former readers are always the likeliest to take up a new subscription offer because they are familiar with the product. A marketing campaign to the 2,000 subscribers we lost last year would be considered highly successful if it got 10 per cent of former subscribers to subscribe again. That would be only 200. The cost would be at least \$15,000.

In order to continue publishing, the magazine has to find ways to cut costs further while building a fund to help replace the lost subscription income. That is why we hired a director of development, Lisa Van Arend, last summer. We believe fundraising is the best way we can ensure the long-term publication of the magazine. Lisa has been overseeing the transition of our donor database to new software to help us look after donors better. Online donations will be easier and online income tax receipting will soon be possible.

We are also now able to offer many more ways for donors to support us and we have created easy to use web pages that provide wording for naming the *Record* in a will, for example. And we thank our donors for their unflinching generosity. Without their support, we would have already ceased to publish.

Another important source of revenue is advertising. Although the *Record* does not receive any direct financial support from the denomination, national church departments, colleges, presbyteries and congregations are our biggest advertisers, albeit at a reduced rate from non-PCC advertisers.

The magazine also benefits from below-market rent for office space at 50 Wynford Dr., paying \$20,000 a year and receiving financial administration services, including payroll, that would undoubtedly cost us more if we had to pay for them out of our own pocket.

Nevertheless, the *Record* plans to move out of 50 Wynford Dr., by the fall to save money. We will negotiate with the finance department regarding their services.

We are also in discussion with various departments in the church to see if there is mutual benefit in publishing materials other than the magazine. When Presbyterian Record Inc. was formed in 2000 to publish the *Record*, the letters patent gave the corporation the ability:

- (b) to publish other magazines, journals, handbooks and publications related to The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
- (c) to carry on a general publishing and printing business for the religious and charitable purposes of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

To the best of our knowledge, Presbyterian Record Inc. has not published anything on behalf of the church and possibly only one booklet from the magazine's own archives.

Our concern is that all these efforts may not change our financial situation quickly enough. We trust that commissioners will see the value in our communications ministry and that they may be able to find some way to support the work of the magazine until we can establish long-term funding through the support of our donors.

The *Presbyterian Record* is published by the Presbyterian Record Inc. The corporation is governed by a board of eight directors. As of April, 2016, the directors are: Mr. Botond Fejes, Scarborough (chair); Mr. Aubrey Bonnell, St. John's (vice-chair); Ms. Kathleen Bolton, Burnaby; the Rev. Katherine Burgess, Quebec City; the Rev. Andrew Cornell, Chatham, Ontario; Mr. Duncan Cowie, Bobcaygeon, Ontario; Ms. Brooke Klassen, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; and the Rev. Dr. Jean Morris, Calgary, Alberta.

David Harris is publisher and secretary.

By mutual agreement of the board and the denomination, since he became chief financial officer of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Stephen Roche has also been treasurer of Presbyterian Record Inc. We thank Steve for his support, his generous and wise advice and for the financial guidance he and his staff have provided over the years. We join with the rest of the denomination in wishing him all the best in retirement.

The Presbyterian Record staff are: David Harris, editor; Andrew Faiz, senior editor; Lisa Van Arem, director of development; Amy MacLachlan, managing editor; Connie Wardle, senior writer and online editor; Caroline Bishop, art director; Salina Vanderhorn, designer; and Deborah Leader, circulation manager.

Botond Fejes
Chair

David Harris
Publisher & Editor

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

PRESBYTERIAN RECORD INC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 1

That the officers and committees of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be urged to assist Presbyterian Record Inc. to obtain a minimum of \$50,000 funding from available funds controlled or held in trust by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in the hope this would be matched by donors.

Recommendation No. 2

That the ministry of the *Presbyterian Record* be commended to the courts of the church with the request that those courts discuss the financial situation of the *Record* and seek ways to assist the *Record* financially in the coming year.

REPORT

The *Presbyterian Record* is a magazine that has been published for members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for 140 years and is a ministry for the whole denomination held in trust by the Board of Directors of Presbyterian Record Inc.

Successive General Assemblies have called on the church to strengthen congregational ministries. The *Presbyterian Record* provides a critical, independent voice and fosters communication and storytelling about and among Presbyterian congregations across the country.

It is a critical time in the life of the denomination that Presbyterians be served by an independent magazine to foster dialogue on important and challenging topics. However, despite due diligence, generous support from donors, careful management of resources and a restructuring of costs and revenue streams, the *Presbyterian Record* finds itself in need of immediate financial support in order to continue the work of restructuring and addressing current challenges.

Major donors to *Presbyterian Record* have indicated that they will strongly consider supporting the magazine with substantial gifts if the denomination signals its financial support for the *Record*. The board of the *Presbyterian Record* has determined that a minimum of \$100,000 is required by the corporation in 2016 in order to address the fiscal challenges and stay solvent for another 12 months.

Therefore the Board of Directors of Presbyterian Record Inc. presents the following recommendation:

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the officers and committees of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be urged to assist Presbyterian Record Inc. to obtain a minimum of \$50,000 funding from available funds controlled or held in trust by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in the hope this would be matched by donors.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the ministry of the *Presbyterian Record* be commended to the courts of the church with the request that those courts discuss the financial situation of the *Record* and seek ways to assist the *Record* financially in the coming year.

Botond Fejes
Chair

David Harris
Publisher & Editor

Presbyterian Record Inc.

Financial Statements
December 31, 2015



April 12, 2016

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Directors of Presbyterian Record Inc.

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Presbyterian Record Inc., which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2015 and the statements of revenues, expenditures and surplus and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes, which comprise a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

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"PwC" refers to PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an Ontario limited liability partnership.



Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Presbyterian Record Inc. as at December 31, 2015 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

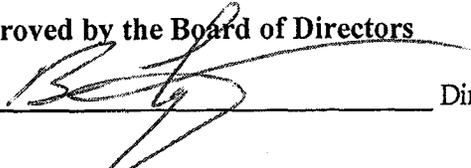
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Chartered Professional Accountants, Licensed Public Accountants

Presbyterian Record Inc.
 Statement of Financial Position
 As at December 31, 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash	78,913	154,058
Accounts receivable	52,591	44,348
Other assets	39,471	44,025
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	170,975	242,431
Investments	610,446	668,857
Capital assets (note 3)	3,349	7,800
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	784,770	919,088
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 4)	85,311	69,558
Subscriptions paid in advance	171,902	180,548
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	257,213	250,106
Surplus	527,557	668,982
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	784,770	919,088
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Approved by the Board of Directors


 _____ Director


 _____ Director

Presbyterian Record Inc.**Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Surplus
For the year ended December 31, 2015**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Revenues		
Subscription	302,671	344,522
Advertising	131,110	142,871
Canadian Periodicals Fund	133,772	133,801
Fundraising	149,561	152,687
Interest income	42,696	78,888
Miscellaneous	8,749	783
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	768,559	853,552
Expenditures		
Production		
Postage - magazine	90,678	81,388
Printing and engraving	78,110	83,799
Advertising and promotion	31,967	33,703
Marketing	6,075	10,558
Editorial material	17,170	16,969
Promotion - fundraising	30,474	17,867
Photograph material	10,350	15,022
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	264,824	259,306
Operating		
Salaries and benefits	498,232	471,699
Office and general	51,954	58,004
Travel - committee and staff	18,269	11,614
Office rent	20,140	19,940
Professional fees	15,695	7,006
Amortization of capital assets	4,451	5,195
Postage	12,915	7,924
Stationery and photocopies	1,604	-
Consulting	21,900	6,168
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	645,160	587,550
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	909,984	846,856
	<hr/>	<hr/>
(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenditures for the year	(141,425)	6,696
Surplus - Beginning of year	668,982	662,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Surplus - End of year	527,557	668,982
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Presbyterian Record Inc.
Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended December 31, 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Cash provided by (used in)		
Operating activities		
(Deficiency) excess of revenues over expenditures for the year	(141,425)	6,696
Item not affecting cash		
Amortization of capital assets	4,451	5,195
Changes in non-cash working capital balances		
Accounts receivable	(8,243)	32,909
Other assets	4,554	1,986
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	15,753	3,679
Subscriptions paid in advance	(8,646)	(12,540)
	<u>(133,556)</u>	<u>37,925</u>
Investing activities		
Change in investments	58,411	72,329
Additions to capital assets	-	(3,982)
	<u>58,411</u>	<u>68,347</u>
Change in cash during the year	<u>(75,145)</u>	<u>106,272</u>
Cash - Beginning of year	<u>154,058</u>	<u>47,786</u>
Cash - End of year	<u>78,913</u>	<u>154,058</u>

Presbyterian Record Inc.

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

1 Nature of operations

Presbyterian Record Inc. (the Record) is a not-for-profit corporation. The Record was incorporated without share capital under the Canada Corporations Act on December 29, 1999 by the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCIC) to produce The Record Magazine.

2 Summary of significant accounting policies

Basis of presentation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO), as issued by the Canadian Accounting Standards Board.

Revenue recognition

Subscription revenues are recognized as revenue in the year to which the subscription relates. Subscriptions paid in advance are recorded as deferred revenue.

Advertising revenues are recognized as revenue when the corresponding issue of the magazine is published. Investment income is recorded as revenue on an accrual basis. All other revenue is recognized as revenue on receipt.

Investments

Investments are held with PCIC in the consolidated portfolio of stocks and bonds managed by independent investment managers in accordance with a stated investment policy and are valued at fair value.

Interest earned or accrued is included in interest income. Gains and losses realized on disposal are included in investment income and unrealized gains and losses from changes in fair value are included in net change in unrealized fair value of investments.

Capital assets

Capital assets comprise computer hardware and software and furniture and fixtures. They are recorded at cost and are amortized on a straight-line basis over their useful lives of five years.

Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with ASNPO requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Presbyterian Record Inc.

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

Financial instruments - recognition and measurement

Financial assets and financial liabilities are initially recognized at fair value and their subsequent measurement is dependent on their classification, as described below. The classification depends on the purpose for which the financial instruments were acquired or issued, their characteristics and the Record’s designation of such instruments.

The Record measures its significant categories of financial instruments as follows:

Cash	fair value
Accounts receivable	amortized cost
Investments	fair value
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	amortized cost

Financial assets are tested for impairment at the end of each reporting period when there are indications that the assets may be impaired.

3 Capital assets

Capital assets consist of the following:

	2015		
	Cost	Accumulated	Net
	\$	amortization	\$
		\$	\$
Computer hardware and software	73,584	70,235	3,349
Furniture and fixtures	5,716	5,716	-
	<u>79,300</u>	<u>75,951</u>	<u>3,349</u>
			2014
	Cost	Accumulated	Net
	\$	amortization	\$
		\$	\$
Computer hardware and software	73,584	65,784	7,800
Furniture and fixtures	5,716	5,716	-
	<u>79,300</u>	<u>71,500</u>	<u>7,800</u>

Presbyterian Record Inc.

Notes to Financial Statements

December 31, 2015

4 Government remittances

Government remittances consist of amounts (such as sales taxes and payroll withholding taxes) required to be paid to government authorities and are recognized when the amounts come due. In respect of government remittances, \$10,191 (2014 - \$nil) is included in accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

5 Financial instruments risk disclosures

The Record's financial instruments are exposed to foreign exchange risk, credit risk, liquidity risk, market risk and interest rate risk.

Foreign exchange risk

The Record's investments are held in the consolidated portfolio of PCIC. This portfolio holds 23.7% (2014 - 21.2%) of its investments in the United States and 9.2% (2014 - 8.6%) in international markets and therefore is subject to foreign exchange risk. The fund managers operate under a detailed statement of investment policies and procedures and are expected to manage this type of risk. The risk in this area is considered to be moderate.

Credit risk

The Record is exposed to credit risk on accounts receivable; this credit risk is considered to be low.

Liquidity risk

Given the makeup of its accounts payable and accrued liabilities, liquidity risk is considered to be low.

Market risk

Market risk arises from the possibility changes in market prices will affect the value of the financial instruments of the Record. The Record's investments are held in the consolidated portfolio of PCIC and this portfolio is exposed to fair value fluctuations on equities and bonds.

Interest rate risk

The promissory notes and bonds in the consolidated portfolio of PCIC bear interest at a fixed rate and, as such, the Record is subject to interest rate risk resulting from changes in fair value from market fluctuations in interest rates.

REMITTS UNDER THE BARRIER ACT

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations will be prepared at the General Assembly by the Committee on Remits.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The following are the replies from the presbyteries to the remits sent down under the Barrier Act by the 2015 Assembly:

Remit A, 2015 That Book of Forms section 32 be amended by deleting the words “By various acts” and “expressly” and by adding the words, “and in the case of a presbytery where its synod has been dissolved, another presbytery is empowered to attest its records according to the dissolution plan approved by General Assembly at the time of dissolution”. (Special Committee re The Optional Elimination of Synods, Rec. No. 2, A&P 2015, p. 538, 31):

32. Every book enjoined to be kept by any court is ordered to be reviewed and attested yearly by the next higher court, save that a presbytery if it is desired may call for the session records once every two years for attestation, and in the case of a presbytery where its synod has been dissolved, another presbytery is empowered to attest its records according to the dissolution plan approved by General Assembly at the time of dissolution. (see section 259.2, Appendix K, Declaratory Act: A&P 1991, p. 254, 37)

Approved: 44 presbyteries (1,277 ministers/diaconal ministers/elders on constituent roll*)

Cape Breton, Newfoundland, Pictou, Halifax-Lunenburg, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Montreal, Seaway-Glengarry, Ottawa, Lanark & Renfrew, Kingston, Lindsay-Peterborough, Pickering, East Toronto, West Toronto, Brampton, Oak Ridges, Barrie, Temiskaming, Algoma & North Bay, Waterloo-Wellington, Eastern Han-Ca, Hamilton, Niagara, Paris, London, Essex-Kent, Lambton-West Middlesex, Huron-Perth, Superior, Winnipeg, Brandon, Assiniboia, Northern Saskatchewan, Peace River, Edmonton-Lakeland, Central Alberta, Calgary-Macleod, Kootenay, Kamloops, Westminster, Vancouver Island, Western Han-Ca.

Disapproved: 0 presbyteries (0 ministers/diaconal ministers/elders on constituent roll*)

No response: 1 presbyteries (40 ministers/diaconal ministers/pastoral charges**)

Grey-Bruce-Maitland.

Total Presbyteries: 45 (1,317 ministers/diaconal ministers/elders on constituent roll****) [see Book of Forms section 293.4]

Remit B, 2015 That Book of Forms section 259.2 re the process for dissolving a synod, be added to the Book of Forms and remitted to presbyteries under the Barrier Act. (Special Committee re the Optional Elimination of Synods, Rec. No. 3, A&P 2015, p. 538, 31):

259.2 The General Assembly may dissolve any synod upon its request provided it is satisfied with the synod's plan to apportion the various responsibilities and assets among the presbyteries within its bounds. The plan for dissolution shall be approved by the General Assembly and included in the Acts and Proceedings. (see Appendix K)

Approved: 44 presbyteries (1,278 ministers/diaconal ministers/elders on constituent roll*)

Cape Breton, Newfoundland, Pictou, Halifax-Lunenburg, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Montreal, Seaway-Glengarry, Ottawa, Lanark & Renfrew, Kingston, Lindsay-Peterborough, Pickering, East Toronto, West Toronto, Brampton, Oak Ridges, Barrie, Temiskaming, Algoma & North Bay, Waterloo-Wellington, Eastern Han-Ca, Hamilton, Niagara, Paris, London, Essex-Kent, Lambton-West Middlesex, Huron-Perth, Superior, Winnipeg, Brandon, Assiniboia, Northern Saskatchewan, Peace River, Edmonton-Lakeland, Central Alberta, Calgary-Macleod, Kootenay, Kamloops, Westminster, Vancouver Island, Western Han-Ca.

Disapproved: 0 presbyteries (0 ministers/diaconal ministers/elders on constituent roll*)

No response: 1 presbyteries (40 ministers/diaconal ministers/pastoral charges**)
Grey-Bruce-Maitland.

Total Presbyteries: 45 (1,318 ministers/diaconal ministers/elders on constituent roll***) [see Book of Forms section 293.4]

- NOTES
- * numbers as reported by clerks when reporting remit response.
 - ** numbers as estimated based upon number of pastoral charges and information regarding the roll of ministers and diaconal ministers (March 2015).
 - *** numbers based upon the combination of approved, disapproved and no response.

SPECIAL COMMISSION RE APPEAL NO. 1, 2015**RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

PREAMBLE

At a meeting on September 20, 2005, the Presbytery of Brampton suspended the Rev. Edward S. Dowdles from “exercising the office of Christian Ministry, or any part thereof”, with the following conditions: “that before he resumes his duties, Mr. Dowdles is to undertake counselling by a person acceptable to him and to the court and that reports be made to the Business Committee; that Mr. Dowdles is to undertake psychological testing with the report being submitted to the Business Committee; and that Mr. Dowdles is not to be at or near Heart Lake Presbyterian Church during the time of his suspension for any reason.” Mr. Dowdles agreed to abide by the court’s ruling. At a subsequent meeting, on November 21, 2006, the presbytery approved the following recommendation: “That E. Dowdles remain under suspension until he takes a course in anger management and a course in providing pastoral care. That before the suspension is lifted, E. Dowdles provide a satisfactory psychological report as to his fitness for ministry to the Ministry Committee of Presbytery, and that E. Dowdles undertake a program in financial management and repay all outstanding money to Heart Lake Presbyterian Church and to the members and adherents of Heart Lake Presbyterian Church under the authority of the Pastoral Guidance Committee.” Mr. Dowdles appealed the presbytery’s decision to the General Assembly. On October 4, 2007 a Special Commission of the 134th General Assembly dismissed Mr. Dowdles’ appeal.

In 2013 new concerns arose about Mr. Dowdles interfering in the life of Heart Lake Presbyterian Church in contravention of the conditions of his suspension. On February 25, 2014, the presbytery appointed an *ad hoc* team to investigate these concerns and determine whether there were sufficient grounds for an allegation or allegations to be laid. On June 24, 2014, the *ad hoc* team reported to the presbytery with a recommendation that charges be laid against Mr. Dowdles. A commission of the presbytery was appointed on October 28, 2014, to conduct a trial. On March 13, 2015, a trial was held to consider the following charges against Mr. Dowdles:

1. That Mr. Dowdles is contumacious in his disregard for the authority of the Presbytery of Brampton in that he has not only failed to comply with the terms of his suspension, but continues to flaunt those conditions, and that,
2. Mr. Dowdles is in contempt of his ordination vows, namely: that he refuses to accept the government of the Church by Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies; and that by his actions he refuses to submit himself to the lawful oversight of the Presbytery; that his actions are divisive and not conducive to the peace and unity of Christ; and that he is conducting himself in both his private and public life in a manner that is unbecoming a Minister of Word and Sacraments.

In its decision, the presbytery commission found Mr. Dowdles guilty of both charges; its judgment was a censure of deposition. Mr. Dowdles appealed the decision and censure of the presbytery commission to the General Assembly. Mr. Dowdles’ appeal was based on the following grounds:

1. That the Presbytery of Brampton did not follow proper procedure for a disciplinary case regarding how the charges were laid for the trial of March 13, 2015 (Book of Forms sections 351, 353, 354.1, 358.2, 364.7 and 410).
2. That there was an injustice in the process of reaching the decision of deposition.
3. That deposition from the Ministry of Word and Sacrament by the Presbytery of Brampton for scandalous behaviour was unduly harsh and unfounded.
4. That the Presbytery of Brampton had shown no pastoral care to Mr. Dowdles since 2006 (Book of Forms section 434).
5. That there was new evidence that warranted a new trial (Book of Forms section 377).

In June of 2015, the 141st General Assembly named a Special Commission to deal with Appeal No. 1 against the actions and censure of the Presbytery of Brampton against Mr. Dowdles.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The Special Commission is established under the authority of the Book of Forms section 290 having all the powers of the General Assembly within its terms of reference.
2. The appellant shall be made aware that the judgment of the Commission is final and must be obeyed (Book of Forms section 290.4).
3. The procedures and actions of the Commission shall be consistent with the laws of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in particular, legislation giving the procedures for appeal (Book of Forms sections 393–405) and the principles of procedural fairness. The work of the Commission shall be conducted in the spirit of grace, relying on the strength of God in Christ.
4. The Commission shall be given authority to call for, confirm and examine the judicial record (Book of Forms section 378) and any other records it deems to be relevant.
5. The Commission shall be empowered to call before it, by citation, witness on behalf of the appellant and the respondent presbytery.
6. The Commission shall meet expeditiously and, after its review and judgment, bring the matter to a conclusion with due regard for the best interests of all concerned, and for the peace and harmony of the church of Jesus Christ.
7. Expenses shall be reimbursed by the General Assembly on a reasonable basis for the Commission and its work.
8. The Commission shall report its actions to the 2016 General Assembly, and shall use, insofar as is possible and appropriate, the following framework: Preamble, Terms of Reference, Membership, Procedures, Findings, Analysis, Decision and Pastoral Comment.

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the commission were: the Rev. Duncan Cameron (convener), Ms. Lynda Forbes, Ms. Linda Herron, Dr. Myung-Sae Kim, and the Rev. Tim Purvis, with the Rev. Stephen Kendall (Principal Clerk) and the Rev. Donald Muir (Deputy Clerk) of the General Assembly Office as consultants.

PROCEDURES

The Special Commission met at 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ontario, on September 29, 2015, December 1, 2015 and January 6, 2016. During those meetings the commission reviewed documents received from the appellant, Mr. Dowdles and the respondent, the Presbytery of Brampton. Further information was requested, the judicial record established and a hearing date and venue chosen.

The appellant and respondent were advised that the appeal had been deemed in order and that the commission would hear the appeal. The appellant and respondent were cited to attend a hearing on February 20, 2016 at 10:00 am at Glenbrook Presbyterian Church in Mississauga, Ontario. Both parties were also invited to provide the names and addresses of witnesses they would like the commission to cite. The commission determined which witnesses to cite and they were duly cited to appear at the hearing.

Present at the hearing, in addition to the members of the commission and the consultants, were the following: the appellant, the Rev. Edward Dowdles, the appellant's advisor, the Rev. Peter Barrow; the Presbytery of Brampton representative, the Rev. Sean Foster, and the following witnesses:

Requested by the appellant:

Young Suk Cho, Olive Lofts, Sean Foster, Reuben St. Louis and Geoff Ross.

Requested by the respondent:

Young Suk Cho (also requested by the appellant) and Mary O'Brien.

The following witnesses did not appear:

Renee Heikamp, Lee Janoshak, Maureen Kelly and Claudia Russell-Placencia.

