

## **THE LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY**

Interim Report, May 2020

“Do not fear”, God’s heartening words in Isaiah 43:5 to the people living in exile under the power of Babylon had been chosen as the theme for the 2020 General Assembly. This section of the Book of Isaiah is filled with assurance as God repeatedly speaks words of encouragement:

Do not fear, I am with you (41:10)  
Do not fear, I will help you (41:13)  
Do not fear, I have redeemed you (43:1)  
Do not fear, I am with you (43:5)  
Do not fear or be afraid (44:8)

The promised comforts of presence, aid and redemption change but God’s constant and abiding message is “Do not fear”. Again and again God meets the fear and the anxiety of human existence with a trustworthy reassurance that echoes throughout scripture. “Do not fear” is how the angel delivers the startling news to Mary that the son of God grows in her womb. “Do not fear” is the message the angel speaks to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks at night. “Do not fear” is what Jesus says to the disciples sailing in a boat tossed about in a storm.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has said that “Our mission, in a world burdened with anxiety and apprehension, is to provide a place of sanctuary, tranquility and renewal in the name of the One who said, ‘I will give you rest.’” The following report is the story of some of the denomination’s faithful ministry through the Life and Mission Agency when that mission in a burdened world has been lived out. Behind the words on the page are stories of hope, stories when the church provided comfort in moments of pain and when the church spoke and acted against the powers of despair and injustice. There are stories of creativity and courage, stories of development and healing, stories of deep trust and new life beyond the numbers listed in this report. The information in these pages reflects stories of faith in the face fear, of reconciliation and tranquility sought, of sanctuary given and of renewal found.

Under the wisdom, guidance and power of the Holy Spirit the Life and Mission Agency, in all its work, strives to extend the Reign of God where it has been called to serve in the world. The Agency carries out its duties and responsibilities faithful to the church’s Vision and Mission Statement and Strategic Plan, seeking to help The Presbyterian Church in Canada to be a church integrating discipleship, evangelism, social action and justice. The Life and Mission Agency also supports the church by giving leadership in programs mandated by the General Assembly and responds flexibly, creatively and effectively to congregations as well as the courts and committees of the church, as they seek to respond to the call of Jesus Christ to mission.

The glimpse of the church in action and service through the service of the Life and Mission Agency is divided into the following sections:

Program Coordination (p. 2)  
Canadian Ministries (p. 5)  
Communications (p. 16)  
International Ministries (p. 20)  
Justice Ministries (p. 31)  
Ministry and Church Vocations (p. 56)  
Presbyterian World Service & Development (p. 61)  
Stewardship and Planned Giving (p. 85)  
Overture Responses (p. 92)

### **THE LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The General Assembly names people from across Canada who serve the church as members of the Life and Mission Agency Committee. The members of the committee have been: the Rev. Sampson Afoakwah (Montreal, Quebec), the Rev. Charles Cook (Riverview, New Brunswick), Mr. Aubrey Hawton (Oro-Medonte, Ontario), Ms. Vivian Ketchum (Winnipeg, Manitoba), the Rev. Jeffrey Lackie (Medicine Hat, Alberta), Ms Marion Lade (Comox, British Columbia), the Rev. Cheryl MacFadyen (St. Stephen, New Brunswick), the Rev. Allyson Macleod (Sutton West, Ontario), Ms. Donna McIlveen (Johnstown, Ontario), the Rev. Douglas Schonberg (Niagara Falls, Ontario), Ms. Cindy Stephenson (convener) (Calgary, Alberta), Dr. Jo Szostak (Regina, Saskatchewan), the Rev. Amanda Currie (Moderator of the General Assembly), Mr. Robert Griffiths (Atlantic Mission Society representative), the Rev. Jinsook Khang (Assembly Council representative), Ms. Carol Stymiest (Assembly Council representative), Mr. Rob

Robertson (PWS&D representative), Ms. Janet Brewer (Women's Missionary Society representative). We are especially grateful to the Rev. Douglas Schonberg, Ms. Janet Brewer, Ms. Carol Stymiest and Mr. Rob Robertson who are completing their service on the committee.

### **Advisory Committees**

The work of the Life and Mission Agency is collaborative, complementary and integrated with the ministries and presbyteries of the church. In addition to being overseen by the Life and Mission Agency Committee upwards of 125 people are appointed by the committee to serve as members of departmental advisory committees. Together, these people use grassroots consultation and research to discern the challenges ministers and congregations face and to conceive of programs, initiatives, tools and theological resources that are responsive the church's needs and that also help it address the needs of the world and the souls of God's people. We celebrate the cultural, geographical, theological and linguistic diversity and the spectrum of skills and perspectives the advisory committees bring to this ministry and are grateful to these people for their insight and dedication. The names of advisory committee members are listed at the end of each section of the report.

### **PROGRAM COORDINATION**

Staff	General Secretary:	The Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald
	Senior Administrator:	Ms. Colleen McCue
	Finance and Administration Coordinator:	Mr. Mathew Goslinski
	Program Assistant (contract):	Ms. Grace McCreary

### **INTRODUCTION**

Program Coordination serves the Life and Mission Agency Committee and staff. This work is done primarily by coordinating policy development, human resources, financial management and programmatic implementation for the Agency and in collaboration with other bodies in the church. The department has representation on a number of working groups, committees and boards within the denomination and coordinates work within the Life and Mission Agency departments and for the Canada Youth event and the Leading with Care Policy.

This section of the Life and Mission Agency Committee report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Relational Connections that Incarnate Christ's Mission  
Canada Youth
- Section 2: Empowering Resources  
Worship  
Leading with Care  
Workplace harassment
- Section 3: Visionary Leadership  
Listening to Concerns, Views and Pain regarding Remits B and C  
Strategic Planning  
Human Resources

### **RELATIONAL CONNECTIONS THAT INCARNATE CHRIST'S MISSION**

#### **Canada Youth – CY2020**

[presbyterian.ca/canada-youth-2020](http://presbyterian.ca/canada-youth-2020)

CY2020 had been scheduled to be held at Brock University from July 6–11. This year's event would have marked 20 years of creative, authentic and engaging ministry to youth, young adults and leaders in our denomination. Since CY2000, more than 4,000 people have attended the event and the impact has been felt in our camps, congregations, colleges and the courts of the church.

The community was to gather around the theme "CY2020 Vision – No end in sight". The guiding scripture passage being "All of us long to see things rightly. We need, as Ephesians says, to have the eyes of our heart enlightened so that we may know hope" (Ephesians 1:18).

CY2020 will be a place where hope will come alive.

CY2020 will be a place where we learn to discover beauty amid the brokenness.

CY2020 will be a place where we will see more clearly with the eyes of the heart.

CY2020 was to offer the 3 tracks for all ages:

- Youth Track: activities designed for those who have graduated Grade 9 and up to celebrate their unique place in our church and experience a landmark event in their faith journey
- Discipleship Track: an opportunity for young adults (ages 19–25) to think deeply about their gifts, to be empowered to be faithful servants and leaders.  
  
Representatives of partner churches in Hungary, Lebanon, Malawi, Scotland and Taiwan will be in attendance.
- Leadership Track: designed to equip congregational leaders of any kind (clergy, lay, paid, volunteer, full-time, contract or part-time) and includes a separate stream devoted to youth ministry leadership. It will run the entire length of CY.

For more information, please contact the CY Coordinator, Jo Morris at [cy@presbyterian.ca](mailto:cy@presbyterian.ca).

## **EMPOWERING RESOURCES**

### **Worship**

[presbyterian.ca/worship](http://presbyterian.ca/worship)

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 below.

The Life and Mission Agency provides on the website worship resources (lectionary, prayers, hymns suggestions, devotions, etc.) for every Sunday of the year as well as for other significant celebrations. 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 easily used by congregations that may be without ordained leadership.

Worship bulletins for Sundays and special occasions are created each year using photos, devotionals and prayers gathered from people and documents from within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In addition to featuring writers with a constellation of perspectives and backgrounds, the bulletins also have pieces of devotional and educational material drawn from church statements. Samples of the bulletins are available on the webpage.

Significant sections of the Book of Common Worship are 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. Certificates for baptism, confirmation, membership transfer, marriage, etc. are available for order or print on demand.

Links to the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches and the prayer requests of the World Communion of Reformed Churches are also found on the church’s worship webpage

### **Leading with Care**

[presbyterian.ca/leading-with-care](http://presbyterian.ca/leading-with-care)

In addition to responding to weekly telephone calls and emails requesting advice, assistance and clarification about the implementation of the policy, David Phillips held workshops across the country and a webinar on implementing the policy is available. We continue the process of updating the Leading with Care Policy. The revised report will be brought to the General Assembly in 2021.