The hearing was conducted as follows:

Opening Prayer
Record of those present
Affirmation of the issuance of citations
Welcome, introductions and explanations

Administration of oaths to the parties
Opening statement by appellant
Opening statement by respondent
Opportunity for questions for commission by appellant and respondent
The witnesses were called forward in the order in which they are listed above.

Testimony was provided by each witness according to the following method:

Administration of oath
Questions by the calling party
Opportunity for cross-examination
Questions by the commission
Dismissal of witness

Final statement by respondent
Final statement by appellant
Closing prayer

The commission reconvened on February 29, 2016 at 12:00 pm at 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ontario to deliberate, reach a decision and begin to prepare its report. The report was submitted to the General Assembly Office on March 11, 2016. The commission rendered its judgment to the parties within Glenbrook Presbyterian Church, Mississauga on March 21, 2016 at 2:00 pm.

FINDINGS

With respect to the first ground of the appeal, the commission found that the Presbytery of Brampton had indeed failed to follow proper procedure in the laying of the charges against Mr. Dowdles.

Section 351 of the Book of Forms requires that a written copy of any allegation be presented to the alleged offender when a disciplinary case is initiated. The commission found that the actions of the presbytery commencing in February, 2014, resulting in the new charges against Mr. Dowdles, were the result of new allegations, and therefore required that section 351 be followed. There is no evidence that a written copy of the allegations against Mr. Dowdles was provided to him when the investigation was initiated.

Section 353 requires that the investigating committee in a disciplinary case meet with the accused prior to arriving at any conclusion regarding the laying of charges. The commission found no indication that the presbytery investigating committee met with Mr. Dowdles before presenting its report to the presbytery with its recommendation that charges be laid.

Section 354.1 requires that a charge be prepared in writing and be accompanied by a summary of evidence and a list of witnesses to be called in support of the charge. Sections 358.2 and 410 both require that a certified copy of the charge, with the list of witnesses and documents to be produced in evidence must accompany the first citation of the accused. There is no evidence that a summary of evidence, a list of witnesses, or a list of documents accompanied the citation of January 13, 2015. There is evidence that arrangements were made with Mr. Dowdles roughly one month later for lists of witnesses and summaries of evidence to be exchanged.

Section 364.7 was not found to be relevant.

In addition to the sections cited in the appeal, the Presbytery of Brampton made reference in its verdict to section 350 which states “Before initiating a disciplinary case, it is the duty of the accuser to meet with the alleged offender to seek resolution of the issue (Matthew 18:15–17). It is only after such efforts have failed that an allegation may be brought to the court. The accuser must inform the alleged offender of the intention to file an allegation and of the nature of the allegation.” The Presbytery of Brampton in its verdict contends that section 350 did not apply as the charges related to the censure that started in 2005. While it may be true that the charges were related to the censure, they were nevertheless new charges. The commission therefore finds that section 350 did apply and that the presbytery had an obligation to meet with Mr. Dowdles before the allegation was filed. The first ground of the appeal was therefore upheld.

With respect to the second ground of the appeal, that there was an injustice in the process of reaching the decision of deposition, Mr. Dowdles notes, first, that he was confronted with written and pictorial evidence at his trial which

had not been presented to him in advance; second, that the Rev. Michael Marsden, in his role as prosecutor, was in a conflict of interest given the other roles he had played in the presbytery's dealings with Mr. Dowdles; and, third, that witnesses who Mr. Dowdles had asked to be cited were not contacted in sufficient time for them to appear. The commission found, with regard to the first matter raised by Mr. Dowdles, that there was conflicting testimony about whether documentary evidence was presented at the trial which Mr. Dowdles had not previously seen. Second, section 355 of the Book of Forms prohibits an accuser from also serving as a prosecutor, and Mr. Marsden, according to the presbytery's own documents, acted in both roles. This situation seems to have arisen because various complainants were not willing to make formal allegations against Mr. Dowdles, resulting in Mr. Marsden acting as accuser on behalf of the presbytery. This irregularity alone calls the justice of the proceedings into question. Third, the commission found that the presbytery made reasonable efforts to contact the witnesses requested by Mr. Dowdles. The second ground of the appeal was therefore upheld.

With respect to the third ground of the appeal, that the sentence of deposition for scandalous behavior was unduly harsh and unfounded, the commission found that Mr. Dowdles has, by his actions, brought the ministry of the gospel into ill repute. The testimony of witnesses and the commission's direct experience of Mr. Dowdles point to an inability to govern himself and his language. By his own admission, Mr. Dowdles has been guilty of misappropriating church funds and of breaching the conditions of his suspension by being on the premises of Heart Lake Presbyterian Church. Further, his requests to individuals and congregations for funds, whether for himself or for others, have at times been aggressive and have inappropriately made use of his status as a minister, his past connection to Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, and/or his connection to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Mr. Dowdles was already under suspension for some of these offences; the next level of censure was deposition. The commission therefore found that the sentence of deposition was neither unduly harsh nor unfounded. The third ground of the appeal was dismissed.

With respect to the fourth ground of the appeal, that the Presbytery of Brampton has shown no pastoral care for Mr. Dowdles since 2006, the commission found that while section 434 requires that pastoral care be extended to all those who are the subjects of church censure, it does not, according to section 395, constitute grounds for appeal. The fourth ground of the appeal was dismissed.

With respect to the fifth ground of the appeal, that there were grounds for a new trial based on new evidence (Book of Forms section 377), the commission was not satisfied that the evidence Mr. Dowdles wished to present to the presbytery was newly discovered or material to the charges that Mr. Dowdles was facing at his trial of March 13, 2015. The fifth ground for the appeal was dismissed.

ANALYSIS

Through the course of these proceedings, it became apparent that the last decade has been a long and painful period, for Mr. Dowdles, for Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, and for the Presbytery of Brampton, and that many other individuals have been touched by that pain.

It must be acknowledged that much of Mr. Dowdles' pain originates from his unwillingness to humbly and promptly abide by the rulings of the various courts of the church. Mr. Dowdles has consistently set himself up as the interpreter and arbiter of the presbytery's past judgments against him. During the hearing he repeatedly made statements suggesting that he had "met and completed" various conditions which the presbytery had set for him, that in his mind these conditions no longer applied and that he no longer had to abide by them. Yet in his own defense documents he demonstrated an understanding that the censure he is under, and the accompanying conditions, may only be lifted by a decision of presbytery; and in his testimony Mr. Dowdles admitted that no such decision had ever been made. For instance, Mr. Dowdles insisted the condition "not to be at or near Heart Lake Presbyterian Church" no longer applied after new conditions were imposed on his suspension in 2006, even though the presbytery never made a formal decision to lift the original condition. Mr. Dowdles also argued the condition was simply not clear and so he could not be faulted for not abiding by the presbytery's unstated intent that he cease his involvement in the life of the congregation and its people. In his defense documents, however, Mr. Dowdles demonstrated his awareness that in 2006 the presbytery found that he was not then complying with the spirit of this condition by "continued meeting with members of the congregation". The commission recognizes that Mr. Dowdles has made some effort to fulfill some of the conditions for lifting his suspension by taking mandated courses and counseling; yet he appears to have done so without prior consultation with the presbytery about whether the courses and counseling were appropriate to fulfill the presbytery's conditions. The commission also wondered why Mr. Dowdles chose not to submit directly to the clerk of the presbytery of Brampton material he claimed would have fulfilled the presbytery's conditions – even though he clearly understood that correspondence to the presbytery must be

submitted to the clerk of presbytery to be properly received, and even though he had this material for many years. The commission understands from where the charge of being “contumacious in his disregard for the authority of the Presbytery” arises.

Based on our direct experience of Mr. Dowdles, the commission also noted a distinct lack of awareness on his part about the impact his words and actions have on the people with whom he interacts. This was borne out in the testimony of witnesses and in Mr. Dowdles’ response to that testimony, and explains much of why Mr. Dowdles has sometimes felt that the criticisms of his behaviour were unmerited or “subjective”; he simply does not see the fear, frustration or pain that his behavior creates. What the commission witnessed certainly raised concerns about Mr. Dowdles’ ability to function in pastoral ministry. The commission understands the frustration experienced by the presbytery in dealing with Mr. Dowdles, as well as their conviction – as evidenced in the charges, verdict and censure of deposition – that he is currently unfit to exercise the office of Christian ministry. However, it also seems that this frustration has led to a pastoral and procedural fatigue on the part of presbytery which has resulted in two legitimate grounds for an appeal. In particular, there appears to have been a marked tendency on the part of the presbytery to deal with Mr. Dowdles procedurally without dealing with him personally or pastorally in the lead-up to the trial of March, 2015. In other words, Mr. Dowdles was offered no opportunity to take part in the preliminary stages of the judicial process, and specifically those stages which are intended to help resolve any issues and bring about a reconciliation between parties. It is incumbent on the church to follow the judicial processes we have laid out for ourselves, especially in that we claim both a biblical warrant and a gospel aim for these processes. In these most recent proceedings, the Presbytery of Brampton appears to have lost sight of that. In this case, given the long history of the presbytery’s dealings with Mr. Dowdles, the commission suggests that this matter might better have been dealt with by means of reference to a higher court (Book of Forms sections 86–90).

In the course of our discussions, and at the hearing, the commission understandably had reason to consider the various grounds meriting a censure of deposition. The commission notes that the two sections of the Book of Forms which deal with deposition, 252 and 373, are not consistent in terms of the grounds which are cited. Section 252 indicates that deposition follows from the teaching of corrupt doctrine, a scandalous life, being given to schism, or being “altogether insufficient to execute” one’s charge. Section 373 limits the grounds to heresy or gross immorality. The commission would suggest that these sections should be examined by the Clerks of Assembly with a view towards obtaining consistency between them.

DECISION AND JUDGMENT

It is the decision and judgment of this commission that notwithstanding that three substantive grounds for the appeal were dismissed, the Appeal of the Rev. Edward Dowdles against the actions and decisions of the Presbytery of Brampton be sustained on the grounds that there were irregularities in procedure going all the way back to the complaints that were made against Mr. Dowdles; in particular, the failure by the presbytery to follow the church’s own judicial process ignored the biblical imperative of Matthew 18 to meet with a brother or sister who sins against us. The appeal is also upheld on the grounds that there was an injustice created when, among other reasons, the roles of complainant, accuser, and prosecutor became confused in the process which the presbytery followed.

The effect of this decision, however, is not simply to rescind the censure of deposition, but to confirm that Mr. Dowdles remains under suspension from the exercise of the office of Christian Ministry.

As well, given the difficulty Mr. Dowdles has experienced in understanding what the presbytery has required of him, the commission imposes the following conditions as part of Mr. Dowdles suspension:

1. While under suspension, Mr. Dowdles is forbidden to exercise the office of Christian Ministry, or any part thereof, including but not limited to leading worship and preaching, the administration of the sacraments, officiating at weddings and funerals, pastoral visitation, pastoral counseling, and chaplaincy, without the express, prior permission of the Presbytery of Brampton, such permission to be sought by means of written correspondence directed to the clerk of presbytery;
2. While under suspension, Mr. Dowdles is to have no contact in any form, either in person or by means of any kind of written or verbal communication (including but not limited to telephone calls, letters, e-mail, text messages and social media) with the current members or adherents of Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, nor be at or near its premises (“at” meaning “on the church property” and “near” meaning “close enough to the church property to be visible to anyone on the church property”);
3. Mr. Dowdles is not to approach any former members or adherents of Heart Lake Presbyterian Church for the purpose of soliciting money, either for himself or for any third party, whether an individual or organization;

4. Mr. Dowdles is not to represent himself as being associated in any way with Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, nor as a minister in good standing of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In addition, before Mr. Dowdles' suspension may be lifted by the Presbytery of Brampton, he will:

1. repay all funds owing to the Heart Lake Presbyterian Church and its current and former members and adherents, the amount to be repaid to be determined through further conversation with the Presbytery of Brampton but to be no less than the \$18,451.30 which Mr. Dowdles has himself acknowledged as being owed; and, after fulfilling this condition in its entirety, as well as any other remaining conditions in the 2005 and 2006 censures to the satisfaction of the Presbytery of Brampton, he will then
2. provide to the Presbytery of Brampton a current report of his psychological fitness for ministry, with the psychologist who will oversee this evaluation to be chosen through prior arrangement with the presbytery (Mr. Dowdles and the presbytery are advised to contact the national office concerning assistance with the funding of this evaluation).

PASTORAL COMMENT

The report of the Special Commission re Appeal No. 1, 2007 expressed the hope that, setting aside the frustrations which the presbytery was experiencing even then, the presbytery might offer to Mr. Dowdles its continued pastoral support. The current commission wishes to acknowledge that the presbytery has indeed extended to Mr. Dowdles some expressions of pastoral concern, namely that they helped to cover the cost of various courses and counseling he was required to take as a condition of having his suspension lifted, that they allowed him at no cost to stay in the manse for a considerable length of time, and that they passed a motion in February 2007 appointing someone to provide pastoral care for Mr. Dowdles. However, these efforts have still fallen short of the restorative care envisioned by the church, most particularly in that the individual appointed to care for Mr. Dowdles in 2007 was not informed of this decision and only became aware of it some years after. It is our hope that the presbytery might renew its involvement in Mr. Dowdles' life.

Mr. Dowdles, for his part, has failed to demonstrate the kind of remorse and readiness to comply with the judgments of the presbytery which might have led to his restoration. He has also left in his wake a series of troubled, frustrated and even fearful people. In addition, the congregation of Heart Lake Presbyterian Church, which he worked so hard to grow, is still feeling the weight of Mr. Dowdles past misdeeds and present interference. It is our hope and prayer that Mr. Dowdles will recognize that he has for far too long been "kicking against the goads" to his own detriment, and that, if he is serious about serving his Lord, it is time to place himself on a path of repentance.

Duncan Cameron
Commission Moderator

SPECIAL COMMITTEE RE PENSION SOLVENCY FUNDING

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

Since the Special Committee re Pension Solvency Funding was appointed at the 2015 General Assembly, it has met on numerous occasions at church offices, 50 Wynford Drive, and by conference call. The precipitating pressure on the church's Pension Plan arises from the continued regulatory need to fund the plan on both a going concern and solvency basis, resulting in a required Pension Plan funding of \$67,453 per month.

The following steps are in the process of being acted on in one way or another.

The working group will continue to evaluate the pros and cons of continuing as a Single Employer Pension Plan (SEPP) or seeking to change our plan to a Multiple Employer Pension Plan (MEPP) and will also explore whether this is even possible. Each kind of plan has its unique features but moving to a MEPP would free us from large annual premiums which must be paid into the Pension Benefits Guaranteed Fund. It is our hope that it would also free the Pension Plan from having to make extra payments due to an actuarially determined solvency shortfall. The shortfall in turn is due to historically low long term interest rates.

Resulting from an urgent need to build capital, the Special Committee recommended that the Assembly Council increase the claim of the Pension Fund on receipts from dissolved congregations to 100% and increase the claim of the Pension Fund on receipts from undesignated bequests to 50%. The latter was adopted by the Assembly Council to take place on April 6, 2016, and the former is coming before the General Assembly as a recommendation of the Council. (see p. 2.1.32–33)

To prepare for the possibility that the plan's solvency deficit and funding requirements could increase as of the next actuarial valuation (must be prepared no later than March 31, 2017), a working group of the Special Committee is also investigating the potential of assessing a Letter of Credit to be available to the Pension Plan. In addition to the potential need for additional deficit funding, an upfront cash infusion may also be desirable to raise the plan's solvency ratio to at least 85% as of the next actuarial valuation date. An 85% solvency ratio will avoid the requirement for annual valuation filings, and provide The Presbyterian Church in Canada with more certainty on plan contribution levels over the three-year period from the valuation date.

We anticipate issuing a request for proposals (RFP) re a letter of credit in the next six months.

Informal discussions have also taken place with the Anglican Church whose pension plan is a Specified Multiple Employer Pension Plan (SMEPP) but these discussions have only been of a very preliminary nature.

Last but not least, once the solvency issue has been settled we may want to look at shifting from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan, if maintaining contribution stability is determined by The Presbyterian Church in Canada as a top priority.

As the Pension Plan solvency has significant impact for not only for the Pension Plan itself but also for the ability of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to fund important parts of its work and mission, the Special Committee continues to exercise due diligence to find the effective solution to the pressures outlined in this report. We ask for the full support and prayers of the church as we continue to move forward with the mandate which the Assembly has placed upon the Special Committee.

Cameron Bigelow
Convener

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 1

That the General Assembly concur with the actions of the Board of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, in agreeing to the new Memorandum of Understanding between The Montreal School of Theology and McGill University. (see p. 22.1.7)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

INTRODUCTION

2015 marked the 150th anniversary of Presbyterian College. It was an event-filled and forward-looking year in the life of the college as the board, faculty and staff worked together at implementing and strengthening the initiatives that grew out of the college's strategic plan of 2014. Also, a major change in our relationship with McGill University, which is described below, has been approved by the boards of all three colleges, the Board of The Montreal School of Theology and the Senate of McGill. It is expected that the documents will have been signed by the time of this General Assembly. We begin with an overview of the college's place in the church's task of theological education, and then move on to describe the year that was.

OVERVIEW

The Presbyterian College, Montreal, is part of the Montreal School of Theology/École Théologique de Montréal, an ecumenical body consisting of three autonomous theological colleges affiliated with McGill University. Students of the School are registered at one of the denominational colleges (Presbyterian College, United Theological College or the Montreal Diocesan Theological College) as well as at McGill. Through participation in a community of scholars, students engage in a variety of theological studies. The final year of the Master of Divinity program is an intensive year of supervised pastoral formation, during which students integrate theology and ministry, dividing their time between the study of pastorally-oriented disciplines and the exercise of ministry. While the curriculum is thoroughly ecumenical, students are also formed in the ethos of their own ecclesial tradition as each college engages in worship according to its particular traditions, and provides courses, seminars and retreats designed to foster spiritual life and denominational identity. In addition to academic work and congregational experience, Presbyterian College places a strong emphasis on learning within community. But the learning does not end with graduation. Through its unique mentoring program, Presbyterian College follows its graduates, offering them a group mentoring program that helps them grow and succeed in the challenging world of church and society.

150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

The 150th Anniversary celebrations included an ongoing pictorial display in the foyer showing the many changes in the life of the college over 150 years; a celebratory dinner held at the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul; a historical visit to Mount Royal Cemetery where many prominent Presbyterians are buried and whose stories were retold by a knowledgeable guide; a joint event on the theme of *Sola Scriptura*, co-sponsored by the college as part of its 150th anniversary and by the Committee on History as part of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, with guest presenter Edith Humphrey of Pittsburgh Seminary. On October 31, a highlight of the year occurred – the launching of the college's anniversary publication, *Still Voices—Still Heard*. This is a history book with a difference. It tells the stories of 13 individuals who were of great importance in the life of the college. It also contains a list of all known graduates of the college since 1865, plus faculty members, recipients of an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity degree and others who had an impact on the college and the mission of the church. The college wishes to express its thanks to J.S.S. Armour, Judith Kashul, William Klempa, Lucille Marr and Dan Shute, the editors of the book.

DR. IAN VICTOR

The year began with the sad news of the death of the Rev. Dr. Ian Victor at the end of 2014. His life and ministry were recognized at last year's General Assembly and, in honour of Dr. Victor, the college established the Ian Victor Pastors to Pastors Initiative. This memorial fund will carry forward Ian's deep concern for clergy support and

renewal, and it will help fund the Pastors of Excellence program that the college is planning to bring to Canada if negotiations with Ashland Seminary in Ohio are successful.

NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH MCGILL UNIVERSITY

2015 also marked the year of a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with McGill University. For the last 20 years, the University of McGill has been concerned that the Faculty of Religious Studies was too small to be financially or educationally viable, and has considered making it a School of Religious Studies within the Faculty of Arts. After several months of negotiation, and with the advice of legal counsel, the Montreal School of Theology agreed to a new memorandum of understanding. (see below.) The memorandum confirms McGill's commitment to maintain a theology program in partnership with the Montreal School of Theology. The School of Religious Studies will have its own Director who will be responsible to the Dean of Arts. The principals of the three colleges continue to sit on the Bachelor of Theology committee and maintain significant representation on the committee. The four academic chairs established under the 1948 agreement remain in place.

With the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between McGill and the Montreal School of Theology, new opportunities arise for Presbyterian College. By the 1948 agreement, each college could only register students from their own denomination who were studying toward ordination. The new Memorandum of Understanding allows the colleges to enroll students from a variety of denominations who are studying for any form of Christian ministry. This means that students who are taking the Bachelor of Theology as a first degree could enroll in the college. Students completing the Bachelor of Theology who decide to go on to ordained ministry could then proceed to the Master of Sacred Theology and to the In-Ministry Year, as an equivalent to the Master of Divinity. This would mean that students would spend six years of theological formation at the college rather than the traditional three years. Given that many people who come into ministry today do not necessarily have the theological background that students from a previous era had, this provides the opportunity to gain the theological foundation and Christian formation that is key to effective ministry.

This provision of the Memorandum of Understanding also means that students who are not intending to go into ordained ministry could take a Bachelor of Theology that allows for a minor in leadership with the Desautels School of Business. This would be ideal training for those desiring to serve with Non-Governmental Organizations, or who would like to work in international relations or other areas of service.

Students may also enroll in the Master of Sacred Theology (S.T.M.) as a graduate degree and do so through Presbyterian College. The S.T.M. has been reshaped into a 12-month program. This would be an ideal course of study for international students, and the college is in the process of inviting such students who will become part of our new Faith to Faith-Face to Face program, a program focused on interfaith studies.

The Memorandum of Understanding, therefore, allows Presbyterian College to enlarge its area of recruitment and to increase its own revenue stream since all students registered at the college fall under the waiver agreement with McGill, and they will pay their tuition directly to the college. (Presbyterian College pays a flat fee of \$20,000 to McGill and can enroll any number of students for that cost.)

It is envisioned that there will be a three-year period of transition from a Faculty of Religious Studies to a School of Religious Studies within McGill's Faculty of Arts. A transition team has been established and a member of the Montreal School of Theology sits on that team. At the present time there is a good spirit of cooperation and there appears to be a sincere desire to make this move an opportunity to create an arrangement that helps both McGill and the Montreal School of Theology to achieve their respective missions.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The School of Religious Studies

1. The Faculty of Religious Studies (the "FRS") shall become the School of Religious Studies in the Faculty of Arts (the "School"). The School shall be the successor unit of the Faculty of Divinity as established in 1948 and shall exercise in continuity the prior rights, obligations and functions of the Faculty of Religious Studies. It shall be the primary academic unit for teaching and research in the field of religious studies, including religions and theology as fields of scholarly interest.
2. The School of Religious Studies in the Faculty of Arts shall continue the functions of the Faculty of Religious Studies as the University's primary academic instrument for maintaining and fulfilling its on-going

relations with the Montreal Diocesan Theological College, the Presbyterian College, the United Theological College and Montreal School of Theology (the “MST”). Those relations continue to be defined in the “1948 Agreement” as modified and supplemented from time to time by mutual agreement, notably, but not exclusively, the “Trigger Report” (approved, Board of Governors, 14 June 1999 [ED98-121]) (the “Agreements”).