## **Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in the Church**

The Presbytery of Brampton submitted a request for resources to help engage congregations, sessions, presbyteries and other ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in a conversation about workplace harassment within the church for the purpose of creating awareness and developing best practices for preventing and responding to such incidents. If the General Assembly adopts the proposed policy found on page 114 in response to the request from the Presbytery of Brampton, the policy will be added to the Leading with Care Policy.

## **VISIONARY LEADERSHIP**

### **Listening to Concerns, Views and Pain regarding Remits B and C**

#### **Introduction**

As part of a prayerful discernment and discussion about sexuality in 2019 the General Assembly resolved on June 6 that as a matter of urgency, the Life and Mission Agency would provide a means for those affected by the Assembly's decisions regarding the remits under the Barrier Act to express their concerns, views and pain in a safe environment. And it was determined that these concerns be reported back to the 2020 General Assembly before the report on remits is received and its recommendations considered.

The Life and Mission Agency Committee formed an advisory committee to help oversee the writing of the report to the General Assembly. The following terms of reference were adopted for the advisory committee:

1. That the advisory committee will suggest, encourage, advise, provide feedback and assist in the process of completing a concise report to the General Assembly that will:
  - a) reflect the concerns, views and pain of those affected by the changes proposed in Remits B and C who submitted written feedback or participated in a listening session with the Life and Mission Agency and;
  - b) be pastoral in tone and nature and not present as a referendum or straw poll and;
  - c) not contain recommendations about whether Remits B and C should or should not be adopted.
2. That the advisory committee have access to all electronic submissions, correspondence and notes taken during listening session related to Remits B and C.

The following people were named by the Life and Mission Agency Committee to be the members of the advisory committee: the Rev. Soo Jin Chung (St. Timothy's Church Toronto, Ontario; Presbytery of Eastern Han Ca), the Rev. John Henderson (Presbytery of Huron Perth), the Rev. Allyson MacLeod (Life and Mission Agency Committee; Keswick Church, Keswick, Ontario; the Presbytery of Oak Ridges), the Rev. Heather Malnick (Knox Church, Bracebridge, Ontario; the Presbytery of Barrie), the Rev. Dr. Susan Shaffer (Presbytery of Paris).

#### **Process**

By June 12, 2019, the Life and Mission Agency had provided an on-line tool for people to use to submit their views in written form and the mailing address, phone number and email address was supplied for those who did not wish to use the on-line form. This pathway was circulated often, widely and in a variety of forms throughout the denomination and was available to the church until February 15, 2020. Presbyteries were informed by June 18 about some additional means by which listening could be done in person and initiatives taken to schedule these kinds of events. In person listening continued until February 7, 2020. Special attention was given to ensuring that the key groups (e.g., colleges, Han Ca presbyteries, Indigenous ministries, etc.) were especially invited to participate.

The General Assembly stated that listening was to be done in a safe environment. With resources based on material used at previous General Assemblies or made available in the church to help groups have difficult conversations, people worked together to create a time and place where individuals could be heard, feeling confident that they would not be criticized or exposed to discrimination, harassment, recrimination and belittlement by the speakers or listeners. This spirit of goodwill created an environment that allowed for empathetic and graceful expression of views. While sharing differing views within groups was sometimes difficult work, sitting together and listening with care to each other was holy work and a participation in God's vision of the Peaceable Kingdom and a foretaste of the unity to be found in the Communion of the Saints. The gatherings we witnessed were respectful and there were moments of remarkable grace and understanding.

In the safe environment people spoke and we had the privilege to listen to the speakers' words and to the feelings under their words. Listeners took notes and received written material at in-person listening event. All the material that the Life and Mission Agency receive and heard is held in confidence by the Life and Mission Agency. However, listeners were told that what was heard would be used to create a report that will be given to the General Assembly in 2020 and some quotes from what we read and heard may be used in the document to help illuminate some recurring themes or points.

Listeners were welcomed graciously by congregations and courts of the church and we are grateful for the kindness and hospitality we received.

The final report containing the summary of what we heard will be available in advance of the next meeting of General Assembly.

### **Strategic Planning**

The Life and Mission Agency Committee adopted the strategic plan in place of its previously established priorities in 2016. The committee monitors the implementation and effective use of the plan in the agency and prioritizes features of the plan to address emerging trends and needs. The staff of the Life and Mission Agency analyzes departmental work in light of the statements in the plan and are using the goals and objectives to evaluate, frame and guide work and programs. The Life and Mission Agency has begun reviewing the departmental mandates and programs in light of the strategic plan and will propose changes to the mandates for consideration by future meetings of the General Assembly. The principles of the strategic plan are used in the evaluation of grants requests and evaluation of all Life and Mission Agency programs. The Life and Mission Agency Committee is engaged in its own strategic process to help guide the Agency's work using Scenario-Based Planning as it does the important work of looking ahead and planning for what will be rather than simply reacting to what is.