The B.Th. Programme and Masters Programmes

3. The University shall make reasonable efforts to maintain and enhance teaching and research in the field of religious studies. MST and the University shall work together on the B.Th. programme, which shall continue to be granted under that name, so that:

- (a) It can reflect changes in contemporary theological education in a pluralistic society;
- (b) It can provide and enhance theological education in the global context for the Colleges; and
- (c) Options could be developed within the B.Th. programme to support ministerial education, as well as cooperative programmes with other University disciplines, such as management and leadership, pastoral care in health services, education, law, and social work.

4. The Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.) programme, including curriculum and admissions decisions, shall be administered and governed by the School, under the guidance of the B.Th. Committee.

5. Subject to section 6, courses that are required for MST’s degree programmes shall not be discontinued only as a result of a small number of enrolled students. There shall be a sufficient number of required and complementary courses to allow students to complete the requirements of the M.Div. years 1 and 2 through the 60 credits B.Th. Programme, normally within two years, in a logical sequence.

6. Essential biblical languages courses (Koine Greek and Hebrew) will be offered with sufficient frequency to permit degree completion in the normally allotted time, and to be available as credits to meet the requirements of the Colleges affiliated with MST for the M.Div. Programme.

- Given the low enrolment in the language courses currently offered by the FRS, such language courses may have to be taken in other departments.
- At the end of the transition period described below, students may have to take those language courses in other universities in Montreal as arranged by the University and acceptable to MST provided that such courses may be credited towards both the 60 and 90 credit the B.Th. Programs.

7. The School shall continue to offer the S.T.M. degree under that name so that students taking the B.Th. as a first degree will have access to a suitable accredited graduate degree.

Commitments underlying this Agreement

8. This agreement is based on the following financial and academic commitments of the University:

- The current accumulated deficit of the FRS will be absorbed by the University, but no further operating deficits will be permitted;
- Any endowment and other donor assets currently held on behalf of the FRS will be held for the School;
- Subject to section 9, the School will have access to approximately \$500,000 that could, at the discretion of the Director of the School, be endowed, spent down, or both;
- The complement number of academic, tenured/tenure track positions in the School shall be raised to 16.5, inclusive of the Director of the School if such individual is a new hire and the incumbent of the CRC mentioned below, and inclusive also of
 - A replacement position in the field of Japanese religions;
 - Two (2) junior joint appointments with primary appointment in the SRS;
- The University will support an application for a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair to be held in the School;
- On the date of implementation, there shall be no change as a result of the transition to any of the teaching programs or in the way in which they are managed;

- Over time, and subject to section 22, the approval of teaching programs will be harmonized with the practices of the Faculty of Arts (approval of curriculum committee and council of the Faculty of Arts, APC and Senate, etc.), except as otherwise provided in this proposal.

Transition

9. There will be transition period of approximately three (3) years, during which the School will engage in a collegial process to decide the best use of the additional funding and on the two junior appointments mentioned above, to prepare the CRC nomination and recruit an appropriate scholar, and to recruit for position in Japanese religions.

- The early transition period will also serve to appoint a Director to the School, in accordance with Section 11.
- After the transition period and having achieved the goal of 16.5 tenure-track positions, the School will be subject to the then existing rules and procedures regarding tenure-track complements as a unit within the Faculty of Arts.

Administration and Governance

10. The School shall be administered by a Director, who will also be advised as appropriate by the School Council.

- The Director shall be generally responsible to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts.
- Under the direction and supervision of the Dean, the Director shall prepare and manage the budget for the School.
- Within the terms of that budget, the Director shall determine course offerings, class sizes, teaching loads and teaching support in relation to RELG and CATH courses.

11. The Dean of the Faculty of Arts shall, after consultation with a committee broadly representative of the membership of the School, including representation from and the written recommendation of the MST (to be made within 10 days of request by the Dean of Arts, at the latest), and including, if desired, representatives from outside of the School, make recommendations to the Provost for the appointment or reappointment of a Director of the School.

- Prior to recommending the re-appointment of a Director who has served in that office for five years, the Dean shall again consult with a committee broadly representative of the membership of the School, including representation from the MST and the same written recommendation process, and including, if desired, representatives from outside of the School.

12. McGill recognises that while the entity will become a School of the Faculty of Arts, its status within the Faculty of Arts will of necessity be a special one, as and in the measure described in this proposal, in particular in relation to:

- its unique programmes (B.Th. and STM);
- the common interest of the University, MST and the Colleges have in these programmes;
- accreditation;
- MST's representation on the School Council and the B.Th. Committee;
- the existence of an external advisory board, as described in section 16.

13. The School shall be housed at the Birks Building which, along with the Birks Heritage Chapel was designed and built and later (under the "1948 Agreement") transferred to the University in order to further the objects of theological and interfaith education and research and to house the principal activities of the predecessor of the School.

- The Director of the School shall therefore, like the Deans of the FRS were, be ex-officio Building Director of the Birks Building.
- The functions and needs of the School shall continue to be given priority in the allocation of space within the Birks Building. In particular, the Birks Heritage Chapel, its uses and booking of times, shall remain under the strict oversight of the School Council.

- It is understood that, except in respect of the Birks Heritage Chapel which shall remain under the rule mentioned above, Birks Building space may be allocated to other purposes of the University as long as the School's purposes are given priority.
- 14. The library located in the Birks building will continue to be a reading room.
- 15. Subject to the provisions of section 29, a School of Religious Studies Council shall replace the FRS Faculty Council and be composed and governed by the "Faculty Council Regulations" of the FRS (approved by Senate, May 3, 2006, document D05-72) as amended from time to time, as a result of a collegial process. The School Council shall meet at least four times per year.
- 16. The current Faculty Advisory Board to the FRS, composed of individuals who are not in the employment of the University, the MST or the Colleges shall become an external advisory board of the School (exact designation to be determined). Its mandate and composition may evolve over time as a result of a collegial process including members of such board,
- 17. Members of the FRS serving as such on University bodies (especially the elected Senate representative) shall complete their terms as initially appointed unless they decline to do so.
- 18. Members of the School shall have the same rights as other members of the Faculty of Arts to serve on various Faculty and University bodies, boards and committees.
- 19. On the date of the implementation, tenure-track, tenured, and contract academic appointments in the FRS shall become appointments in the Faculty of Arts with continuity of benefits, years of service (e.g., for pension rights, reappointment, tenure, promotion, and/or sabbatical consideration), as from the date of appointment to the FRS.
- 20. For the 2015–2016 academic year, the Departmental Tenure Committee (DTC) shall be as established by the FRS and the University Tenure Committee (UTC) as established by the FRS, the Provost and by the Secretariat.
 - From the date of implementation of the move, the Departmental Tenure Committee (DTC) shall continue as the DTC for the School of Religious Studies within the Faculty of Arts.
 - The University Tenure Committee (UTC) shall continue as a UTC within the Faculty of Arts.
 - In subsequent years, all processes related to the reappointment, tenure and promotion of ranked academic staff in the School of Religious Studies shall be governed by the relevant University regulations and conducted in accordance with the relevant procedures of the Faculty of Arts.
- 21. As long as the Agreements are in force, search committees making recommendations to the Dean of Arts for new appointments in the fields of New Testament, Old Testament, History of the Christian Church, and Theology shall continue to consist of members nominated according to current practices in the FRS.
- 22. At the date of implementation, all B.A. Major and Minor Concentrations and Honours and Joint Honours programmes currently administered in conjunction between the FRS and the Faculty of Arts shall become departmental programmes of the School within the Faculty of Arts.
- 23. MST agrees that the B.A. programmes in Catholic Studies may become departmental programmes of the School within the Faculty of Arts, while maintaining and potentially reinforcing their interdisciplinary character.
- 24. All funds held by the University in support of functions of the FRS (including all endowments) shall be held for the functions of the School.
 - All endowment funds administered by the Dean of FRS shall be administered by the Director of the School.
 - All endowed funds shall be administered in full respect of the conditions of the donations. In particular, the role of the Principal of the United Theological College in the choice of Gordon Scholarships awardees shall continue in accordance with the current practice.
- 25. The School shall have the right, continuous with the right of the FRS and in cooperation with University Advancement and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, to seek and accept new endowments and gifts in support of its functions and priorities.

26. The Director of the School will present a stewardship report annually to the MST on the endowed portion (and any unendowed portion) of the 1948 Funds. The endowed portion shall remain endowed unless otherwise agreed by the University and MST.

27. On the date of implementation, the governance and bylaws of The Centre for Research on Religion (CREOR) shall remain in force, except that the lead Faculty shall be the Faculty of Arts, the Dean of Arts or delegate shall be the Chair of the Advisory or Management Board, and the Director of the SRS shall be ex-officio a member of the Advisory body.

28. The current practice of MST faculty being invited to teach in the FRS at the discretion of the Dean shall be continued in the School, at the discretion of the Director.

29. As long as the 1948 Agreement is in force, the mechanisms now in place for representation of MST and FRS on each other's governance bodies shall be continued between MST and the School.

- The three Principals of the Colleges shall each have voice and vote on the School Council (replacing the FRS Faculty Council) and on the B.Th. Programme Committee and B.Th. Admissions and Awards Committee, each in the same proportion as currently, and shall continue to have Advisors' access to student records and admission records relating to the B.Th. and S.T.M. programmes.

30. Students jointly registered in the Colleges in all forms of ministry and at the University will continue to have the privilege of University tuition fee waivers, which shall also apply to language courses in other universities pursuant to Section 6.

31. The University shall undertake to retain accreditation with the Association of Theological Schools.

32. The University will endeavour to meet upon reasonable request and in any event at least once a year with the Principals of the Colleges and representatives of MST to discuss matters of common interest.

- For the purpose of such meetings, McGill University shall be represented by the Dean of Arts accompanied as appropriate by the Director of the School.

- The Provost shall also be available to meet with MST and the Principals of the Colleges, upon reasonable request and normally once a year.

33. The changes described in the present proposal as aspects of the transformation of the FRS into the School, shall take place at the date of implementation, it being acknowledged that some measures regarding the teaching complement will require a longer period of implementation, but shall be put in place in an ordered manner over time and that the University will use its best efforts so that they will be completed on or before the end of the transition period (end date to be determined on the basis of the implementation date).

Final Provisions

34. The Parties shall also work collegially towards the continued development of the B.Th. program, and in particular its marketing, so as to build its appeal to a broader community of students, without materially adding to their respective financial commitments.

35. Except as it amends the Agreements, the MOU shall not be read in contradiction of the contractual and historic relations between the University and the Theological Colleges of the Montreal School of Theology.

36. Acknowledging that the provisions of the Agreements are amended in accordance with Appendix "A", the parties reaffirm all provisions of the Agreements not directly amended by this MOU.

37. Any dispute concerning the interpretation or implementation of this MOU shall be resolved through binding arbitration pursuant to articles 940 to 947.4 of the Code of Civil Procedure of Quebec in front of a single arbitrator chosen by consent by the Parties. Before submitting a matter to arbitration a Party shall provide the other Parties with a written notice of dispute, stating the facts, its view of the correct application of this MOU to the facts, and of the resolution to the dispute that it proposes. The Parties shall then engage in negotiations aimed at resolving the dispute without resorting to arbitration. In the event that no such resolution is achieved within 90 days of the written notice of dispute (or such longer delay agreed to in writing by authorized representatives of the Parties), either Party may refer the matter to arbitration as described above. The arbitration costs shall be shared equally by

the Parties, and each party shall pay for its own costs incurred for the purposes of the arbitration such as fees of legal counsel, witnesses, experts, reproduction of documentary evidence, etc.

38. Unless otherwise agreed between the parties, the date of implementation shall be May 1, 2016. The term of this MOU shall be 25 years and shall expire on April 30, 2040 or, if later, 25 years after the date of implementation. All students who are in programs at the expiry of the term shall be allowed to continue in their programmes until completion, in accordance with the rules then in force at the Faculty of Arts concerning time to completion of degree. Upon expiry and the completion of the degree years of the last complement of such students, the Birks Building and the 1948 endowment and funds (as they then are) shall revert to MST and other equitable adjustments shall be made between the parties.

39. The Parties agree to engage into discussions with a view to renegotiate the Agreements to arrive at a renewed understanding adapted to current realities as soon as possible, but in any case, during the first 5 years of the term of this agreement. To that end the University shall propose to MST and the Colleges a robust collaborative process for discussion and consultations on the proposed amendments which, once approved by MST and the College shall serve as the basis for exchanges between the Parties.

40. This MOU shall be subject to the approval of the board of governors of McGill University and the boards of MST and of the Colleges. Once approved and executed by all Parties, it shall constitute a binding Agreement.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly concur with the actions of the Board of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, in agreeing to the new Memorandum of Understanding between The Montreal School of Theology and McGill University.

FACULTY

At its April 2015 meeting, the board unanimously put forward the name of the Rev. Dr. Roland De Vries for the position of Director of Pastoral Studies. The nomination was approved by the General Assembly and Dr. De Vries was appointed as the new Director of Pastoral Studies of Presbyterian College. His induction service on October 29 brought together an encouraging and enthusiastic community of those who love and support the college and its new programs. Dr. De Vries has already proved to be a great asset to the college, both academically and administratively.

In addition to Dr. De Vries, the faculty of the college for 2015 consisted of the Rev. Dr. Dale Woods, Principal, and the Rev. Dr. Dan Shute, Librarian, Dr. Lucille Marr, Academic Dean and Chaplain, the Rev. Dr. Victor Gavino, Director of the Leadership Centre, along with McGill instructor, Professor Gerbern Oegema of the Faculty of Religious Studies, who serves on the college faculty by annual appointment. Two retired members of the faculty, Principal Emeritus William Klempa, and Professor Emeritus Joseph C. McLelland continued to participate in the life of the college when possible. The Rev. Dr. Barry Mack was sessional lecturer in Canadian Presbyterian History. In addition to its own faculty, the college continues to work collaboratively with the faculty of the other two colleges and the Faculty of Religious Studies. In 2015 the following people provided supervision for students in the In-Ministry Year: the Rev. Jeremy Sanderson, the Rev. Ian Fraser, the Rev. Dr. Barry Mack, the Rev. Shaun Seaman, the Rev. Wayne Menard, the Rev. Joel Coppieters, the Rev. Dr. Victor Gavino and the Rev. Paul Graham. The Rev. Dr. Glen Davis served as Director of Communications and Alumni Relations, and his contract has been renewed for a further one-year period.

STAFF

The college is served ably and effectively by its administrative and custodial staff: Ms. Jeannette Vink (part-time administrative assistant), Ms. Sandra Steadman (part-time accountant), Mr. Mario Elvé (building superintendent) and Mr. Stéphane Richard (custodian). Ms. Jillian Wood served as part-time administrative receptionist for the first half of 2015 and then went on to pursue further studies. Her replacement, Ms. Mary Sicoli, is a fine addition to the welcoming and efficient environment of the college.

FINANCES

The calendar year is the fiscal year for The Presbyterian College. At the time of writing the report the audited statements were not complete and therefore the numbers in this report are approximate. In 2015 The Presbyterian College received \$178,500 as its percentage of funds from The Presbyterian Church in Canada's budget for theological education. The remainder of its revenue was derived from residence rentals, investment income, tuition

fees and donations. As of December 31, 2014 the endowment fund totaled \$3,116,697. The college withdrew from its endowment fund in order to cover all operation costs, and to invest in its new strategic plan. The college ended the year with an endowment fund balance of approximately \$2,600,000 reflecting both the withdrawals and the overall downturn in world financial markets. Of the amount withdrawn from the endowment fund \$218,000 was allocated to capital projects with the balance put to operations and strategic plan initiatives. The college is grateful to the many generous donors who contribute directly to the annual operating costs and the endowment fund, and to the many Presbyterians across Canada who support the work of theological education through *Presbyterians Sharing*. The challenge to find adequate funding to support its academic programs is always before the college. The board has had the foresight to undertake a capital campaign in order to finance the strategic and certain capital improvements with a view to making the college a viable institution well into the future. The financial statements are available on request from the college or from the General Assembly Office.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

The Board of Governors is committed to strengthening the financial base of the college and securing its long-term ministry. It has, therefore, embarked upon a fund-raising campaign with a goal of \$1,750,000. The money from this campaign will be directed almost entirely to the support of people in the college's newly initiated programs, with a small portion devoted to the upgrading of the college facilities. The program is divided into two main sections: the Leadership Centre and the Enhanced Master of Divinity Program. For the Leadership Centre the goal is \$700,000 to be divided into three programs: Mentoring Missional Leaders, the Ian Victor Pastors to Pastors Program, and the Shuling Chen Lay Leadership Program, which includes continuing and lay education, as well as the unique program for nurturing the faith of young adults. The Enhanced Master of Divinity program will receive \$800,000 to help establish three programs: Congregational Renewal, New Church Development and Faith-to-Faith Program for international students. The remaining \$250,000 will be used for capital improvements on the building, especially upgrading student rooms. Thus far, the campaign has raised \$807,000. A full description of the campaign can be found on our website at presbyteriancollege.ca. We are deeply grateful for all of the gifts we have received to date and have been greatly encouraged by the generosity of so many.

FACILITIES UPGRADE

Overall, the college facility is in relatively good shape. A survey by an engineering firm indicated that over the next 10 years the college will need to spend \$500,000 on structural items such as the roof, elevator, windows, etc. While working on these areas of improvement each year, the college is more immediately working on updating the residences. We have begun to receive gifts of \$5,000 from individuals and congregations, which is the cost of renovating one room. Community has always been an important part of Presbyterian College and it is our goal to ensure a pleasant place for our students to live at a reasonable rate. The major capital expense in 2015 was the renovation of the three washrooms in the residence. We are moving ahead with plans for some renovations that will enable us to reopen the cafeteria and make it available to the community outside our residence. We developed a community urban garden in the courtyard in 2015, a shared project with the Presbyterian Chaplain's office at McGill. This year we are undertaking modifications to that design which will allow for more growing space, an inner "quiet and conversation" space, an entrance way to the cafeteria and improved lighting.

LEADERSHIP CENTRE

Over the past year, under the able direction of Dr. Victor Gavino, the Leadership Centre focused on Continuing Education, Lay Education and the Mentoring Program.

Continuing Education

In February 2015, the college ran a continuing education event called Mission and Worship after Christendom, led by Alan and Eleanor Krieder. Although participation was small, participants found the week instructive and helpful. In May the college, along with St. Andrew's Hall, jointly sponsored a continuing education event on the theme: "Ready to Give an Answer for the Hope within You", with speakers Dr. Robert Fennell and Dr. John Stackhouse. It was well received, despite some quality issues with the live-streaming platform and we are encouraged to explore further areas of collaboration with our other two colleges. In February 2016, we held an event to explore the theme, "Assisted Death: Faithful Responses in a New Landscape" with the leadership of several prominent and knowledgeable speakers and panelists. We adjusted the schedule in order to increase accessibility to lay people, and registration was good, both on-site and off-site via live-stream. This June we are trying an experimental event, a retreat for ministers, based on indications that ministers are looking for a time of spiritual renewal. Looking forward, we plan to re-imagine our continuing education programs in ways that will better address the concerns of the church.

Lay Education

In June the college sponsored a young adult event based on a program called “Discover Your Dependable Strengths”. It proved to be a useful and positive experience for participants, and we see the need to promote this program among young adults beyond The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In addition, we are developing a certificate program, to be recognized by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, designed to equip lay people to assist in a variety of ministry tasks in congregations that might be no longer able to afford a full time ordained minister. The college is also working on a proposal to establish a Montreal Institute for Faith, Work and Society, which will assist with the challenge of living out one’s faith in the workplace.

Mentoring Program

This unique program for recent graduates of our three colleges grew by 30% in 2015. We now have 40 participants with six mentors. We started two new groups: one for those in rural ministry, and one focused on the theology of ministry and mission. Two further new groups are being formed: one on church renewal and revitalization, and one on stewardship and planned giving.

ENHANCED MASTER OF DIVINITY PROGRAM

The college has developed an enhanced Master of Divinity program which offers options to students who want to take advantage of receiving specialized training either in Revitalizing Congregations or in New Church Development. The college provides opportunities for candidates who feel called to one of these areas of ministry to spend their summers working with experienced ministers and congregations in these areas. Over two summers, this adds 8 months of paid leadership preparation within the regular three-year Master of Divinity program. We believe that this initiative will be of great benefit to students who will eventually face the challenges of leadership in a spiritually hungry society and in declining, struggling congregations. It will also be of benefit to our wider church whose energy and effort seems to be demanded more for closing congregations than on starting new ones or renewing older ones.

GLOBAL AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

In January seven students from Presbyterian College, along with the Director of Pastoral Studies, attended a week-long study tour in Cuba, visiting with churches and mission organizations, and also with the students and faculty at Matanzas Theological Seminary. Above all, this experience provided our students with an opportunity to learn from the Cuban church what it means to embody the love of Christ in a particular context – what it means that the church is, by definition, missional. We anticipate that we will have room, in January 2017, to invite lay participants to join us in this challenging and enriching experience.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Under the pastoral care and leadership of the college chaplain, Dr. Lucille Marr, the spiritual needs of students, residents, faculty and staff are well met. With a focus on building authentic Christian community, the spiritual life of the college revolves around the weekly chapel gatherings for worship and prayer. We also hold regular “pizza conversations” for the whole community. The chaplain provides a listening ear and helpful advice to students experiencing difficulties. Please pray for us, including the board of the college, as we work to implement our strategic plan and carry out our new programs aimed at preparing and supporting excellent leaders for the church as it meets the challenges of a dramatically changing society.

WORK OF THE BOARD

The Board of Governors continues to provide visionary, supportive and united leadership to the college. It consists of 12 members appointed annually (four per year for three-year terms) by the General Assembly, plus the Principal, one faculty representative, one representative from the Graduates’ Association and one student representative. In addition to its usual committees, the board established a Recruitment Committee in 2015.

Appreciation: Retiring Board Members

According to the church’s rotation system for board and committee members, the time has come to record the college’s gratitude to two outstanding members of the board who have completed their terms of service, Jane Wylie and Ralph Loader. Ms Wylie’s commitment and faithfulness to the mission of the college is deeply appreciated. Her insightful interventions at board meetings and her faithful committee work will be missed. At her last meeting she expressed how much the board meetings have strengthened her Christian faith, not a common statement at the end of

a term of board service! A special word of thanks goes to Mr. Loader who has served as convener of the board for several years. He expended countless hours and much energy on the multiple tasks of convener. His wise, pastoral and spiritual leadership has been a blessing to us all. Ralph is an example of a Christian who takes his faith with him into the work place and into board meetings. His pastoral care and spiritual support for the Principal and faculty have been especially appreciated.

MONTREAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The Joint Board of Theological Colleges affiliated with McGill University is the ecumenical theological consortium of Protestant theological schools of which The Presbyterian College is a member. The public name of the Joint Board is The Montreal School of Theology/École Théologique de Montréal (MST). In 2014–2015 the college was represented on the Joint Board by Mr. Jim MacKinnon, Dr. Michael Pettem, Mr. Markus Arsenaault (student representative), Mr. Donald Walcot, and the Principal. In the In-Ministry Year, offered conjointly by the three colleges through the Montreal School of Theology, Presbyterian College students received instruction from the Rev. Dr. Alyson Huntly and the Rev. Dr. Philip Joudrey of the United Theological College, and from the Rev. Dr. Karen Egan and the Rev. Dr. Donald Boisvert of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College. Presbyterian College and its students are blessed by this ecumenical partnership, and our college's contribution to the Montreal School of Theology is vital to its work. Our Principal, Dr. Dale Woods, currently serves as Director of the Montreal School of Theology.

CONVOCATION

The 2015 convocation was a time of both blessing and challenge. The blessing was that to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Montreal School of Theology, the three colleges held a joint convocation. It was a great opportunity to celebrate the long and rich tradition of ecumenical work. The challenge was that, due to a combination of a number of unforeseen circumstances, there were no graduates from Presbyterian College in 2015. However, we were able to recognize servants of The Presbyterian Church in Canada whose outstanding contribution to the church was celebrated by the conferring of Honorary Doctorate of Divinity degree upon the the Rev. Stewart Folster and the Rev. W.G. Sydney McDonald.

More encouraging news is that the 2016 convocation will celebrate the graduation of seven Master of Divinity students. The college will also confer Honorary Doctorate of Divinity degrees upon two outstanding leaders in both the international mission and education ministry of the church, the Rev. Marion Barclay MacKay and the Rev. Glenn Inglis. In addition, some of the new programs of the college have attracted more participants, both lay and clergy. For example, our mentoring program (for recent graduates of all three colleges) grew from 27–40 enrollees, and we added two new mentors.

ENROLLMENT AND RECRUITMENT

While the increase in graduates this year is gratifying, the task of recruiting candidates who will present themselves to be trained for leadership in the church continues to be a challenge. We are encouraged to note that our new programs are showing signs of promise. For example, we are preparing to welcome two students from Cameroon into our new Faith-to-Faith Face-to-Face program. We are making progress on establishing the Congregational Renewal and New Church Development aspects of our enhanced Master of Divinity program. Five new candidates for the Master of Divinity program have already indicated their intention to enroll in the fall. But the challenge remains. Presbyterian College is a small college that is not well known in the world of theological education. Marketing and recruitment have not been a significant part of the college's life.

In response to this challenge, the board has developed a recruitment plan, formed a recruitment committee and hired a part time recruitment coordinator in the person of Jillian Wood, our former administrative receptionist. She will focus on increasing enrolment through outreach to summer camps, youth conferences and congregations, as well as through strategic advertising both in The Presbyterian Church in Canada outlets and in church media in the US states that are close to Montreal. Principal Dale Woods will continue to make connections and visits to churches in Africa and other regions to promote our Face-to-Face Faith-to-Faith program.

Furthermore, the Memorandum of Understanding with McGill, as described above, presents several new opportunities for marketing which we will take advantage of by communicating with high schools in Canada and the eastern United States, and also with Presbyterian churches and presbyteries in nearby US states. The considerable advantages of studying and living in a small college within a supportive Christian community, while being a part of one of the leading universities in the world, will be attractively presented through our website and other media.

We believe that our work in creating new and innovative programs will play an important role in attracting new students. We also believe that recruitment must be connected to our mission: engaging the world through congregations, one leader at a time. Our goal is to graduate students who have the skills to lead congregations in growing their own mission.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION LIAISON GROUP

The Theological Education Liaison Group was established after the dissolution of the Committee on Theological Education. The group consists of the principals of the three colleges and their board conveners, as well as the Principal Clerk of General Assembly, the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency and the Chief Financial Officer of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The group meets twice a year for the purpose of working together to develop greater collaboration between the colleges and the national church. The group is able to share the work of each college and discuss matters relating to the future of theological education in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It discusses topics such as the use of technology, the challenges for the theological education task in a changing society, the development of curriculum and sharing resources. Presbyterian College is an active participant in these discussions, and a partner in seeking effective collaboration, an example of which was the joint continuing education event with St. Andrew's Hall in 2015.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

The book of Zechariah describes the kind of ministry that pleases God as ministry which cares for the perishing, seeks the wandering, heals the maimed and nourishes the healthy. Our world is in desperate need of the good news of God's grace in Jesus Christ. Congregations are the places where that good news is both lived and shared. But congregations need healthy leaders who can help congregations become all that God intends them to be. Presbyterian College has the potential to help shape those leaders here at home and around the world. It has the potential to be a place, not only of teaching others, but also a place of learning from others, especially those from other parts of the world. And it has the potential to play an important role within our own city of Montreal.

Imagine being part of the renewal of 100 congregations across Canada, or providing leaders to plant 50 new churches, or engaging with leaders who are equipped to provide an alternative to religious conflict, or helping lay people live their faith in the workplace, or training lay people to do ministry so that when they can no longer afford a minister, their congregations do not need to close. All of that potential lies before us. But we must embrace it with humility, knowing that 'unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain' (Psalm 127:1). And that potential will only be realized through the persistent and confident prayers of our people throughout the church. We ask you to pray for us, for the faculty and board, but especially for our students, both those who have already committed themselves to prepare for leadership in Christ's church, and those still undecided. Your prayers will be answered for the glory of God and the establishment of God's reign on earth.

Ralph Loader
Convener

Dale Woods
Principal

KNOX COLLEGE

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

THE 172ND CONVOCATION

The 172nd Convocation took place on May 11, 2016, in Convocation Hall, University of Toronto. The following students received degrees, diplomas and certificates:

Master of Divinity Degree: Seung-Ho (Charles) Baik, Lisa Brimblecombe, Euikyun (David) Chang, James Clark, Torrey Griffiths, Robert Henderson, Soon-Nyung Huh, Dae Hyeon (James) Kim, Matthew Lingard, A. Ian Marnoch, Ernest Naylor, Nicole Reid, Mikal Schomburg, Seung-Vin (Vincent) Shin, Mi Hoa (Michelle) Yoon, Sanghun (Steven) Yoon.

Diploma of the College: Lisa Brimblecombe, Euikyun (David) Chang, James Clark, Torrey Griffiths, Robert Henderson, Soon-Nyung Huh, Dae Hyeon (James) Kim, Matthew Lingard, A. Ian Marnoch, Elias Mendes Gomes, Ernest Naylor, Nicole Reid, Mikal Schomburg, Jee-Eun (Megan) Shin, Seung-Vin (Vincent) Shin, Mi Hoa (Michelle) Yoon.

Master of Divinity (Honours): Elias Mendes Gomes, Jee-Eun (Megan) Shin.

Master of Theological Studies: Paulus Cha, Phye-Huat (Pye) Chew, Kiersty Hong, Sang Hyuk Lee, Jae Heong (David) Lim, Barbara Smibert.

Master of Religious Studies: Ki Sung Song.

Doctor of Ministry: Rosa Yuk Chu Leung, John William David McMaster, Wendy Vanderwal Gritter.

Master of Theology: Deborah Rapport.

Others completing denominational requirements (GAC): Phye-Huat (Pye) Chew, Megan Purdy.

In recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the decision of the General Assembly to ordain women to ministry and eldership, this year's convocation speaker was the Rev. Linda Ashfield, minister at Knox Presbyterian Church in Waterloo. The title of her address was "What matters is faith expressed through love" (Galatians 5:6b). On the morning of Convocation Day, she also gave leadership at a workshop on "Full inclusion of women in the church – what were they thinking?".

FACULTY

Sabbaticals

Since January, Professor Charles Fensham has been on sabbatical and will return in August. Over the years, Professor Fensham has been working on a research trajectory that has included work on the future of the North American Church (*Emerging from the Dark Age Ahead: The Future of the North American Church*), the spirituality of the church (*To the Nations for the Earth: a Missional Spirituality*) and, on this sabbatical, a process working towards a third book on the public witness of the church. The general area of his research remains that of contemporary ecclesiology with a focus on engaging the present world. His research leave is focused on working on the public witness/missiology project in the following ways:

- a. Drawing together the published work in the area already complete or in progress towards a draft for a book.
- b. Interacting with students and colleagues in South Africa in testing ideas and gaining insights from the majority world on his work.
- c. Working on additional research and material for a book on public witness.

This second part has been facilitated by a two-month sojourn in Cape Town and Stellenbosch, South Africa where he was invited by the University of Stellenbosch as well as the University of Western Cape as visiting professor.

Knox College's academic planning takes into account that for the foreseeable future almost every semester will see a member of the Knox faculty on sabbatical. Sabbaticals are critical both to Knox as it engages fully within the TST

and the UofT as well as to individual faculty members as they continue to develop as scholars. At the same time, as you can imagine there are, within a small faculty, some challenges in terms of resourcing teaching, faculty administration and student advising. Knox is fortunate to be situated in a large city where there are highly qualified sessionals who welcome teaching opportunities.

STUDENTS

As we look to the future, we recognize the challenging work of recruiting well-qualified students for all our programs. We continue to rely on our graduates, sessions, congregations and presbyteries to identify prospective students for Christian ministry and leadership. But there is also a need to be more proactive, thus over the past year a small task force has been actively working to understand the field of recruitment and the kind of staffing expertise needed. In February, the Board of Governors approved a recommendation to include the hiring of a Recruitment Officer in the college's 2016–2017 budget.

Bursaries and scholarships are important to maintaining student enrolment and ensuring that students do not enter ministry with an unmanageable debt. To that end, Knox provided a bursary of approximately 75% of the tuition cost of each course for which a student in the M.Div., M.T.S., and M.R.E. enrolls. In addition to a smaller bursary, a number of our doctoral students received a multi-year scholarship. A total of \$408,000 in bursary and scholarship assistance was distributed to 121 students this past year.

2015–2016 Enrolment

Knox College has enrolled a total of 149 students in degree programs. In its basic degree areas, there are 75 students actively registered. Of these, 57 are enrolled in programs for ordained ministry. Eighteen are in lay programs leading to various ministries including Christian Education. There are 49 students enrolled in the advanced degree division of the college. Presently 25 students are on various leaves of absence. In addition, there were also 49 students enrolled in three lay education courses during the academic year.

Other statistics of interest include the following: for the student body in our degree programs the percentage of full-time students to part-time students is 60 to 40; the citizenship percentage is 81 domestic, 19 international, and the average student age within both the graduate and basic degree programs is 42.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Since 1844 the academic programs of Knox College have prepared people for leadership and service in church and society. Recently, the faculty and board adopted an academic plan that will guide the college as it lives into the plan of God for the church and theological education in Canadian society. The plan affirms that faith matters in an increasingly pluralistic and secular age and that the faith tradition and educational model represented by Knox College has a unique contribution to make. The academic plan emphasizes:

- One Academic Mission** Educating women and men for faithful and creative ministries and scholarship through our teaching, research and global partnerships.
- Seven Academic Degrees** Master of Divinity, Master of Theological Studies, Master of Religious Education, Master of Pastoral Studies, Master of Theology, Doctor of Ministry, Doctor of Philosophy in Theological Studies.
- Five Academic Outcomes**
 - Congregational Ministries
 - Teaching Ministries
 - Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy Ministries
 - Social Service Ministries
 - Intercultural and Interfaith Ministries

Basic Degree Programs

In September 2016, Knox College will welcome its first cohort of students in the Master of Pastoral Studies program. This is a two-year (20 course) program with two streams: (1) Pastoral Ministries and (2) Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy.

Graduate Degree Programs

In addition to the Master of Theology and Doctor of Ministry degrees, Knox College now offers a conjoint Ph.D. in Theological Studies with the University of Toronto through the Toronto School of Theology. Applications and

admissions in these programs continue to grow year-to-year making for a robust advanced degree community of faith and learning.

Association of the Theological Schools (ATS) in the United States and Canada

We continue to complete the reports requested as a result of the 2011 ten year re-accreditation of the college. In June 2015, Knox received approval of its learning outcomes for the four basic degrees. These formed the basis of a revised assessment plan that Knox reported to ATS (May 1, 2015). A report on the implementation of the plan was submitted May 1, 2016.

Continuing Education

This was the third year that the Fall RENEW event was offered. We were gratified to have our highest total registration at over 80 and were pleased to offer it on You Tube to 17 sites. The RENEW 2015 educational event was held November 10–12. Following upon Dr. Darrell Guder's Laidlaw lectures (March 2015) "Taking the Form of a Servant: Polity for the Missional Church", Vera White conducted a presentation on the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s goal of establishing "1001 New Worshipping Communities". Initiated in 2012, Ms White led a lively workshop using illustrations from over 300 new worshipping communities based on a more outward, creative and disciple-making (as opposed to maintenance) model of church. A panel on assisted dying/death was moderated by Dr. Pamela McCarroll with panelists Dr. Anne Wood, physician and Director of Palliative Care at St. Joseph's Health Sciences McMaster University; Peter Allatt, Clinical Ethicist Bridgepoint Hospital, Toronto and Dr. Thomas O'Connor, chaplain, educator and pastoral counsellor Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. The 2½ day event concluded with Hillary Donaldson leading an interactive workshop "Singing the Story of Advent and Christmas".

LIBRARY SERVICES

Through social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and blogs, the Caven Library's architectural features continue to be written about with enthusiastic admiration. They are often compared to Hogwarts from the Harry Potter novels. On these sites, the library is also highlighted as an ideal study space due to its natural lighting and quiet ambience. As a result, most weekdays the reading room is filled with UofT undergraduate students, as well as Knox/TST graduate students and several Knox residents. Since Knox College is situated at the centre of the university, the use of Caven Library by Knox students and other UofT student groups is expected and welcomed.

The large north window in Caven Library, in need of renewal for some time, was repaired last summer through the generosity of a donor who has great admiration for the Knox College building and architecture. This large window and its duplicate south-facing window in the chapel are of significant architectural and theological significance. The Reformed tradition's focus on the tenet *ora et labora* (study and work) is reflected in the identical placement of both the chapel and library windows, signifying the importance the Reformed Church places on both worship and study. These large windows are considered exceptional by architects as they are constructed of coloured panes of Norman slab glass, made by blowing the glass into squares. The slabs are thick in the centre and thinner at the edges, creating unique optics. The coloured and opaque panes allow light to enter both spaces while creating an opportunity for revelation and reflection for the occupants. This glass is quite rare today. Made by only one or two companies, it is difficult to replace. Knox College was given a number of extra squares at the time of construction in 1915, some of which were used last summer for the careful and detailed professional repairs.

The library staff, including our student workers, are diligently working on and making steady progress with a project of sorting, culling, cataloguing and organizing a large collection of older materials not yet listed on the online library catalogue. Although these are much less frequently used materials, they are still valuable in an academic collection in order to provide historical and seminal works for local and international researchers.

Another large project involves the Ewart College historical collection of Christian education materials, presented to Knox in the early 1990s on the amalgamation of Ewart with Knox College. In 1996, the McKay Educational Resources Centre (MERC) was established not only to maintain the legacy of Ewart College and its collections but to also add new resources for the students of the amalgamated colleges. Each year MERC, with the assistance of grants from the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education, has added curriculum recommended by The Presbyterian Church in Canada. It has slowly expanded the scope of the collection to include a variety of practical resources for church ministry and leadership. While the more current materials are available and easily accessible within the McKay Centre located in Caven Library, the historical collection remains uncatalogued and inaccessible in the basement. Since the library staff believes the Ewart historical collection is a rich resource that could be used by students and other researchers, our current project involves sorting and organizing this collection chronologically

with the view to creating a finding aide to add to our website. The plan is to purchase a high quality scanner to enable resources to be sent to researchers electronically.

DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING

The Development Office focuses on stewarding contributions from our supporters and building relationship with the college's many patrons. We are grateful for the generosity and commitment of our supporters to the mission of Knox College, including but not limited to scholarships, prizes and bursaries, library resources as well as academic and building renewal. Our donors are our alumni/ae, former residents, friends, congregations, *Presbyterians Sharing* and other church groups. We thank them all for their faith in our work and belief in our vision to remain a vibrant and dynamic centre for Christian theological education.

We continued to work towards raising funds for board designated priorities, building renewal, endowment of faculty chairs and other projects in our Re:forming Tomorrow capital campaign. Our annual fund supported general day-to-day costs and we began implementing a planned giving program to engage our donors and friends in our mission.

In relationship building we extended support to students and alumni as well as current and former residents. All groups participated in organizing the 100th Anniversary Gala celebration of Knox's building on University of Toronto campus. The celebration was an opportunity to bring Knox's community together while raising funds for the renewal of our building.

The Knox-Ewart Graduates Association (KEGA) Reunion Luncheon at Convocation and Reception at General Assembly have both been well attended in the past. At the college, KEGA hosted two community worship services and dinners to nurture student-alumni relations. At Convocation 2016, the Principal hosted the 40, 50 and 60+ year Grads for a reunion dinner of fellowship and memories of times spent together at the college. The Former Residents Association (KNXOFRA) combined their annual dinner with the 100th anniversary celebrations. Four former residents received the KNOXFRA Award of Honour for their contributions in the community. The Development Office also worked closely with students and residents to connect the two groups through activities and shared interests.

The Principal and Development staff visited with graduates, former residents and donors across the country. Those gathered at the Synods of the Atlantic Provinces and of Alberta and the Northwest were presented with news of the college. The college also had a display at the Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The Board of Governors in setting the annual protocols for the budget requires that it be realistic and that no more than 5% from its investments be used as revenue. For the fiscal year May 2015–April 2016, the goals of the board were met.

As of December 2015, Knox College had over \$23.3 million dollars in investments held with The Presbyterian Church in Canada Consolidated Portfolio. This balance reflects years of donations and bequests from graduates and friends of the college, as well as the result of income and market increases within the portfolio. Of that \$23.3 million, \$15.4 million is restricted for student bursaries and scholarships. For the 2015–2016 academic year, \$408,000 was paid out in bursaries and scholarships to students. The remaining investment income (\$560,000) was used primarily for academic and administrative expenses.

Staff Update

During the 2015–2016 academic year, a number of staffing changes took place at Knox College. With Seta Ghougassian settling in as the Director of Development, Louise Longhurst was welcomed as her replacement as the Development Officer. In September, Jim Burgess was hired as Caretaker to replace Dave Lynas who retired. Yolanda Fernandez also retired after almost 30 years as Knox's Head of Housekeeping. Marina Rozina has been hired to replace her. Our Events Coordinator, Elena Livertovsky, hired to assist with the additional events associated with the 170/100 celebrations, completed her contract in December. With Aaron Gordon having completed his one-year contract as Communications Associate (during which Development reassessed its needs), Stephanie Hanna was welcomed in March as the Communications and Marketing Associate, a full-time staff position.

CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

Ewart Centre for Lay Education

As part of its overall mission the Ewart College, until its closure in 1991, provided courses for the laity. Presently Knox, as an amalgamated college, seeks to fulfill this mission through its English Certificate in Christian Faith and

Life I and II. This English certificate program is offered on-line. Eight basic courses are offered in four areas – Bible, Theology, Lay Ministry, and History. At the present time, the Rev. John Henderson continues his work with the college assisting the Principal in re-visioning the place and the design of lay education at Knox. Part of this work is to alert the college to trends and experiences from the perspective of congregational needs and what is taking place in educational and lay ministries in other places in North America.

Four courses were offered this year, two in the fall and two in the winter. In the fall of 2015 “Evil, Suffering and the Love of God” taught by the Rev. Dr. Dong Ha Kim and “Listening for a Transforming Word: Bible Study and the Church” taught by Dr. Laura Alary. A total of 14 and 12 students respectively took these courses. Of these students, 5 had never taken a Ewart lay education course before.

In the winter term, “Introduction to the New Testament” taught by Dr. Laura Alary had 13 students registered, 7 of whom had never taken a Ewart lay education course before. “Pastoral Care: Loving God’s People” taught by the Rev. Dr. Pamela McCarroll had 10 registrants of whom 1 was new to on-line lay education.

In conjunction with the Knox-Ewart Graduates Association (KEGA), a series of webinars is in the planning stages.

Asian-Canadian Centre for Theology and Ministry

This year the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology and Ministry continued its focus on academic and practical research for the Asian-Canadian Churches in Canada.

The first research project was entitled, *Religious Attitudes and Commitment Among 1.5 and Second Generation Asian-Canadian Protestant Young Adults*. This study examined religious loyalty among the identified group with the aim of discerning whether religious commitment and attitudes might change when these young people leave high school. A questionnaire of 74 questions was completed by 300 Asian-Canadian young adults. On September 28, 2015, the centre held a public forum to discuss the findings from an analysis of the data and their implications for youth ministry. Over 100 people from diverse backgrounds in terms of ethnicity and age levels participated in the forum. The plan is to publish the results of the study in order for churches to benefit from the insightful findings.

On May 9, 2016, the centre, in partnership with Justice Ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, continued its conference series “Crossing Cultures Together XI”. This year’s theme was “Cracking Open Power and Privilege” facilitated by Peter Noteboom who is a Senior Partner with Global Learning Partners, Deputy General Secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches, and the Associate Secretary for the Council’s Commission on Justice and Peace. It was an opportunity to better understand and identify ways to address the negative effects of power and privilege in the church.

The centre continues to cooperate with the college and its English Tutors program through its hosting of volunteer tutors who provide services in written and spoken English practices to ESL students. Many thanks go to our volunteer English tutors: Mrs. Nancy Mathewson, Ms. Lorna Hutchinson, and the Rev. Noel Gordon. The centre misses Ms. Christie Bentham who served as an English Tutor for many years and passed away during Christmas season last year.

APPRECIATION

One member of the Board of Governors has completed six years of service. We heartily thank Ms. Joanne Stewart for her service to the board on its committees and at its regular meetings as convener of the Administration Committee and as a member of the Executive Committee. With regret, we received the resignation of the Rev. Jane Yoon who served on the Governance Committee and for the past two years on the Academic Committee. We wish her well as she pursues further education out of province.

The Board of Governors also expresses its gratitude to the faculty and staff of the college who work diligently on a daily basis to ensure that the mission of the college is achieved and that every year students are taught, supported and prepared in numerous ways for ministries within The Presbyterian Church in Canada and beyond.