### **Human Resources**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is fortunate to have dedicated and professional staff in the various departments of the Life and Mission Agency who work together in promoting the building up of the body of Christ, the church.

We are very fortunate to welcome this year: Ms. Dwan Billings; Ms. Winnie Bower; Ms. Stephanie Chunoo; Ms. Emma Clarke; Ms. Marjorie Copeland; Ms. Sarah Curd; the Rev. Tim Purvis; Ms. Prachi Shailendra. We express gratitude for the work and service of the following people who served the church well during their time with the Life and Mission Agency: Ms. Sylvia Brade; Ms. Jackie Czegledi; Ms. Anna Muir; Ms. Alison Stirling. We are very grateful to the many contract staff who work on specific programs and research projects for the church throughout the year.

This year staff members have taken continuing education in the area of theology, Indigenous culture and history, healing and reconciliation issues, human resources, mental health, sexual abuse and sexual harassment, writing and editing, coaching, cyber security and worship.

### **CANADIAN MINISTRIES**

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Ms. Jen de Combe
	Education Program Coordinator:	Dr. Emily Hill
	Grant Program Coordinator:	Ms. Jennifer Astop

### **INTRODUCTION**

[presbyterian.ca/canadianministries](http://presbyterian.ca/canadianministries)

Canadian Ministries collaborates with and assists congregations and courts of the church to support faithful ministry. Through Canadian Ministries the church is equipped with online, printed and financial resources as well as relational support in the form of networking and mentorship opportunities, collaborative partnerships, one-on-one consultations, educational workshops and leadership conferences.

The report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Equipping Opportunities: evangelism, renewal, Christian education and new church development
- Section 2: Resources
- Section 3: Grants and Funds: granting programs for ministry personnel, programs and capital
- Section 4: Administration: appointments, Ecumenical Shared Ministries and properties
- Section 5: Advisory committees

### **EQUIPPING OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **Renewal Initiatives**

[presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/new-beginnings/](http://presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/new-beginnings/)

In response to feedback from congregations about needing resources to lead them through a renewal process, The Presbyterian Church in Canada partnered with the Hope Network for Missional Transformation to launch the New

Beginnings program. This program takes congregations through a year-long process that involves discipleship, coaching and group discernment. At the end of the process congregations will have made a decision about their future direction and have begun taking steps towards a new beginning.

In 2019, the following congregations enrolled in the process:

- St. James (Charlottetown, Presbytery of Prince Edward Island)
- St. Andrew's (Quebec, Presbytery of Quebec)
- St. Andrew's (Lindsay, Presbytery of Lindsay-Peterborough)
- Nigerian (Toronto, Presbytery of West Toronto)
- Mount Zion (Ridgetown, Presbytery of Essex Kent)
- Trinity (London, Presbytery of London)
- St. Andrew's (Kimberley, Presbytery of Kootenay)

Congregations interested in participating in the New Beginnings program should contact Canadian Ministries at [canadianministries@presbyterian.ca](mailto:canadianministries@presbyterian.ca).

### **Evangelism Initiative**

[presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/evangelism-network/](http://presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/evangelism-network/)

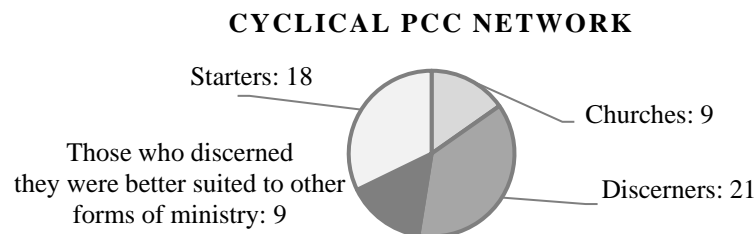
The Presbyterian Evangelism Network responds directly to one of the priorities of the strategic plan. This program equips ministry leaders to develop community-focused approaches to evangelism. Each year, a new cohort drawn from five congregations attends a gathering where they are equipped to lead, support and champion evangelism initiatives in their congregations. Following the gathering, leaders receive a year of coaching and attend 12 online cohort meetings to support the implementation of their goals. We are grateful to the Rev. Andrew Campbell, the Rev. Jonathan Hong and the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart who acted as resource people and mentors in the initiative this year.