Peter Ross
Convener

J. Dorcas Gordon
Principal

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT**KNOX COLLEGE****RECOMMENDATIONS****Consent Recommendation**

There are no consent recommendations.

Recommendation No. 1

That the above minute of appreciation for the Rev. Dr. Pamela McCarroll be adopted. (see p. 23.1.7)

REPORT**THE REV. DR. DORCAS GORDON****Leaving Knox College in 2018 after 24 years, 18 as Principal**

The Rev. Dr. Dorcas Gordon, Principal of the College, informed the Board of Governors at its February meeting of her desire to take her planned sabbatical during the 2017–2018 academic year with the intention that 2016–2017 would be her final year as Principal of Knox College. The board accepted her intention to resign as noted above and has begun the process of transition. In the meantime, Professor Gordon is committed to continuing her duties as Principal with the same enthusiasm and diligence that she has demonstrated since she assumed this position at Knox in 1999. The board and she look forward to this coming year as a time to bring a number of projects to completion.

“I have thought and prayed long and hard about this decision, and I believe now is the right time,” she said. “By July 2017 the capital campaign will have completed the congregational phase and the work of planned giving, a long-term project through which the campaign will reach its goal, will be well underway. The first stage of new academic programming will be complete, our endowments have grown beyond my expectation, and after a decade of balanced budgets we are well practiced in exercising fiscal responsibility.”

The board is arranging to appoint a search committee to conduct the search for a new Principal, with a focus on ensuring diverse composition of the search committee. Guidelines for the search committee were duly approved by the board on May 12, 2016 and were forwarded to the Assembly Council Executive along with the position description. Subsequently at a meeting on May 16, the Executive gave permission to the college to circularize the presbyteries. The board expects the search committee to be in place by the end of June 2016 and to serve until a Principal-Elect is chosen by the board. The board aims to present the Principal-Elect for approval at the 2017 General Assembly.

The board has established that Knox College needs a leader who:

- Possesses a compelling vision for the future of the College;
- Provides a sense of direction;
- Ensures a strong contemporary curriculum;
- Handles administrative matters efficiently;
- Manages the finances responsibly;
- Speaks on behalf of the College’s interests as a representative to its many partners; and
- Is prepared to manage change effectively, with a balance of risk and caution.

In consultation with the Faculty and Senior Administrative Team, the board has identified key criteria for the new Principal and established a corresponding position description.

THE REV. DR. PAMELA MCCARROLL**Leaving Knox College June 2016 after eight years as Faculty in the area of Pastoral Theology**

The Rev. Dr. Pamela McCarroll will be leaving Knox College to take up the faculty position, Associate Professor of Practical Theology at Emmanuel College effective July 1, 2016. Professor McCarroll came to Knox in 2008 as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and over eight years has carried out that role in an enthusiastic and conscientious manner. A much loved faculty colleague she has a reputation among students as an excellent teacher. Her work in the area of theological field education has refocused this aspect of the M.Div. and M.R.E. degree

programs in significant ways. Knox College will miss Professor McCarroll but wishes her well in this next stage of her theological journey.

A position description was approved by the Knox College Board of Governors at its meeting on May 12, 2016 and permission to circularize the presbyteries has been given by the Executive Committee of Assembly Council. A search committee will be established in the coming months and the plan is to have this position filled by July 1, 2017.

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION

The Rev. Dr. Pamela McCarroll

The Rev. Dr. Pamela McCarroll will be leaving Knox College to take up the faculty position, Associate Professor of Practical Theology, at Emmanuel College effective July 1, 2016. A graduate of Knox College (M.Div.) and the University of St. Michael's College (Ph.D.), Professor McCarroll came to Knox College in 2008 as Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and Director of Theological Field Education. Over eight years she has carried out this role in an enthusiastic and conscientious manner. A much loved faculty colleague she has a reputation among students as an excellent teacher. Her work in the area of theological field education has refocused this aspect of the M.Div. and M.R.E. degree programs in significant ways.

Professor McCarroll brought to her work at Knox many additional qualifications, which have greatly benefitted the college in its academic planning. Her previous experience as Clinical Educator/Professional Leader, Spiritual and Religious Care at Sunnybrook Health Sciences (2006–2008), her Certification as Teaching Supervisor and Specialist (2008–present) in the Canadian Association of Spiritual Care and her qualification as a Registered Psychotherapist in the College of Psychotherapists of Ontario (April 2015) has provided significant leadership to Knox College in its development of a new degree program, focused on forms of ministry practice such as spiritual care in hospitals, the armed forces and prisons as well as in social ministries. Thanks, in no small part, to her initiative this program will be launched in September 2016.

In addition to her teaching, Professor McCarroll has engaged in a significant amount of scholarly research and publication. Of particular importance for both the church and the academy are two books: *The End of Hope-The Beginning: Narratives of Hope in the Face of Suffering and Trauma* (2014) and *Waiting at the Foot of the Cross: Toward a Theology of Hope for Today* (2014). To these she adds a number of chapters in multi-authored books as well as a significant number of papers presented at meetings and symposia, and of course, manuscripts in process. As one deeply concerned for the church, she has spent significant time leading workshops for both laity and clergy, and not surprisingly many of these presentations focus on hope, hope in a congregational context, hope in contexts of violence, hope in crisis, hope and poverty.

Writing to students about her decision, Professor McCarroll states: “As some of you know this decision has come through a challenging discernment process and with all sorts of competing emotions. While it has become clear to me that my move into this position is a Spirit-inspired calling and while I am excited about serving in this position at Emmanuel, I feel great sadness to be leaving my beloved students, colleagues, staff, and community at Knox College. I have relished the opportunities to work with all of you. I am grateful for the leadership of Principal Gordon and my faculty colleagues. I have learned so much from them and from you, my students, and I am deeply grateful. I look forward to continuing to serve as an ordained minister in The Presbyterian Church in Canada and to serve the larger church through my work at Emmanuel.”

Knox will miss Professor McCarroll but wishes her well in this next stage of her theological journey.

Recommendation No. 1

Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the above minute of appreciation for the Rev. Dr. Pamela McCarroll be adopted.

Peter Ross
Convener

J. Dorcas Gordon
Principal

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ST. ANDREW'S HALL

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The mission of St. Andrew's Hall is to form quality leaders who will serve a church that serves the world in Christ's name. Our post-Christendom context makes it more and more difficult to fulfill this mission in traditional ways, but God is always doing new things and is ever faithful to the church. The Board of St. Andrew's Hall is grateful for the resources God has entrusted to us, and is committed to investing these in programs and initiatives that are oriented to the future God is bringing, not to the past. God has been faithful to us, and we are moving forward with confident hope, witnessing to the gospel of Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit leads us.

We have taken crucial steps toward the future of theological education by establishing the St. Andrew's Hall Centre for Missional Leadership. We are exploring various forms of collaboration among all the theological colleges located at the University of British Columbia, including Regent College, Carey Theological College and the St. Mark's-Corpus Christi Colleges, as well as our primary partner, the Vancouver School of Theology. St. Andrew's Hall has contributed resources, personnel and crucial leadership to the remarkable turnaround and renewed energy evident in the Vancouver School of Theology. God is doing new things in Vancouver, and we rejoice to be part of it.

A major rehabilitation of our residential hall is on schedule and will be substantially completed by June 2016. A bank loan at prime has been arranged to finance the project, with the option of paying it off early without penalty at the board's discretion. Funds held for St. Andrew's Hall in The Presbyterian Church in Canada's combined investment fund substantially exceed the value of the loan. The board anticipated and planned for a temporary operating deficit in 2015 due to extraordinary factors, including depreciation write-offs, modest losses of rental revenues during construction, and personnel transitions that involved some overlap in salary payments to those leaving and those coming on board. We expect to return to a nearly balanced budget in 2016, and are projecting operating surpluses again by 2017.

Leadership transitions have gone smoothly since the retirements of the Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris and Ms. Helen Anderson last June. The Rev. Dr. Robert Paul was appointed Dean of St. Andrew's Hall by the General Assembly in June 2015, and assumed his duties in early July. Ms. Deanna Louie, formerly a member of the Board of St. Andrew's Hall, joined the staff in April 2015 and assumed Helen's role after her retirement. Mr. Rod Thomson became convener of the Board, succeeding Mr. David Jennings in that role.

The current generation of the board is deeply grateful for the legacy of excellent leadership and visionary thinking on the part of those who served St. Andrew's Hall before us. Thanks to their bold strategic thinking, timely actions, and diligent attention to the details of sound governance and management, we are well positioned to focus on what matters most – the preparation of leaders equipped to serve our Lord with integrity and intelligence, whatever the future brings.

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

St. Andrew's Hall was chartered on March 14, 1955 by an act of Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, with authority to grant degrees, honorary degrees, and certificates of proficiency in theology. On October 31, 1955, the University of British Columbia Board of Governors approved an application for affiliation with the University. The college was founded in 1957 on a property located on land leased to St. Andrew's Hall by the University of British Columbia for 999 years, with the condition that the college continues to teach theology.

From the beginning, St. Andrew's Hall has fulfilled its educational mandate through and in partnership with the Vancouver School of Theology, as defined by a formal agreement established between the two respective institutions and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A working group representing the two colleges reviews the agreement from time to time to keep it up to date with current needs and opportunities.

St. Andrew's Hall faculty members teach as part of the Vancouver School of Theology faculty. Currently, this includes the Rev. Dr. Richard Topping, the Principal of VST and Professor of Studies in the Reformed Tradition; the Rev. Dr. Robert Paul, Dean of St. Andrew's Hall and Professor of Mission Theology; and the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart, Director of the Centre for Missional Leadership and Director of Presbyterian Formation.

St. Andrew's Hall also has a formal agreement with Regent College, under which Presbyterian students studying for the M.Div. degree at Regent may take courses in Presbyterian polity and history offered by VST concurrently, in order to satisfy requirements for ordination in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

St. Andrew's Hall also offers a variety of other educational opportunities to serve the needs of church leaders in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Recent offerings have included a national training seminar for clerks that was provided through on-line distance learning technology; seminars on missional theology and church planting; seminars for pastors and ruling elders on 'missional church' themes; and ongoing support for graduates now serving churches in Canada.

Thanks to the vision and efforts of former Dean Stephen Farris, the heads of the five theological colleges at UBC meet periodically to explore opportunities for cooperation among the respective schools. A notable achievement is the integration of library cataloguing systems, which has brought together the collections held in the H.R. MacMillan Library (which is housed in the Vancouver School of Theology and in St. Andrew's Hall), the John Richard Allison Library at Regent College, the Dr. John Micallef Memorial Library at St. Mark's College, and a microfilm archive of the Church Missionary Society mission to First Nations people in Canada, which is housed at the Koerner Library of the University of British Columbia. The board and management of St. Andrew's Hall are grateful for a productive, cordial, and mutually beneficial relationship with all the theological colleges at UBC.

The board is also grateful to the General Assembly for supporting theological education through an annual grant from *Presbyterians Sharing*, which represents approximately 5% of our budget.

THE CENTRE FOR MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

The Centre for Missional Leadership (CML) at St. Andrew's Hall equips leaders for witnessing communities with the vision of making missionary disciples who bless and mend God's world. The centre takes seriously the theological principle that the church is missionary by its very nature, and endeavors to form inspired and inspiring missional leaders for Christ's Church of tomorrow, today. The structure of the centre includes the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart as Director and the Rev. Dr. Darrell Guder as Senior Fellow in Residence. Dr. Guder is on site several times throughout the year to teach courses and serve as "Missionary Architect" of the centre's work. In addition, we are developing a network of fellows from across North America who are experienced in missional theology and practice, and ministry practitioners who are leading innovative ministries to form vibrant witnessing missional communities. The Centre for Missional Leadership aims to be a place of research, teaching and practice that is a resource to the wider church to help in learning how to engage in mission in our post-Christendom cultural context, so that God's reputation is enhanced wherever we live, work and play.

We are grateful for the significant support of donors to this program, and welcome conversations with other Presbyterians who are interested in investing in leadership development for the church of the future in Canada.

PERSONNEL

The past year has involved significant transitions in personnel at St. Andrew's Hall with the retirements of the Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris and Ms. Helen Anderson at the end of June. The Rev. Dr. Robert Paul became Dean in July, and has been received as a Minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada through the Education and Reception Committee, and as a member of the Presbytery of Westminster. Ms. Deanna Louie, who is a chartered accountant, became Director of Finance and Operations in April after having served previously on the Board of St. Andrew's Hall, in private industry, and with the University of British Columbia. The Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart continues his work as Director of Presbyterian Formation and Director of the Centre for Missional Leadership. Ms. Sumarme Goble leads the Campus Ministries department, with able assistance from student chaplains Janet Taylor, Roberto DeSandoli, and Andrea Perrett. Ms. Mihye Park serves as Housing Manager, with assistance from Ms. Kim Woody and community coordinators Silva Kraal, Xiaoyi Ze, and Onyoo Kim. Ms. Mavis Ho serves as Executive Assistant to the Dean, Secretary to the Board of Management, and provides administrative assistance for the Centre for Missional Leadership. Ms. Amy Lin assists with bookkeeping and financial administration, and we are blessed by the good services of Mr. Greg Bonkowski in facilities maintenance and Mr. Rick Smith as custodian.

THE YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION

The property on which St. Andrew's Hall is located is approximately three acres in size and is located in the so-called 'theological neighborhood' at the University of British Columbia, in close proximity to four other theological colleges and near the centre of the campus. Steps were taken to development portions of this valuable property during the past decade, which has helped St. Andrew's Hall to achieve and maintain a strong financial condition.

The current residential facility was built in 1995, with the capacity to accommodate between 200–250 individuals, depending on how many families with young children are in residence. Studies completed in 2014–2015 revealed that extensive repairs were needed on the exterior cladding and roof of the building, and would be needed at some point on interior piping as well.

Based on this assessment and the value of extending the useable life of the facility, the Board of St. Andrew's Hall on June 19, 2015 authorized a contract with the Engineering Consultant firm RDH to oversee a major rehabilitation project, with an original budget of \$4.2 million. Additions to the scope of the project were subsequently approved, on October 8, 2015, as additional needs were identified. The most substantial increase in scope involved the complete replacement of interior piping throughout the facility. These additions brought the total authorized budget to \$4,775,500, including contingency funds. The project is on schedule to be completed by the end of May 2016.

Working and living in the midst of a major construction project has presented many challenges for the staff and residents of St. Andrew's Hall. Early in the project, scaffolding went up around the entire building. The rehabilitation process began with new shingles on the roof, followed by the removal of the exterior stucco right down to the studs. Areas affected by water incursion were identified repaired, and then all windows were removed and replaced with new ones. Finally, new exterior cladding designed to eliminate future water incursion problems was applied in stages. At the same time, a subcontracting company, Cambridge Plumbing, systematically worked through the building from one end to the other, replacing all the interior plumbing from the main supply lines to the feeder lines connected to kitchens and bathrooms in every unit. In addition to the noise, dust, and daily disruptions caused by work on the exterior of the building, the interior plumbing involved scheduled entries by workmen into apartment units to remove sections of drywall, remove old pipes, install new ones, and repair the drywall. This process required about three weeks of intermittent activity in each apartment unit.

Two significant water escape events occurred when construction workers accidentally damaged fire sprinkler pipes. In one of these, three families were displaced because their apartments were rendered uninhabitable by water damage. St. Andrew's Hall secured alternative housing for them. The damaged units have required extensive repairs, which meant a loss of rental revenue for these units.

Despite these difficulties, which are inherent risks in a large construction project, residents and staff have persevered and weathered the process. A construction rebate to residents was planned from the beginning of the project, anticipating the disruptions that were likely to occur. In light of actual experience, the board recently authorized an increase in the amount, along with its sincere appreciation for the resiliency and understanding of residents who have lived through this year of construction with patience and grace.

The board is also grateful for the excellent management of this project by its Property Development Committee, chaired by Mr. Ian Rokeby. Former board members Mr. David Jennings and Mr. Alan Hartley have continued to participate in this committee, along with Dean Robert Paul, Convener Rod Thomson, and Director of Finance and Operations Deanna Louie.

MINUTE OF APPRECIATION

The board wishes to express its deep appreciation for the service of Mr. Robert Paterson and Ms. Val Kerekes in relation to financial accounting and management. Mr. Robert Paterson has served as treasurer for the past seven years. His acumen in financial matters and his advocacy for sound management principles has been an important factor in establishing a secure financial basis for the work of St. Andrew's Hall. We will miss his presence at our meetings, and wish him well in all his future endeavours. Ms. Val Kerekes for many years has rendered able and faithful assistance with year-end accounting and the preparation of reports and statements for the annual audit. Her services will be sorely missed, and we wish her well, with gratitude for all her work.

Rod Thomson
Convener

Robert Paul
Dean

VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

Vancouver School of Theology is a theological graduate school that offers a wide range of degree, diploma, certificate and continuing education programs with sufficient flexibility to accommodate a variety of goals and personal circumstances. Together with the core work of the school preparing candidates for Christian leadership in the church and the world, the school has a stream of Inter-Religious Studies and Indigenous Studies, unique in North America. There is rich overlap and intersection between these streams deepening and broadening theological education. Vancouver School of Theology is a Theological College of the Anglican and United Churches of Canada, with which The Presbyterian Church in Canada is associated through St. Andrew's Hall. The Vancouver School of Theology has a dedicated board, under the wise and able direction of Mr. Michael Francis, chair. It is composed of representatives of all the supporting denominations and it meets at least quarterly to review the strategic direction, development, sustainability and excellence of all streams of VST's community of learning. Mission: Vancouver School of Theology is called to educate and form thoughtful, engaged and generous Christian leaders.

NEW FACULTY

In 2015 VST hired 5 new faculty and St. Andrew's Hall hired a new Dean, who teaches at VST. They are:

- The Rev. Ray Aldred, Director Indigenous Studies and Professor of Indigenous Theology;
- The Rev. Dr. Jason Byassee, Butler Chair in Homiletics and Biblical Interpretation;
- Rabbi Dr. Laura Duhan-Kaplan, Director Inter-Religious Studies and Professor of Jewish Studies;
- The Rev. Dr. Travis O'Brian, Anglican Director of Denomination Formation (Anglican Studies);
- The Rev. Dr. Robert Paul, Dean St. Andrew's Hall, Professor of Mission Theology;
- The Rev. Grant Rodgers, Anglican Director of Denomination Formation (Anglican Formation).

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris will complete his sabbatical in June 2016, after which he will retire. We are very grateful for the leadership of Dr. Farris for over 12 years at St Andrew's Hall and Vancouver School of Theology. We do hope to keep him active at VST in the years to come. The Rev. Dr. Robert Paul and the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart, both of St Andrew's Hall, both play key roles in the leadership and vitality of the Vancouver School of Theology.

PROVINCIAL ACCREDITATION

The Province of British Columbia now requires that all post-secondary educational institutions be accredited by the province. We submitted a thorough application for accreditation and received the EQA certification from the province. Education Quality Assurance (EQA) provides protection for all our students in the event of dissolution and certifies our school as a going concern. It also allows students to receive government loans to attend VST. This accreditation by the province is proof of good governance and fiscal responsibility. It also provides reassurance to foreign students who register at our school.

NEW BUILDING, BUDGET AND VST FOUNDATION

In October 2015, the Vancouver School of Theology moved into its new purpose built, IT savvy facility. A significant change to our school in the last year lies in our enhanced ability to deliver programs remotely. The new VST building is equipped with five Smart Classrooms. We now use Adobe Connect software for real time delivery of classes to students across British Columbia and elsewhere in the country. Class lectures are also archived on the Moodle platform for asynchronous learners. We have engaged in serious training with our teaching faculty in order to make the best use of this new capacity. An official opening was held in November 2015 with officials from all supporting denominations in attendance, as well as representatives from our Indigenous partners. In our new building we are renting space to a coffee shop and to St. Mark's, a Roman Catholic College, to provide a revenue stream for the school, add animation to our building and interact with the university community. The new VST Foundation, established to manage the net proceeds from the sale of the Iona building, together with other assets, holds over \$30 million. The Board of the Foundation is peopled with experts in the field of financial management.

The school is well on its way to a balanced budget for 2015–2016 (year end is April 30), and forecasts the same for its next fiscal year.

LIBRARY

The H.R. MacMillan Library officially re-opened February 4, 2016 in our new facility. The school houses its active collection in this space, with a secondary collection held at St. Andrew's Hall. Our increased commitment to electronic resources supports off-campus students, hybrid delivery of theological education and our extension sites in Calgary and Victoria. A new library software system (OCLC) allows us to integrate connections to electronic resources and cooperate more closely in an 'electronic' consortium with our neighbours at other theological colleges in the neighbourhood. Dr. Naomi Lloyd is our new co-ordinator of Library Technical Services.

ENGAGEMENT WITH CHURCHES

One of the central goals of our new strategic plan is to engage more fully with our denominational partners, and the wider community, to support the work of Christian ministry for the flourishing of all God's people. The following is an inventory of some of the significant cooperative ventures: Syrian Refugee Sponsorship together with Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver Acts, City in Focus, Primex Investment and Ajjal; Kathleen Norris at St Mary's Kerrisdale for lecture and workshop, June 2015; Jason Byassee Preaching Workshops with Diocese of New Westminster, February/November 2016; Hillhurst United, Calgary – four weekends of instruction with VST faculty on Theology, Old Testament, New Testament and Christian Spirituality, 'Theology for the First Time,' January 2016, with over 2000! attending; William Willimon, Preaching Workshop, Christ Church Cathedral, January 2016; Lillian Daniel, Revitalizing the Church Conference 'Religion without Ranting,' May 2016; Co-sponsor of 'Inspire Conference' – leadership with youth and children, March 2016; Theology Sunday – preaching opportunities for students at local churches, February 2016, in over 45 churches; the Principal was invited to offer the Niblett Lecture at Sarum College, Salisbury, UK, in October of 2015. The address was entitled, 'Troubling Context: Mainline Protestant Theology Education in Canada' and will be published in Encounter, Spring 2016.

(RE)NEW PROGRAMS

This year a number of new programs were started at the Vancouver School of Theology. A new emphasis on Anglican Formation supported by a grant from the Anglican Foundation is taking shape. This program recognizes that with increasing numbers of part-time students the school needs to be innovative in the work of formation for ministry in retreat format and intensive delivery of programs. This model is important for all our students. The school is developing a certificate in Youth and Children's Ministry in cooperation with our denominational partners, meeting a real need for the churches of the Lower Mainland and beyond. This emphasis is being built into our summer school, day programs and intensive formats. Conversations continue with the Sauder Executive School at UBC in the interests of a certificate in Entrepreneurial Ministry. 'The Teaching House that Moves,' is an innovative project for ministry in Indigenous communities funded by a grant from the Fellowship of the Maple Leaf. This proposal is being developed by the Rev. Ray Aldred in collaboration with Indigenous Anglican Bishop Mark McDonald. A new annual inter-religious conference, 'Religious Constructions of the Other' will be held May 15–17. Dr. Marc Gopin, Director of the Centre for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University, will be the Keynote speaker. VST summer school (July 4–15) will reboot after a two-year hiatus. Instructors include Visiting Distinguished Scholar, Dr. Daniel Boyarin, of the University of California, Berkeley; Dr. Jason Byassee, of VST; Dr. Jay Daniel, of Hendrix College, youth specialist Dr. Kathy Dawson of Columbia Theological Seminary and Missional Theologian, the Rev. Dr Bob Paul of St. Andrew's Hall. The Native Ministries Consortium Summer School takes place at VST, July 11–22. This annual event allows distance students to complete courses on site in a community of Indigenous students and scholars from across the North American, including Hawaii, Alaska and also Oceania. Courses this year include: 'North American Indigenous Spirituality' with the Rev. Dr. Randy Woodley, United Keetoowah Band Cherokee; 'The Land is Sacred' with the Rev. Ray Aldred, Cree; Reading the Old Testament Through Post-Colonial Eyes, with Dr. Ira Mangililo, Indonesian First Nations; 'Let's Go to Church,' with the Rev. Marlene Whiterabbit Helgemo, Ho Chuck. A renewal of the covenant of Indigenous Partners that make up the Consortium will be a part of the summer school. This renewal of the covenant marks the 30+1 anniversary of the Consortium.

ACADEMIC ENROLLMENT

The fall 2015 head count was 124 and increased to 147 in the spring of 2016. The number of course registrations for the fall of 2015 increased by 10 from the previous academic year to 257. The spring semester saw 329 course registrations. The number of full-time equivalent students in the fall of 2015 was 59 and it increased to 70 in the

spring of 2016. 20 Presbyterian students were registered in the spring of 2015. This number increased to 25 in the spring of 2016. The United Church of Canada form the largest part of our student body (55); Anglican/Episcopalian the second largest (36) and Presbyterian students the third (25). We have students from at least 12 different Christian denominations. On May 9, 2016 we will confer degrees and certificates on 30 students at our Convocation at Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church. An honorary doctorate will be presented to Mr. David Jennings, former convener of the Board at St Andrew's Hall and VST board member. Mr. Jennings efforts as a member of the Turning Point and Property Management Teams was crucial to the renewal of VST. Senator Lois Wilson, the first female Moderator of the United Church, Companion of the Order of Canada and 1985 recipient of the Pearson Medal of Peace will also be a recipient of an honorary doctorate. Our convocation speaker is the Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, author of *When Spiritual but not Religious is Not Enough*. On May 10, for the second year, we will offer a special event for local church leaders with Lillian Daniel entitled, "Religion Without Ranting, Spirituality Without Stereotypes". This workshop is sponsored by the Hugh and Helen Mogensen Fund for Church Revitalization.

MAJOR GIFTS

In 2015–2016, alongside our regular donor support, we received a number of major donations. We received \$300,000 in October 2015 for recruitment of outstanding students. The money will provide 8 entrance scholarships for students with B+ average and the endorsement of their denomination, \$100,000 to support housing costs for students attending VST intensive courses on site and funding to increase the hours of our new Recruitment Officer, the Rev. Julie Lees. St Andrew's Hall and Presbyterian students will benefit from this gift. We received \$50,000 in November 2015 from a private donor to support our library. A \$500,000 gift from the BC Conference and the Presbytery of Vancouver-Burrard (United Church of Canada) was received in December 2015 to ensure a robust United Church presence on Faculty of VST. This money, for which we are incredibly grateful, will be held in the VST Foundation. The national office of the United Church also restored funding for one full-time academic position for the next two years. Finally, we received commitment of \$72,000 to support Indigenous Studies at Vancouver School of Theology and a start up grant for our innovative new project: 'The Teaching House that Moves'.

We offer thanks for the partnership that Vancouver School of Theology has with The Presbyterian Church in Canada, through St Andrew's Hall. Together we work to equip our students to participate in God's mission to the world in Jesus Christ. Be assured of our prayers for the General Assembly and The Presbyterian Church in Canada as you serve Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God.

Richard Topping
Principal

TRUSTEE BOARD

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (the board) is incorporated by Federal Statute and by ancillary legislation in every province. The board met four times during 2015 and has sought to ensure that it has properly discharged its statutory responsibilities as trustees and acted in a most fiduciary manner. The board acts at the direction of the General Assembly and the Assembly Council and is responsible for giving close attention to the matters with which it is charged.

We welcomed to the Trustee Board, the Rev. Cameron Bigelow, convener of the Pension and Benefits Board, and Mr. Bruce Templeton from Newfoundland. Mr. Templeton had previously sat on the Pension and Benefits Board. We also welcomed the Rev. Robert Smith from Alberta and the Rev. Victor Gavino from Quebec. Mr. Gordon Higgins resigned from the board in November.

Eckler Partners Ltd. continues to perform a quarterly investment review of the fund managers and presents its report to the board. Jason Campbell also attends on Eckler's behalf the Investment Advisory Committee (IAC) meetings. The purpose of the committee is to assist the Trustee Board in meeting the requirements of the Trustee Act and fulfilling its obligations by receiving fund manager reports, meeting with fund managers, educating ourselves in relevant areas and making recommendations to the board. With Eckler's guidance and the positive nature of the returns on both the Pension and Consolidated portfolios, we made no changes with regard to managers. We have created a review process that allows the committee to monitor each manager and recommend to the Trustee Board any changes if needed.

We are pleased to submit the following list of securities showing those:

- purchased or received during the year;
- matured or sold during the year;
- held by the board at December 31, 2015 on behalf of the funds of the church;
- a list of properties whose title is held by the board for organizations of the church; and
- a list of loans outstanding.

The following are currently members of the Trustee Board:

Mr. Timothy Herron (convener)	Mr. Richard Anderson
The Rev. Cameron Bigelow	Dr. Margaret Ogilvie
The Rev. Victor Gavino	The Rev. Robert Smith
Mr. Stephen Roche	Ms. Esther Inglis
The Rev. Stephen Kendall	Mr. Gordon Marshall
Ms. Drusilla Bryan	Ms. Diane Cameron
Mr. Bruce Templeton	

Ex-officio without vote:

Ms. Barbara Nawratil, secretary
Mr. Jed Blackburn provides counsel to the Trustee Board at its invitation.

Timothy Herron
Convener

Barbara Nawratil
Secretary

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no recommendations.

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Council Executive of the Women's Missionary Society respectfully submits the following report.

COUNCIL

The biennial Council meeting took place at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre from May 1–3, 2015. There were approximately 50 delegates, staff and guests in attendance.

The theme was "Seize the Hope" based on Hebrews 6:13–20. This theme was carried out throughout the conference, starting with the Rev. Dr. Pam McCarroll, professor at Knox College, who gave a talk on "Hope" on the first day. Music was led by the McLennans (that is, Susan and Mark) with Joy Randall on the piano.

The business was carried out as usual, with the approval of the budget estimates for 2016 and 2017. As well, the Auditor's reports for 2013 and 2014 were approved.

There were many guest speakers, as follows:

1. The Rev. Dr. Richard Fee spoke, his last time as General Secretary before retirement in September 2015.
2. From PWS&D, Guy Smagghe and Jennifer Ramkissoon spoke about the Mayan people of Guatemala. PWS&D has an ongoing partnership with the AMMID (Maya Mam Association for Research and Development).
3. President Betty Siverns, along with Janet Brewer and Joan Smith, gave a presentation on their trip to Afghanistan in 2013.
4. The Bible study was led by the Rev. Kristine O'Brien, minister of Trafalgar Church. The scripture passage studied was Hebrews 6:13–20, reflecting on the theme on hope.
5. June Campbell spoke on Human Trafficking.
6. The Rev. Deb Rapport, Director of ARISE Ministry, spoke on sex trafficking in the Toronto area.

With the closing of the Book Room, Susan Clarke was invited to Council for a time of recognition. Susan was shown much appreciation for developing the Book Room for 15 years as its Manager. Through Susan, the Book Room served the whole of The Presbyterian Church in Canada as well as the WMS with a wide selection of books and resources.

Interspersed with the Bible study and presentations, business was also carried out. The following were some decisions made by Council:

1. It was decided that the WMS will continue as the umbrella organization and that the PCW (Presbyterian Church Women) would fall under the WMS. The PCW will be the outreach ministry of the WMS.
2. The Women's Gathering will be an ongoing ministry of the WMS to be held every three years.
3. The Together We Can! projects for 2015–2017 will be the Mayan people of Guatemala and ARISE Ministry of East Toronto Presbytery.
4. The number of delegates to Council was reduced to reflect the declining membership as well as for cost-saving reasons. The number of representatives on Council Executive was also reduced.

Saturday ended with a fun-filled time around a campfire, singing songs and playing games. Sunday worship and communion was led by the Rev. Mark McLennan. After the election of officers, Mark also installed the new executive. The newly installed President, Susan McLennan, closed the Council meeting with prayer.

The next Council meeting will be May 18, 2017, the day before the Women's Gathering at the Sheraton Parkway Hotel in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

The Council Executive met in full session on November 11 and 12, 2015, at 50 Wynford Drive.

There were two presentations from mission exposure trips which took place in 2015: Susan McLennan and Shirley Miller presented the Guatemala Trip; Sarah Kim and Janet Brewer presented the Tumekutana Conference near Accra, Ghana.

The Finance Committee presented the budget for 2016 which was approved. Also, various grant decisions were made, some of which are listed below.

The PCW Working Group presented several recommendations for consideration. Council Executive decided the following coming from the recommendations:

1. That the new name for the outreach arm of the WMS will be called "Women To Women" (WTW).
2. That the website name for WTW will be called *The Hub*.
3. That a WTW Committee will be formed, composed of the current PCW Working Group members plus two more women.

MISSION RESOURCES

Resources for Mission Awareness Sunday were distributed to all WMS and affiliated groups in February 2016. This year the resource was written by the Rev. Lara Scholey. Resources for Mission Awareness Sunday are available online at wmspcc.ca, or through the WMS office.

The WMS popular report 'On the Move in Mission' marked its 15th year publication this past year. This resource continues to serve as an excellent promotional tool for the Society and for mission.

Glad Tidings continues to be published six times a year, and is available by subscription (\$15 plus tax for one year). It is interesting to note that our subscribers are not all WMS members, and even a few men subscribe to the magazine. Topics are varied and of interest to many across The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In 2015, we had articles on food security, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, camping ministry, housing and many more. In addition, there are worship services, devotionals and reports from missionaries and WMS groups.

Glad Tidings also prints a study. This year we are undertaking a two-year (eight-session) study on women that began in the July/August 2015 edition. It will include topics such as domestic violence, care-giving, and some focus on women in our partner churches and organizations around the world.

WOMEN TO WOMEN (WTW)

Last year, we reported that the PCW would become an outreach ministry of the WMS, and we have moved forward with this ministry throughout the past year. At the Council Executive Meeting in November 2015, it was decided that this new outreach arm would be called Women To Women (WTW). A committee was created to brainstorm and give structure to this new mission of the WMS as follows:

Mission Statement	Presbyterian women serving, sharing, and spiritual living.
Goals	Resourcing, mentoring, and networking.
Purpose	To reach out to Presbyterian women across Canada and globally, to network women to women, with common women's experiences and concerns.

To meet the needs of women, much of the work will be relationship focused. We will connect women through topics like work, marriage, parenting, caring for caregivers, social justice themes and leadership development.

To help accomplish our mission, we will also engage women in service, at all levels of the church, both clergy and laity. We will also share educational resources and calls to action for community impact and prayer support, for both Canadian and international partners. Women will have the opportunity to share their experiences with other women across Canada, and even around the world.

We also know that many women are stretched and often forget about their own personal discipleship and spiritual development, so we will also provide resources that nurture spiritual living. Through various means such as our new blog and the National Presbyterian Women's Gathering in 2017, we will provide an opportunity for self-reflection and authentic faith growth.

Much of the initial work done by this committee has been the development of *The Hub*, which was launched in January 2016.

The Hub (womenshub.ca) is an online space for women to share their Reformed faith and how it relates to their daily lives. It is a place to create relationships with women who identify themselves as Presbyterian. Through regular blog posts, we hope that women will feel a part of this community, that they will hear their stories in the words of another. We pray that relationships will develop among our readers and that their relationship with God will also be deepened. We hope the blog posts will also encourage women to continue to serve God in their daily life. We hope it will be a lively site that welcomes and encourages discussion among its readers. Many of the posts will include ways in which women reach out into their community (locally and globally), and how they work towards justice for the marginalized, the neglected, or the forgotten. *The Hub* is also supported by the *Women To Women* Facebook page.

NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S GATHERING 2017

The third National Presbyterian Women's Gathering is well underway with planning and preparation. A Planning Team of 20 members from across the country have been working since May 2015. The information/registration booklets were mailed out early March 2016. The following are some highlights; detailed information can be found in the booklets or on the Women's Gathering website (womensgathering.ca) or through *The Hub* (womenshub.ca).

- Date: May 19–22, 2017 (Victoria Day Long Weekend)
- Venue: Sheraton Parkway Hotel and Conference Centre, Richmond Hill, Ontario
- Registration Fee: early registration \$365; regular \$465; family discounts \$50/person; student discount \$50
- Early deadline: November 30, 2016
- Final deadline: March 31, 2017
- Theme: Rooted In Love (Ephesians 3:14–21)

Many things are being planned, including: many workshop topics, four forums with special speakers, uplifting worships each day, Spirituality Centre, Saturday evening program with dinner and show presenting Aboriginal culture. There will be worship and praise each day; the praise leader will be the Rev. Hugh Donnelly, minister of Guildwood Church. Four women clergy will be preaching each day: the Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls, the Rev. Mona Scrivens, the Rev. Linda Ashfield, and the Rev. Karen Horst.

Keynote Speakers:

- Mary Jo Leddy: Founder of Romero House, a home for refugees in Toronto; professor at Regis College, Toronto School of Theology; writer of *Radical Gratitude*, *The Other Face of God*; *When the stranger calls us Home*; recipient of the Order of Canada
- Jean Chamberlain: Gynaecologist, works at McMaster University and in Uganda as a teaching doctor; Founder of "Save The Mothers, Canada"
- Cindy Blackstock: Lawyer and advocate for Aboriginal children in Canada; Executive Director of First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCFS); Associate Professor at the University of Alberta

Saturday Evening Program

Aboriginal Night with cultural presentation by Tribal Vision Performers and keynote speech by Dr. Cindy Blackstock.

Spirituality Centre

A special guest, the Rev. Theresa Cho, minister of Presbyterian Church (USA), will set up and lead the Spirituality Centre with assistance from our three chaplains, the Rev. Jean Morris (Calgary), the Rev. Theresa Han (Toronto), and the Rev. Cynthia Chenard (Halifax).

Forums

1. Theme passage: the Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset
2. Spiritual Disciplines: the Rev. Theresa Cho
3. Inclusiveness: Sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, age, etc.: the Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher-Walls
4. *Half the Sky* – the Rev. Sarah Kim will lead this video presentation

Workshops

1. ARISE: In Hope and Love – the Rev. Deb Rapport
2. Blanket Exercise – Katharine Masterton
3. Connecting a Garden to the Globe – the Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee

4. Dance to Praise Him – Anointed Joy and Sharon Geigl
5. Every life needs...to make a difference – Raw Carrot, the Rev. Joel and Ms. Rebecca Sherbino
6. *Half the Sky* video presentation – the Rev. Sarah Kim
7. Pray All Ways: Expanding Your Prayer Toolbox – Laura Alary
8. Reconciliation in the Watershed – KAIROS
9. Suffering, Prayer and God – the Rev. Dr. Pam McCarroll
10. With Hands and Hearts: Creating Outreach in a Changing Canada – Karen Stiller and Patricia Paddey
11. Global music/songs through the church year – the Rev. Hugh Donnelly
12. Spirituality (English and Korean) – the Rev. In Kee Kim
13. Theme workshop – the Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset
14. Passing on the Faith/Family ministry – the Rev. Jacqui Foxall

The second *Presbyterian Woman of Faith Award* will be presented at the Sunday Banquet dinner. Congregations and groups across the country are encouraged to nominate a Presbyterian woman for this award. Contact Liz Brewer at church offices for more information.

STAFF CHANGES

The Presbyterian Church in Canada Finance Department approached the WMS with the suggestion to take over the WMS Financial Officer's work. The Council Executive considered this and approved the decision. Subsequently, after almost two years of working as Financial Officer in the WMS, Elza Furzer finished as of November 2015. As well, arrangements were made to have Sheilah Alyea do some administrative work for the WMS, starting in December 2015.

PARTNERSHIP WITH WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

The WMS is active in a number of women's organizations within Canada and around the world.

Sarah Kim and Susan McLennan attended the Presbyterian Church USA Women's Gathering in Minneapolis that was held from June 18–21, 2015. More than 1,700 women (from around the United States and the world!) went to Minneapolis. It was a very interesting experience to be part of the international delegation. The theme of the Gathering was "One Body, One Spirit". Through many wonderful plenary speakers and workshop leaders we heard that, if we "welcome one another through God's spirit, we will unite as one body empowered to embody Christ's love in the world."

A WMS group, including Susan McLennan, WMS President, travelled to Guatemala from September 30–October 9, 2015. The projects supported by the WMS in Guatemala include food security, women's empowerment and the education of children. Women receive training on agro-ecology, livestock production, veterinary care, gender equality and Mam cultural identity and land rights. The groups that were visited by the delegation were very encouraged by our visit and wanted most of all for their stories to be shared with others. By strengthening their abilities and increasing their knowledge, these women are improving the future for their children and families. When women are strong, communities are strong. The work we are supporting is important and useful.

In September 2015, Sarah Kim and Janet Brewer attended the Tumekutana African Women's Conference held near Accra, Ghana. There were women from 22 African countries, 5 Presbyterian Church (USA), 2 Church of Scotland, and 2 The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Tumekutana is a Swahili word meaning "We have come together". It was started by a former Presbyterian Church (USA) missionary, Ms. Caryl Weinberg, who had the vision to bring together Presbyterian/Reformed Church women from African countries for a time of sharing their common concerns. This was the third conference. The first conference was held in Nairobi in 2007; the second one was in Rwanda in 2011; the third was to take place in 2014 but was delayed until 2015 because of the Ebola outbreak. This was an excellent opportunity to meet women in African churches and hear the grass-roots stories and concerns; relationships were also built and strengthened.

The WMS has had a long partnership with the Women's Inter-church Council of Canada (WICC). As well as making financial contributions, the WMS sends a representative to sit on their committee. WICC is a member organization on the World Council of Churches. It is the organization that produces the World Day of Prayer resource as well as participating in the Fellowship of the Least Coin.

The WMS is also a voting member on the National Council of Women of Canada. Although this is a non-church organization based in Ottawa, we give voice to Presbyterian women through our membership and vote.

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AGENCIES OF THE CHURCH

The Together We Can! projects, which were decided at Council 2015, continue to raise funds for the following projects: Mayan Women (Guatemala) that raised \$7,858.11 in 2015; and ARISE Ministry (Canada) that raised \$8,083.53 in 2015.

A contribution of \$100,000 was given to the General Fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 2015. This grant will continue in 2016. In 2017, the grant will be \$50,000.

The WMS continues to give annual student bursaries of \$1,000 each to Knox College, Presbyterian College and the Vancouver School of Theology.

In addition to the above, the WMS gave grants from its various endowment funds for individuals as well as for projects. The following are some of the recent grants:

1. A grant of \$2000 was given for the construction of a bore-well for the Mendha Community in India.
2. From the Pauline Brown Fund, \$10,000 (CAD) was given for 18 students at the Isabel McConnell School of Nursing (Jobat, India) for two years study \$600 for each student.
3. From the Giollo Kelly Memorial Leadership Development Fund, \$3600 was given for 12 students to participate in the Knox College mission education trip to Cuba.
4. From Undesignated Legacies, \$5000 (US) was given for the Tumekutana Conference to assist the African women's travel to attend the conference.
5. From the Ewart E. Henderson Fund, a grant of \$5000 was given for Minister's Wives' Theological Education of the Blantyre Synod, Malawi (through the Women's Desk of the Synod).

The Council Executive gave a grant of up to \$10,000 (CAD) from the Nettie Gemmell Fund to the Tumekutana African Women's Conference every three years.

The WMS is very grateful to all our members who give generously through second mile givings. We are also grateful to all Presbyterians for their support of the Together We Can! projects.

Susan McLennan
President

Sarah Kim
Executive Director

REFERRED OVERTURES – 2016

NO. 1 – PRESBYTERY OF PARIS

Re: Revising appointment protocols for associate secretaries

(Referred to Assembly Council, p. 2.1.28–29)

WHEREAS, the position of the General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency is one of the most responsible and important staff appointments in The Presbyterian Church in Canada requiring the confirmation of the nominee by the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, in recent times this vacancy has been filled only by persons who are currently associate secretaries of the Life and Mission Agency; and

WHEREAS, the appointment of associate secretaries are not reviewed nor confirmed by the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, such recent practice has in effect rendered the hiring and confirmation of the General Secretary to be limited to only those who are associate secretaries;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Paris humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to instruct the appropriate agency to revise hiring protocols for the Life and Mission Agency so that the appointment of associate secretaries are confirmed by the General Assembly or do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

NO. 2 – PRESBYTERY OF WINNIPEG

Re: Timeline regarding overtures relating to human sexuality

(Referred to Assembly Council, in consultation with the Clerks of Assembly, p. 2.1.29–31, 7.1.12)

WHEREAS, there is uncertainty and anxiety in The Presbyterian Church in Canada about the present conversation regarding sexual orientation and the inclusion of LGBTQ persons who are in active sexual relationships among the ordained leadership of the church; and

WHEREAS, there are voices on social media and in traditional social contexts saying that a decision will be made at the 2016 General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, there are voices saying that the year 2015–2016 is a year of prayer and discernment and “a study and report process” will follow this year of prayer and discernment; and

WHEREAS, still other voices have suggested other processes and timelines are at work; and

WHEREAS, this lack of clarity about the timeline and the process adds to the anxiety and creates an environment that nurtures speculation and rumour which hampers the ability to have this important conversation;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Winnipeg humbly overtures the Venerable, 142nd General Assembly to provide the church with a clear timeline so Canadian Presbyterians can know when decisions will be made, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

NO. 3 – PRESBYTERY OF WINNIPEG

Re: Barrier Act and an individual’s dissent

(Referred to Clerks of Assembly, p. 7.1.6)

WHEREAS, the church affirms “Any member of a court who has voted on a question and is not satisfied with the decision is entitled to have his/her dissent recorded. By so doing he/she relieves himself/herself from responsibility for the decision and saves himself/herself from censure on account of it.” (Book of Forms section 91); and

WHEREAS, the church’s procedure for approving “law or rule relative to matters of doctrine, discipline, government or worship” includes the following, “If a majority of the presbyteries of the church replying to a remit sent down under the Barrier Act, as specified in section 293.1, express their approval and this majority of presbyteries constitute an actual majority of ministers, members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries, and elders on the constituent rolls of the presbyteries, the Assembly may pass such proposed law or rule into a standing law of the church.” (Book of Forms section 293.4); and

WHEREAS, this means that a member of a presbytery who dissents against their presbytery’s approval of a remit under the Barrier Act is counted as “expressing their approval” when it comes to determining if “an actual majority” were in favour, and

WHEREAS, to dissent against an action and then be counted as being in favour of it appears to violate the common sense understanding of what dissent means, similarly to have one’s presbytery vote against a remit and to then dissent from that decision to then be counted as opposed violates the common sense understanding of what dissent means;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Winnipeg humbly overtures the Venerable, 142nd General Assembly to change the approval procedure for remits under the Barrier Act so that those individuals who dissent from approving a

remit are not counted as being in favour when a determination is made of “an actual majority”, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

NO. 4 – SESSION OF ST. ANDREW’S, MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

Re: A policy for a congregation leaving the denomination

(Referred to Clerks of Assembly, in consultation with Trustee Board, Assembly Council and Pension and Benefits Board, p. 7.1.2–5, 2.1.28)

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to struggle with issues surrounding human sexuality; and
WHEREAS, polarization of the denomination appears to be increasingly entrenched around related issues which inform the positions of the polarities on the issue of human sexuality and other issues with The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly in the coming years will in all likelihood be making some decisions around human sexuality which will make it increasingly uncomfortable for some parts of the polarities with The Presbyterian Church in Canada regardless of whatever directions are taken by General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has established a precedent of sorts in the Lachine, Quebec situation historically, where a congregation chose to leave the denomination around issues relating to the issue of human sexuality, and were initially able to lease their buildings, and then within a couple of years were able to keep their building at a nominal cost for ‘pastoral reasons’; and

WHEREAS, the reputation of Christ and his kingdom would be enhanced if churches were permitted to leave the denomination in a gracious manner rather than through acrimonious and expensive legal battles; and

WHEREAS, the focus of congregations needs to be on the mission of Christ and his kingdom rather than to be consumed with denominational in-fighting; and

WHEREAS, it is probable that numerous congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada may seek to leave the denomination regardless of whatever decisions may be made by General Assembly in 2016 and the following years;

THEREFORE, the Session of St. Andrew’s, Moncton, New Brunswick, humbly overtures the Venerable, 142nd General Assembly to establish a policy of gracious dismissal from The Presbyterian Church in Canada of dissenting churches from the majority decision, as those congregations in integrity may be unable to continue within The Presbyterian Church in Canada in good conscience, as a result of decisions made by General Assembly with respect to human sexuality; allowing congregations to leave the denomination without due encumbrances, with their buildings, endowments and assets intact, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted with disapproval by the Presbytery of New Brunswick.

NO. 5 – SESSION OF BETHEL, RIVERVIEW, NEW BRUNSWICK

Re: A policy for a congregation leaving the denomination

(Referred to Clerks of Assembly, in consultation with Trustee Board, Assembly Council and Pension and Benefits Board, p. 7.1.2–5, 2.1.28)

WHEREAS, the section on human sexuality in Social Action Handbook documents The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s consideration of issues around human sexuality as beginning in 1964 producing statements and study guides in 1987, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2003 and 2015; and

WHEREAS, within The Presbyterian Church in Canada the ongoing discussions are contributing to an ever increasing polarization of opinion that is opening chasms amongst us rather than drawing us together at a time in our history when focused effort is so very necessary; and

WHEREAS, the climate of the society in which The Presbyterian Church in Canada is presently immersed in does not allow for or tolerate genuine, sincere and loving discussions that take seriously all the starting points of discussion to be found within The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 General Assembly passed a motion that Assembly go on record as ‘giving priority to the reimagining and renewal of our congregations’ and that the 2014 General Assembly passed an additional motion ‘to remember, reaffirm and carry forward the strong statement made by the 2012 General Assembly re the importance of local congregations’; and

WHEREAS, this ongoing discussion could prove to be one that for many congregations in The Presbyterian Church in Canada will be damaging and fractious and diverting of our efforts towards the renewal and reimagining of our congregations as it could be for the denomination itself considering the history of such discussions in some of our sister denominations;

THEREFORE, the Session of Bethel Church, Riverview, New Brunswick, humbly overtures the Venerable, 142nd General Assembly to establish a policy of gracious dismissal from The Presbyterian Church in Canada of churches dissenting from this conversation; allowing congregations to leave the denomination without due encumbrances, with their buildings, endowments and assets intact, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of New Brunswick.

NO. 6 – PRESBYTERY OF SEAWAY-GLENGARRY

Re: Revise SASH Policy when complainant is minister in a congregation

(Referred to Life and Mission Agency Committee (Ministry and Church Vocations) p. 12.1.46–47)

- WHEREAS, ministers of Word and sacraments, diaconal ministers, presbytery appointed lay missionaries, and certified candidates for ministry or ordination, in their roles as church leaders and moderators of the lower court, play a vital role in the life and work of the session; they are involved actively in the whole congregation and bring to the session a deep understanding of the word of God, the needs of the congregation, and the mission of the larger church; and during session meetings, the moderator needs to be free to join in the conversations, while being careful to guard against unduly directing it; and
- WHEREAS, our church leaders due to their positions of leadership within the church, are often put on a pedestal by members of their congregation, including ruling elders, members, adherents, volunteers, salaried employees and members of non-church groups utilizing the church facilities; and
- WHEREAS, sometimes members of the congregation who are impressionable, lonely, gender biased, or have sociopathic traits can become fixated on their church leader, which can manifest itself in romantic attachments, inappropriate sexual comments or behaviour, or attempting to exert sexual control by making false statements about their church leader to others, or by stalking; and
- WHEREAS, our church leaders have a human right to expect that when targeted with unwanted sexual contact, sexual attention, stalking, or when their work is being undermined by false statements made by a perpetrating member of their congregation, the presbytery will receive their complaint, help to identify the problem(s), help to ensure proper boundaries can be maintained, and provide them with pastoral care when dealing with sexual abuse or sexual harassment; and
- WHEREAS, under both federal and provincial human rights legislation The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in its role as the employer of our church leaders, has a legal duty to take steps to prevent and respond to sexual abuse or sexual harassment in the workplace; and
- WHEREAS, sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment cases, involving a church leader/moderator complaining against a member of their congregation, can bring their interests, obligations, or commitments into conflict with the interests, obligations or commitments of their session, thus making these cases especially difficult and delicate; and
- WHEREAS, the current Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment unfairly identifies our church leaders solely as potential perpetrators in all sexual abuse and sexual harassment cases, and fails to fairly and justly provide procedures for synods, presbyteries and sessions to deal with such difficult and delicate cases involving a “complainant” church leader/moderator solely accountable to the presbytery and a “complainee” congregant solely accountable to the session; and
- WHEREAS, the current Policy The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment forces the lower court (session) to receive, investigate and prosecute all complaints that fall under their jurisdiction and fails to address the difficult and delicate circumstances where a church leader/moderator is the “complainant” against a ruling elder, member or adherent or salaried employee of the congregation, thus unfairly placing both the “complainant” and the session in a true conflict of interest; and
- WHEREAS, the stresses of the lower court (session) being forced to deal with sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment complaints of their church leader/moderator, who is the sole responsibility of the higher court (presbytery), against a fellow congregant can also unnecessarily lead to the dissolution of the pastoral tie, which can be perceived as retaliation by presbytery against their own employee for lodging the complaint; and
- WHEREAS, the aforementioned shortcomings in the Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment may force a “complainant” church leader to exercise their legal right to take their complaint directly to the appropriate Provincial Human Rights Commission in order to receive equal and fair treatment of their complaint; and
- WHEREAS, section 87 of the Book of Forms allows for cases of particular difficulty or delicacy, the decision of which, for any reason, it is desirable that a larger body should first decide, be referenced to the higher court;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to revise the Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment to reflect the above concerns, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

NO. 7 – PRESBYTERY OF PARIS

Re: Policy for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination

(Referred to Clerks of Assembly in consultation with Trustee Board, Assembly Council and Pension and Benefits Board, p. 7.1.2–5, 2.1.28)

WHEREAS, issues related to human sexuality and sexual orientation have been almost constantly before The Presbyterian Church in Canada since 1987; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has over the course of that time been significantly divided on various statements, studies and decisions presented to and/or approved by the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the expenditure of the resources of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in terms of time, finances, cost to relational harmony, membership and spiritual energy has clearly been extensive; and

WHEREAS, there were 22 overtures submitted to the 2015 General Assembly related to these topics; and

WHEREAS, it appears that, whatever future decisions are made related to the issues involved, significant division will remain; and

WHEREAS, such sharp and prevailing division neither honours Jesus Christ nor provides vital witness to the gospel; and

WHEREAS, the spirit of the discussion and the amended motion regarding Lachine at the 1998 General Assembly was to allow dissenting congregations to continue independently their mission and ministry in graciousness and without rancor or penalty; and

WHEREAS, there is no present provision whereby a congregation dissenting from a majority decision within The Presbyterian Church in Canada can withdraw from The Presbyterian Church in Canada and expect to retain possession of its property; and

WHEREAS, legal battles over property which are likely to be lengthy, costly to our resources of time, talent and treasury will be a poor witness to the world; and

WHEREAS, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has made allowance for “gracious dismissal” of dissenting congregations whereby congregations may withdraw and become members of other denominations in the Reformed tradition, and be able to retain the title to their property and other material assets; and

WHEREAS, the development of a gracious process to divide, dismiss or dissolve churches in consultation with their members which exercises consistency, pastoral responsibility, transparency and compassionate witness should be our desire;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Paris, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to consider establishing a means for “gracious dismissal” of congregations which might in good conscience either be unable to continue wholeheartedly within the Presbyterian Church in Canada unless significant changes as advocated by some overtures (e.g. Overture Nos. 5, and 23, 2015 are made, or be unable to accept the changes in doctrine or discipline as advocated by these same overtures, or do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

NO. 8 – PRESBYTERY OF PARIS

Re: Standing committees secretaries

(Referred to Assembly Council, p. 2.1.31)

WHEREAS, there exists in various parts of The Presbyterian Church in Canada a perception of increased centralization; and

WHEREAS, in recent years budgetary considerations have reduced the number of staff working at 50 Wynford Drive; and

WHEREAS, significant changes have recently been made to the process and dynamics by which members are elected to serve on national committees; and

WHEREAS, one goal of these changes has been to recruit persons ably suited for the tasks and mandates of those committees; and

WHEREAS, it is critical for each committee to fully own and be responsible for the performance of the tasks assigned to them; and

WHEREAS, recognizing both that staff resources have become more limited and that committee members are quite capable; and

WHEREAS, noting the Assembly Council is mandated to name the Principal Clerk as its secretary;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Paris humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to request the Assembly Council through its advisory function on good governance to strongly encourage and advocate that, with the exception of the Assembly Council, each of our national committees name one of its non-staff members to fulfill the duties of committee secretary, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

NO. 9 – PRESBYTERY OF WINNIPEG

Re: Utilize and develop resources re “passive energy”

(Referred to Assembly Council and Life and Mission Agency Committee (Justice Ministries), p. 2.1.31, 12.1.39–40)

WHEREAS, human beings are to be stewards of the creation; and

WHEREAS, climate change is the most significant environmental threat facing the world; and

WHEREAS, achieving the goals laid out in the Paris Agreement will require commitment on the part of all organizations, institutions and individuals;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Winnipeg humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to:

1. develop and implement an action plan to make 50 Wynford Drive a passive energy building,
2. enter into conversation with the three theological colleges so they would become passive energy spaces; and

to instruct the Life and Mission Agency (Justice Ministries) to:

1. develop a resource to assist congregations in taking steps towards making their buildings energy passive, such a resource to include examples of what actual congregations have done to reduce energy use,
2. explore the viability of clergy serving multi-point charges using electric cars, such an exploration to include cost analysis and discussion of the availability of charging stations,
3. explore the costs involved with congregations that possess strategically located parking lots building charging stations;

or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

UNREFERRED OVERTURES – 2016

NO. 10 – SESSION OF COQUITLAM, COQUITLAM, BRITISH COLUMBIA

RE: Declaring overtures re same sex marriage out of order

WHEREAS, all commissioners to General Assembly are ordained ruling elders or ordained teaching elders, and for their ordination they made ordination vows before God and their congregation; and

WHEREAS, the ordination vows of ruling elders and teaching elders state acceptance of the subordinate standards of the church, with a promise to “uphold its doctrine under the continual illumination and correction of the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures and to be guided thereby in fostering Christian belief” (Ordination Question 2) and also to promise to “follow no divisive course, but to seek the peace and unity of Christ...” (Question 3); and

WHEREAS, the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter XXIV states that “Marriage is to be between one man and one woman” and “Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind with legitimate issue...” and Living Faith 8.2.3 states “Christian marriage is a union in Christ, whereby a man and a woman become one in the sight of God... Sexual union in marriage is intended to provide mutual joy and comfort as well as the means of creating new life.”; and

WHEREAS, the request for The Presbyterian Church in Canada to consider approval of same-sex marriage and ordination of same-sex married ministers is known to be a divisive course based on the experience of every other denomination that has followed this path; and

WHEREAS, should ordained elders no longer be able to uphold their vows of ordination as a matter of conscience and belief, as a matter of conscience they should request to be released from their ordination vows and forego their position as elder;

THEREFORE, the Session of Coquitlam Church, Coquitlam, British Columbia, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly, to rule any consideration of overtures relating to approval of the celebration of marriage of same-sex couples to be out of order, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

Transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of Westminster.

NO. 11 – SESSION OF VALLEYVIEW, CALGARY, ALBERTA

Re: Develop a Reformed confessional hermeneutic

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada is united in agreement to be guided on matters pertaining to conducting meetings, the operation of its courts, and proper procedure for decision making by the Book of Forms, it, nevertheless in its confessions and procedures, has no formal guidelines adopted, such as an agreed-to Reformed confessional hermeneutic (see an example of such a confessional hermeneutic in Dr. Gordon Spykman’s *Reformational Theology: A New Paradigm for Doing Dogmatics*, p. 128–133), which might create agreement, and provide guidance on matters pertaining to the interpretation and application of the scriptures; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada declares in its subordinate standard Living Faith that scripture is to be “the rule of faith and life...the standard of all doctrine by which we must test any word that comes to us from church, world or inner experience” and further, that we are to “subject to its judgment all we believe and do”; and

WHEREAS, Western culture now reflects a secular humanistic, post-modern worldview derived from Enlightenment philosophy, most noticeably in issues relating to anthropology, epistemology and soteriology, and Canadian society is following this trend; and

WHEREAS, this has resulted in the issue of human sexuality and orientation persistently presenting itself to The Presbyterian Church in Canada since 1987; and

WHEREAS, the contradictory appeals to scripture with regards to this issue, due to lack of a common Reformed confessional hermeneutic guiding The Presbyterian Church in Canada, have revealed that the scriptures cannot fully function as the only rule for faith and life in a unifying manner for our denomination; and

WHEREAS, without a common Reformed confessional hermeneutic in place, The Presbyterian Church in Canada will only experience further contradictory appeals to scripture, resulting in deep dividedness on many issues, and a regular practice of setting scripture to the side, as we make our collective decisions, define our identity in the midst of Canadian culture and outline our mission as Christ’s body in the world;

THEREFORE, the Session of Valleyview Community Church, Calgary, Alberta, humbly overtures the Venerable, 142nd General Assembly to consider pausing the current discussion and study on human sexuality and orientation, and deferring any recommendations stemming from this issue, in order to focus on the

development and adoption of an explicitly Reformed confessional hermeneutic, or do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted with disapproval from the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod.

NO. 12 – SESSION OF ST. ANDREW’S, PARRY SOUND, ONTARIO

Re: Policy for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination

WHEREAS, the issue of the role and discipline of actively homosexual persons in the church has consistently been before The Presbyterian Church in Canada since 1987; and
WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has over the course of that time been significantly divided on various statements, studies and decisions presented to and/or approved by the General Assembly; and
WHEREAS, the expenditure of the resources of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in terms of time, finances, cost to relational harmony, membership and spiritual energy has been extensive; and
WHEREAS, numerous overtures have been submitted to the General Assembly related to these topics; and
WHEREAS, it appears that, whatever future decisions are made related to the issues involved, significant and damaging division will remain; and
WHEREAS, such sharp, damaging and prevailing division neither honours nor glorifies Jesus Christ nor provides vital and winsome witness to the gospel; and
WHEREAS, the spirit of the discussion and the amended motion re Lachine at the 1998 General Assembly was to allow dissenting congregations to continue independently their mission and ministry in graciousness and without significant cost, penalty nor acrimony; and
WHEREAS, there is no present provision whereby a congregation dissenting from a majority decision with The Presbyterian Church in Canada can withdraw from The Presbyterian Church in Canada and expect to retain possession of its property and assets; and
WHEREAS, legal battles over property and assets are likely to be lengthy, costly to our resources of time, gifts, talent and treasury; and
WHEREAS, such legal proceedings and the publicity resulting thereof will be a poor witness to society and to the world; and
WHEREAS, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has made allowance for “gracious dismissal” of dissenting congregations whereby congregations may withdraw and become members of other denominations in the Reformed tradition, and be able to retain the title to their property and other material assets; and
WHEREAS, the development of a gracious process to divide, dismiss or dissolve churches in consultation with their members which exercises consistency, pastoral responsibility, transparency and compassionate witness should be our desire;
THEREFORE, the Session of St. Andrew’s Church, Parry Sound, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to consider establishing a means for “gracious dismissal” of congregations which might in good conscience either be unable to continue wholeheartedly within The Presbyterian Church in Canada unless significant changes as advocated by some overtures (e.g. Overtures Nos. 4 and 23, 2015) are made, or be unable to accept the changes in doctrine or discipline as advocated by these overtures, or do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of Barrie.

NO. 13 – SESSION OF ST. PAUL’S, LEASKDALE, ONTARIO

Re: Request more time for human sexuality discussion

WHEREAS, the resources of the *Body, Mind and Soul* study guide have been available to us for only four (4) months; and
WHEREAS, we, the session, have read the resource and discussed it at some length but are far from feeling like we’ve had a full discussion and exchange of thoughts and experiences on the matter; and
WHEREAS, we have yet to engage our congregation in discussions on the matter at hand, nor have they had opportunity to engage the resources provided; and
WHEREAS, the resource provided could only ever, at best, be considered a partial voice to the Christian Church in the discernment process around this issue; and
WHEREAS, we acknowledge that for some this matter appears to be one of systemic tragic injustice and therefore, are pressing that the currently held position be reversed as quickly as possible even though, such a move, quick or slow, would be a complete reversal of what has been the stated orthodox Christian position for 2000 years; and

WHEREAS, the Session of St. Paul's, Leaskdale, when faced with having to directly address this matter five years ago gave ourselves a full 12 months to discuss and study the matter simply among ourselves; and
WHEREAS, a hasty or premature decision reached before full and adequate discussion would ultimately prove unhelpful and potentially crippling to the church;
THEREFORE the Session of St. Paul's, Leaskdale, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to provide more time, even a comprehensive schedule such as adopted by the Anglican Church of Canada, to congregations, sessions and presbyteries for study, discussion and reflection on the matter of affirming same-sex marriage and the ordination of LGBT individuals to ministry of Word and sacrament or to do otherwise, as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of Pickering.

NO. 14 – PRESBYTERY OF MONTREAL

Re: Indigenous spirituality and defer Native Ministries Endowment Fund

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has been involved for many years in reflection about theological arrogance in relation to Aboriginal people in Canada, and the ways in which this arrogance contributed negatively to the sad history of residential schools in this country; and
WHEREAS, Living Faith (9.2.1) nicely captures the proper humility requisite to authentic interfaith dialogue and relationships in stating that “Some whom we encounter belong to other religions and already have a faith. Their lives often give evidence of devotion and reverence for life. We recognize that truth and goodness in them are the work of God’s Spirit, the author of all truth. We should not address others in a spirit of arrogance implying that we are better than they. But rather, in the spirit of humility, as beggars telling others where food is to be found, we point to life in Christ”; and
WHEREAS, our present relationship with those of other faiths than our own cannot be driven simply by a sense of compensatory guilt in relation to a historical judgment about the collective Christian witness of past generations in Canada, but must have its own integrity if it is to amount to anything more than empty political posturing; and
WHEREAS, God is revealed in scripture as the one God, beside whom there is no other, and God demands exclusive worship from his people; and
WHEREAS, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and the salvation of God provided to us through the reconciling ministry of Jesus, is held in scripture to be singular and unique; and
WHEREAS, the subordinate standards of our church clearly enshrine this understanding of the uniqueness of God, of Jesus, and of salvation through him; and
WHEREAS, the pluralistic religious context in which we live, and our recognition of the manifold evidences of the common grace of God in peoples of other faiths and of none, by no means detracts from the fact we are “compelled” to bear witness to Christ (as it says in our subordinate standard Living Faith 9.2.2: “We witness to God in Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and invite others to accept from him the forgiveness of God”); and
WHEREAS, the 2008 General Assembly responded to a discussion concerning the exclusiveness and uniqueness of the saving work of Christ by affirming our commitment to the doctrine of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ; and
WHEREAS, the 2015 General Assembly dealt with a recommendation to “encourage Presbyterians to acknowledge, understand and appreciate other faith traditions...” by adopting the amended wording “to acknowledge, understand and appreciate the strengths of other faith traditions...”; and
WHEREAS, the 2013 General Assembly adopted the report of the Conversation Circle re Theological Framework for Aboriginal Spirituality, which evinced an awareness that Indigenous Wisdom and Christian faith represent two distinct belief systems and ways of life, with some aspects of fruitful intersection, but also with areas in which the significant differences must be honoured; and
WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities, while having a robust view of God the Creator, and while willing to acknowledge the life-giving help of various guides, may not pivot, as Christian theology does, upon the revelation and incarnation of God in Christ, and the redemptive work that Christ has achieved; and
WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities, while having a profound respect for the “sacredness” of creation, may challenge the clear dividing line that Genesis, the Nicene Creed and the Reformed confessional tradition place between what is God (the Creator) and what is not God (the creation); and
WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities have a respect for elders and for ancestors which connects with the biblical commandment to honour parents and the Old Testament custom of giving forebears a memorial and a name, Christian views of the life to come may be challenged at the point where Aboriginal spiritualities tend to regard our ancestors as still present/accessible to us; and

WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities are very alive to the notion of Spirit, Christians are enjoined to discern the Spirits, particularly since our notion of the Holy Spirit is specified in relation to God and with Jesus in Triune relation; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency are currently considering the three overtures (Overtures Nos. 16, 22 and 36, 2015) sent to the last Assembly which request the establishment of a Native Ministries Endowment Fund, to ensure that the commitment of our church to these ministries will continue and deepen; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly Council briefing notes from November 2015 intimate that of the seven areas in which the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has called churches to action, No. 6 (referencing No. 61 of the TRC's Calls to Action) concerns the provision of "permanent ongoing funding for projects that promote Indigenous healing and reconciliation, culture, language and spirituality"; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly Council briefing notes from November 2015 intimate that No. 3 of these seven areas (taking up Nos. 48, 60 and 61 of the TRC's Calls to Action) concerns Indigenous Spirituality explicitly, in that the churches are being called upon to "educate clergy, laity and candidates for ministry to respect in its own right, Indigenous Spirituality as 'a valid form of worship equal to their own'"; and

WHEREAS, this stated objective goes considerably beyond what the TRC actually calls for in No. 60, which is merely to "respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right" ("tis a consummation devoutly to be wished); and

WHEREAS, the invitation to promote Indigenous spirituality and the invitation to teach that the Indigenous spirituality is a valid form of worship equal to our own calls into question what the scripture and our subordinate standards teach concerning Jesus Christ the only way; and

WHEREAS, the church must be ever on guard against forms of syncretistic Christianity, in which we move beyond the inevitable and necessary reality of contextualization, toward an articulation of faith that neglects or contradicts essential elements of our faith in Christ, particularly his singular Lordship; and

WHEREAS, the intention of Assembly Council, as suggested by the briefing notes of November 2015, is to formulate recommendations on how the church will implement TRC Calls to Action by calling on the expertise of the [Assembly Council] Executive in collaboration with Justice Ministries"; and

WHEREAS, the theological and cultural issues at play here are beyond the mandate and resources of the Executive and Justice Ministries; and

WHEREAS, such sensitive and profoundly important theological issues are within the purview of the Committee on Church Doctrine;

THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Montreal humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to:

1. refer to the Committee on Church Doctrine the matter of whether Christians can accept that Indigenous Spirituality is, in its own right, a valid form of worship equal to our own, and request that the committee produce two statements offering:
 - a. a doctrinal statement outlining those areas in which appreciation of Indigenous Spirituality can be articulated from a Reformed perspective, and also the limits upon the ability of Christians to affirm Indigenous Wisdom teachings and ways which conflict with our theological affirmations,
 - b. a statement defining the worship practices which Presbyterian members, and ruling and teaching elders may participate in or lead without syncretism, and which practices must be regarded as contrary to the teaching of Christian faith; and
2. defer any decisions about the creation of an Endowment Fund for Native Ministries until after the Committee on Church Doctrine has reported back and these matters have been decided by the Assembly;

or to do otherwise, as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

NO. 15 – SESSION OF COTES DE NEIGES, MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Re: Extending time for human sexuality responses

WHEREAS, the issue of human sexuality is a complex one with great emotional charge; and

WHEREAS, some of the new directions being proposed and discussed involve not only a change in the historic perspective on the issue of gender and human relationships, but also a significant change in the historic readings of, and approaches to the Bible; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada places great value on the local lay leadership of individual congregations entrusted to sessions of elders, and has continued to seek and to encourage the informed involvement of the laity in the governance process at all levels; and

WHEREAS, pushing too quickly ahead to the decision making stage without the sufficient time required for the appropriate ground level discussions risks making the issue even more divisive than it already is; and

WHEREAS, the feedback deadlines have come so quickly after the Moderator's pastoral letters in November 2015 and January 2016, and the availability of the study guide, that many congregations did not have a chance to engage the issue properly, much less to provide informed feedback; and

WHEREAS, it would be very difficult for the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries, within a mere matter of weeks (between February 15 and March 15), to bring the best of their skill in an atmosphere of open discussion about what will likely be a large number of deeply thought out submissions; and

WHEREAS, it would be far better to take another year to properly receive feedback on the study guide, and to carefully craft the documents that will guide our ongoing discussions;

THEREFORE, the Session of Cote des Neiges, Montreal, Quebec, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to provide an extended opportunity for responses to the documents on human sexuality, thereby allowing individuals and congregations a longer lead time to respond, and providing the Committee on Church Doctrine and Justice Ministries the additional time required to thoughtfully do the work entrusted to them on this pivotal issue, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

Transmitted with approval by the Presbytery of Montreal.

NO. 16 – SESSION OF COTES DES NEIGES, MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Re: Process for a congregation wishing to leave the denomination

WHEREAS, any decision that is made about the issue of human sexuality, even the decision to keep the status quo, will likely place some congregations in untenable positions of having to compromise their own convictions in order to continue within The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, there is currently no provision within the policies and processes of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, whereby a congregation dissenting from a majority decision can peaceably withdraw; and

WHEREAS, we do not want any congregation to have to make the hard choice between either foregoing its convictions, or walking away from the historic buildings and resources that have become central to their ministry in their local community; and

WHEREAS, a carefully prepared process of “gracious dismissal” would help to avoid divisive legal battles and the waste of kingdom resources; and

WHEREAS, the experience of other Christian denominations has shown that a refusal of this process has great potential for marring the testimony of the body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, several Christian denominations, including the Presbyterian Church (USA) have already been able to craft workable processes for “gracious dismissal” that allow dissenting congregations to retain title to their property and assets; and

WHEREAS, with The Presbyterian Church in Canada, a precedent for something akin to “gracious dismissal” was already present in the spirit of the amended motion concerning the congregation in Lachine, that was accepted by the 1998 General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, it would likely be much more difficult to peaceably negotiate the details of a “gracious dismissal” process after the fact, once a decision about human sexuality was made; and

WHEREAS, the fear of the outcome of the discussion and of losing congregational property and assets will make it increasingly tempting for individuals to decrease their contributions at a time when they are much needed, and for congregations to slow or even to stop altogether the investment of time and resources in the maintenance of properties and buildings which they fear might be lost; and

WHEREAS, the fear of losing assets or historic property risks bringing the unhelpful intensity to the debate; and

WHEREAS, a clearly laid out process would help allay the fears of congregations who fear that theirs might be a minority position, and could keep them involved and participating in the discussion;

THEREFORE, the Session of Cote des Neiges, Montreal, Quebec, humbly overtures the Venerable, 142nd General Assembly to act quickly, even as the discussions are ongoing, to map out a process for the “gracious dismissal” of dissenting congregations, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

Transmitted with approval by the Presbytery of Montreal

NO. 17 – PRESBYTERY OF GREY-BRUCE-MAITLAND

Re: Develop a bereavement leave policy

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada currently has no stated policy regarding bereavement leave for its ministers, employees and employees of its congregations; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of bereavement leave is to provide ministers or employees with time off work to be with their loved ones; make arrangements for the funeral of a family member; to attend the funeral of a family member; and/or to grieve the loss of a family member whose funeral cannot be attended by the employee; THEREFORE, the Presbytery of Grey-Bruce-Maitland humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly, to enact a bereavement leave policy, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

NO. 18 – SESSION OF FIRST CHURCH, EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Re: Research reasons for declining membership

WHEREAS, the membership of The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to decline and has declined for many years;

THEREFORE, the Session of First Church, Edmonton, Alberta, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to form a committee with broad representation from across the country, to investigate and research the reasons for declining membership, and as part of that investigation and research, communicate with congregations in the church, and to bring recommendations suggesting ways to reverse the declining membership trend to a succeeding General Assembly, and to bring an interim report to the next General Assembly; or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

Transmitted with disapproval by the Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland.

NO. 19 – SESSION OF CHINESE, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Re: Congregational vote re sexual orientation and process for leaving the denomination

WHEREAS, thirteen sessions and three presbyteries made overtures to the 2015 General Assembly affirming The Presbyterian Church in Canada's current stance regarding human sexuality, as compared to three sessions and three presbyteries desiring substantial change to the current stance; and

WHEREAS, Overture No. 37, 2015 made by the Session of Grace Church, Orleans, Ontario, re process for a congregation leaving the denomination, demonstrates that some congregations will wish to leave the denomination should changes be made to church doctrine related to sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report on Human Sexuality that was adopted by the 1994 General Assembly and the 1998 General Assembly affirmed the polity of The Presbyterian Church in Canada involving the case with the congregation of St. Andrew's, Lachine in the Presbytery of Montreal and the 2005 General Assembly rejected the ordination of practicing homosexuals; and

WHEREAS, unanimous consensus on the issue of sexuality seems unlikely in The Presbyterian Church in Canada and change is likely to cause the loss of congregations; and

WHEREAS, in other denominations, where same sex ordination was adopted, change was followed by costly court cases and disgraceful conflict between former colleagues; and

WHEREAS, in 1925 each congregation held a congregational vote to affirm their desire to join the newly formed United Church of Canada or continue Presbyterian; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada is an asset rich denomination with buildings more than adequate for all existing congregations; and

WHEREAS, a process that is likely to result in the disenfranchisement of some congregations is undesirable, being a poor witness of Christ's love to the world;

THEREFORE, the Session of Chinese Church, Vancouver, British Columbia, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to consider requiring every congregation to hold a congregational vote on the issue of same sex marriage or ordination, and establish a means of graciously dismissing (a process to equitably divide and/or share the denominational assets between the two resulting denominations) the resulting minority group to form a new denomination with, in such a way that neither side be disenfranchised, preserving mutual respect and good will, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of Westminster.

NO. 20 – SESSION OF FIRST HUNGARIAN, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Re: Congregational vote re sexual orientation and process for leaving the denomination

WHEREAS, thirteen sessions and three presbyteries made overtures to the 2015 General Assembly affirming The Presbyterian Church in Canada's current stance regarding human sexuality, as compared to three sessions and three presbyteries desiring substantial change to the current stance; and

WHEREAS, Overture No. 37, 2015 made by the Session of Grace Church, Orleans, Ontario, re process for a congregation leaving the denomination, demonstrates that some congregations will wish to leave the denomination should changes be made to church doctrine related to sexuality; and

WHEREAS, the Report on Human Sexuality that was adopted by the 1994 General Assembly and the 1998 General Assembly affirmed the polity of The Presbyterian Church in Canada involving the case with the congregation of St. Andrew's, Lachine in the Presbytery of Montreal and the 2005 General Assembly rejected the ordination of practicing homosexuals; and

WHEREAS, unanimous consensus on the issue of sexuality seems unlikely in The Presbyterian Church in Canada and change is likely to cause the loss of congregations; and

WHEREAS, in other denominations, where same sex ordination was adopted, change was followed by costly court cases and disgraceful conflict between former colleagues; and

WHEREAS, in 1925 each congregation held a congregational vote to affirm their desire to join the newly formed United Church of Canada or continue Presbyterian; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada is an asset rich denomination with buildings more than adequate for all existing congregations; and

WHEREAS, a process that is likely to result in the disenfranchisement of some congregations is undesirable, being a poor witness of Christ's love to the world;

THEREFORE, the Session of First Hungarian Church, Vancouver, British Columbia, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to consider requiring every congregation to hold a congregational vote on the issue of same sex marriage or ordination, and establish a means of graciously dismissing (a process to equitably divide and/or share the denominational assets between the two resulting denominations) the resulting minority group to form a new denomination with, in such a way that neither side be disenfranchised, preserving mutual respect and good will, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of Westminster.

NO. 21 – SESSION OF ST. ANDREW'S, DARTMOUTH, NOVA SCOTIA

Re: Ministry and eldership of and performing marriage of those in same gender relationships

WHEREAS, biblical scholars hold a wide variety of insights with respect to biblical interpretation; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada consists of a diversity of persons and perspectives that vary because of differing biblical interpretations; and

WHEREAS, The Presbyterian Church in Canada seeks to maintain the unity of Christ's Church in a spirit of love and mutual respect; and

WHEREAS, the Reformed tradition confesses salvation by grace alone through Christ alone, accepted by the gift of faith alone and not by any claim of human action or identity which makes some persons more acceptable than others; and

WHEREAS, many would agree with the scholar, Walter Wink, when he writes that, "The Bible only knows a love ethic which is constantly being brought to bear on whatever sexual mores are dominant in a given country, culture and/or period"; and

WHEREAS, those living in, or who may live in a faithful, committed same gender relationship, may feel called by God to serve as an elder or ordained minister in The Presbyterian Church in Canada; and

WHEREAS, the teachings of Jesus emphasize the acceptance and inclusiveness for oppressed and persecuted minorities;

THEREFORE, the Session of St. Andrew's, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to seek a means whereby presbyteries and sessions may be permitted to consider for certification for the ministry of Word and sacrament or the diaconate or for election as ruling elders persons who are in committed, faithful relationships with persons of the same gender and further to empower sessions to grant permission for the celebration of marriage of persons of the same gender who are under their pastoral care, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of Halifax & Lunenburg.

NO. 22 – SESSION OF WESTMINSTER-ST. PAUL'S, GUELPH, ONTARIO

Re: Preparing a statement on Indigenous Spirituality

WHEREAS, God is revealed in scripture as the one God, beside whom is no other, and demands from the people of faith their exclusive worship (Exodus 20:1-6, Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 40:25, 45:18, I Corinthians 8:4-6); and

- WHEREAS, the temptation to syncretize the faith with other faiths is a perennial one for God's people, described throughout the scriptures, together with the serious consequences this incurs (Leviticus 10:1–2, Deuteronomy 6:10–15, I Kings 19:15–18, II Kings 17:7–17, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, I Corinthians 10:14–22; Revelation 14:9–11); and
- WHEREAS, the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and the salvation of God provided to us through the reconciling ministry of Jesus is held in scripture to be unique (John 6:53–68, John 14:6, Acts 4:10–12, Colosians 1:15–23, Hebrews 1:1–4); and
- WHEREAS, the subordinate standards of our church enshrine this understanding of the uniqueness of God and of Jesus: eg. “There is one true God whom to know is life eternal, whom to serve is joy and peace. God has created all that is (Living Faith 1.1). Jesus is the Mediator through whom God has come to us and through whom we come to God (Living Faith 3.4.1). Salvation comes from God's grace alone received through faith in Christ (Living Faith 3.6.1). Faith is...trust in God, involves personal repentance of sin, acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and commitment to him as Lord. It includes assent to the truth of the gospel (Living Faith 6.1.1)”, (see also Westminster Confession of Faith II.1–2, VIII.2, XXI.1, 2 and 6); and
- WHEREAS, the pluralistic religious context in which we live, and our recognition of the manifold evidences of the common grace of God in peoples of other faiths and of none, by no means detract from the fact we are “compelled” to bear witness to Christ, as it says in our subordinate standard Living Faith, “Some whom we encounter belong to other religions and already have a faith... We recognize that truth and goodness in them are the work of God's Spirit, the author of all truth. We should not address others in a spirit of arrogance...[Yet] we witness to God in Christ as the Way, the Truth, the Life, and invite others to accept from him the forgiveness of God. We are compelled to share this good news” (Living Faith 9.2.1–2); and
- WHEREAS, the 2008 General Assembly dealt with a recommendation from the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee which proposed that the prayer of Overture No. 3, 2008 requesting reaffirmation of “the exclusiveness and uniqueness of the saving work of Christ” be not granted (A&P 2008, p. 260) by adopting this amended motion instead: “That in the interests of clarity the Assembly affirm its commitment to the doctrine of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ” and that this be the answer to Overture Nos. 3, 15, 17, 18, 19 and 20, 2008, (A&P 2008, p. 22); and
- WHEREAS, the 2015 General Assembly dealt with a recommendation from the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee which proposed that the committee's terms of reference be changed to add the words: “to encourage Presbyterians to acknowledge, understand and appreciate other faith traditions...” (A&P 2008, p. 287) by adopting the amended wording “to acknowledge, understand and appreciate the strengths of other faith traditions...” (A&P 2015, p. 28) after a debate which highlighted the great lack of clarity around what it would mean for Presbyterian Christians to “acknowledge...and appreciate...” other faiths; and
- WHEREAS, the 2013 General Assembly adopted the Report of the Conversation Circle re Theological Framework for Aboriginal Spirituality (A&P 2013, p. 16), which evinced an awareness that Indigenous wisdom and Christian faith represent two distinct belief systems and ways of life, with some aspects of fruitful intersection, but also with areas in which the significant differences must be honoured (eg. “...The Pipe Ceremony, the Sun Dance, the Sweat Lodge and the Medicine Wheel should only be conducted by traditional Indigenous elders who follow Indigenous wisdom ways. For others to conduct these ceremonies would mean appropriating the belief systems or changing their meaning to suit the Christian belief system...The Medicine Wheel is...a complete belief system involving a life long journey...[there is] potential of belittling a centuries-old belief system by oversimplifying it” (A&P 2013, p. 510–511) [One might add that the same is true of the Christian belief system]; and
- WHEREAS, this report of the Conversation Circle constitutes an incomplete answer to the prayer of Overture No. 19, 2011, since, while illuminating in many respects, it remains unclear in the articulation of any limits for the church in blending its theology and worship with Indigenous wisdom and sacred ways, and is more explicit about the problems of appropriating Indigenous wisdom and rituals in Christian contexts than about the areas in which distinctives of the Christian teaching may be subdued or compromised by framing them within a worldview or worship practice that derives from Aboriginal spirituality; and
- WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities, while having a robust view of God the Creator, and while willing to acknowledge the life-giving help of various guides, may not pivot, as Christian theology does, upon the revelation and incarnation of God in Christ, and the redemptive work he (Christ) objectively, and on our behalf, achieved; and
- WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities, while having a profound respect for the “sacredness” of creation, may challenge the clear dividing line which Genesis, the Nicene Creed and the Reformed theology enshrined in our subordinate standards places between what is God (the Creator) and what is not God (the creation), and in shared ritual may tempt Christians to give worship to what is not God; and

- WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities have an understanding of revealed wisdom and of covenant, these views may be challenging to the view which Christian scripture advances concerning the particularity/election of Israel as the bearer of God's revelation, the specific terms of the covenant, and the idea of a closed canon; and
- WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities have a respect for elders and for ancestors which connects with the biblical commandment to honour parents and the Old Testament custom of giving forebears a memorial and a name, Christian views of the life to come may be challenged at the point where Aboriginal spiritualities tend to regard our ancestors as still present/accessible to us; and
- WHEREAS, most Aboriginal spiritualities are very alive to the notion of Spirit, Christians are enjoined to discern whenever the spirit realm is invoked “which spirit is this?,” our notion of the Holy Spirit, identified with God and with Jesus in Triune relation, being quite specific; and
- WHEREAS, the commitment of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, both in word and in financial expenditure to the process of Confession/Truth, and Healing/Reconciliation with the First Nations Community has been deep, ministry grants toward work with Aboriginal peoples constituting between 42% and 46% of all Canadian Ministries grants for the years 2014–2016 (Life and Mission Agency revised draft budget 2016); and
- WHEREAS, the Assembly Council and the Life and Mission Agency are currently considering the three overtures (Overture Nos. 16, 22 and 36, 2015) sent to the last Assembly that request the establishment of a Native Ministries Endowment Fund, to ensure that the commitment of our church to these ministries will continue and deepen; and
- WHEREAS, the Assembly Council briefing notes from November 2015 intimate that of the seven areas in which the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has called churches to action, No. 61 (referencing the TRC’s Calls to Action) concerns the provision of “permanent ongoing funding for projects that promote Indigenous healing and reconciliation, culture, language and spirituality”; and
- WHEREAS, the Assembly Council briefing notes from November 2015 intimate that No. 3 of these seven areas (taking up Nos. 48, 60 and 61 of the TRC’s Calls to Action) concerns Indigenous spirituality explicitly, in that the churches are being called upon to “educate clergy, laity and candidates for ministry to respect in its own right”. Indigenous spirituality as ‘a valid form of worship equal to their own’; and
- WHEREAS, such “calls” to regard Indigenous spirituality as a way equivalent to the gospel of Jesus Christ, graciously made known to us as the one way which has been given under heaven, among mortals, whereby we may have reconciliation with and know the truth about God, and moreover to provide “permanent ongoing funding for projects that promote” not the Christian way, but the way of “Indigenous...spirituality” as “a valid form of worship equal to [our] own,” go a bridge too far in light of the exclusivity of worship and allegiance commanded by the Lord of us, the covenant people; and
- WHEREAS, the intention of the Assembly Council, as intimated in the briefing notes of November 2015, to formulate recommendations on how the church will implement the TRC Calls to Action “by calling on the expertise of The [Assembly Council] Executive in collaboration with Justice Ministries” woefully underestimates the issues of doctrine at stake, and the right of Assembly as a whole to have participation as well as the final say in the “planning [of] a way forward,” when the issue is as critical as this one;
- THEREFORE, the Session of Westminster-St. Paul’s Church, Guelph, Ontario, humbly overtures the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly to
1. refer to the Committee on Church Doctrine the matter of whether Christians can respect Indigenous spirituality in such a way as to conclude that “in its own right” it is “a valid form of worship, [revelation of God and provision of a path of salvation] equal to [Christians’] own” for report to the 2017 General Assembly,
 2. request from this committee a facilitated table group discussion to take place at the 2017 General Assembly on the content of its paper, with the record of this discussion feeding back to the committee together with the usually requested feedback from congregations, sessions, presbyteries, synods and national agencies and committees,
 3. request from the Committee on Church Doctrine, once it has completed this process, two statements (or a statement in two parts) upon which the Assembly will vote:
 - a. a doctrinal statement outlining those areas in which appreciation of Indigenous spirituality can be articulated from the Christian point of view, and also the limits upon the ability of Christians to affirm Indigenous wisdom teachings and ways which conflict with our theological affirmations,
 - b. a statement defining the worship practices which Presbyterian members, and ruling and teaching elders may participate in or lead without syncretism, and which practices must be regarded as “strange fire”,
 4. provide for the communication of these statements to all congregational and non-congregational ministries and missions of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and for the reflection of their permissions and limits in the Book of Forms,

5. defer any decision upon the creation of an Endowment Fund for Native Ministries until after these matters have been decided by the Assembly,
 6. communicate to those involved in Native Ministries that this period of reflection on what is and is not sustainable within Christian theological thinking and worship practice by no means detracts from The Presbyterian Church in Canada's commitment to the Confession made in 1994, or its ongoing financial commitment to ministry with Aboriginal Peoples;
- or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Transmitted with disapproval by the Presbytery of Waterloo Wellington.