The following leaders are participating in the network in 2019–2020: the Rev. Michael Koslowski and Ms. Chelsey Joudrey from Calvin (Halifax, Presbytery of Halifax & Lunenburg); Mr. Conrad Chen, Mr. Kevin Chen and Ms. Liya Dulap from Toronto Formosan (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto); the Rev. Angie Song and Ms. Nuri Lee from Vaughn (Toronto, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca); the Rev. Janet Taylor and Mr. Tucker Taylor from Braeside (Edmonton, Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland); the Rev. Cal MacLeod and Jim McQueen from Gordon (Vancouver, Presbytery of Westminster).

### **New Worshipping Communities Initiative (Cyclical PCC)**

[presbyterian.ca/cyclicalpcc](http://presbyterian.ca/cyclicalpcc)

Cyclical PCC is a church-planting support initiative designed to encourage presbyteries and leaders within the denomination to take the first steps towards beginning new worshipping communities. The network continued to grow in 2019. To date, 48 leaders have begun the work of discerning calls to starting new ministries.



### **Coaching**

[presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/equipping/#coaching](http://presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/equipping/#coaching)

Coaching is an important component of successful new ministry initiatives and congregational renewal. The coaching program provides support to leaders participating in the New Beginnings process, the Evangelism Network and Cyclical PCC. In 2019, 28 ministry leaders received coaching and have expressed that their ministry has been positively impacted.

Coaches: The Rev. Andrew Campbell, Nova Scotia; the Rev. Ian Fraser, Quebec; the Rev. Sarina Meyer, Quebec; the Rev. Jonathan Hong, Ontario; the Rev. Heather Malnick, Ontario; the Rev. Ken MacQuarrie, Ontario; the Rev.

Kirk McLeod, Ontario; the Rev. David Moody, Ontario; the Rev. Glen Soderholm, Ontario; the Rev. John-Peter Smit, Ontario; the Rev. Dr. Timothy Archibald, Alberta; the Rev. Peter Coutts, Alberta; the Rev. Dianne Ollershaw, Alberta; the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart, British Columbia; Ms. Andrea Perrett, British Columbia.

### **Workshops and Conferences**

Canadian Ministries offers workshops and conferences to equip leaders for faithful service.

### **Transform**

In 2020, Canadian Ministries and Stewardship and Planned Giving will be hosting the Transform Conference in November. This ministry conference is designed for congregations and outreach missions seeking practical tools for ministry in the 21st century.

### **Telling God's Story**

In 2019, The Presbyterian Church in Canada partnered with the Christian Reformed Church to host a daylong worship conference in Hamilton, Ontario. This conference drew Christian educators and worship leaders who were interested in learning thoughtful approaches to planning worship and discipleship programs.

### **Cyclical PCC Spring Gathering**

In 2019, Canadian Ministries gathered participants and coaches involved in the Cyclical PCC network as well as representatives from presbyteries interested in exploring church planting for a four day training on starting new worshipping communities.

### **Workshops, Retreats and Presentations (upon invitation from synods, presbyteries and congregations)**

- Synod of the Atlantic Provinces – Workshop, Connecting with Your Neighbours
- Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry, Presbytery of Ottawa, Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew – Retreat day on starting new ministries and beginning parallel ministries
- Presbytery of Ottawa – Workshop, Best Practices in Christian Education and Curriculum Selection
- Presbytery of Kingston – Presentation, Canadian Ministries' Programs
- Presbytery of Pickering – Presentation, Canadian Ministries' Programs
- Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland - Presentation, Canadian Ministries' Programs
- Thornhill (Thornhill, Presbytery of Oak Ridges) – Presentation, The New Beginnings Process
- St. Mark's (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto) – Workshop, Advent Retreat
- Knox (Leamington, Presbytery of Essex-Kent) – Session Retreat, Discernment and Visioning
- Malvern (Pickering, Presbytery of Pickering) – Presentation, The New Beginnings Process

### **Children and Worship (C&W)**

[presbyterian.ca/children-and-worship](http://presbyterian.ca/children-and-worship)

Children and Worship (C&W) is a children's ministry that invites children to experience the wonder and mystery of God through a unique storytelling format and multi-sensory materials. While C&W was originally designed to be used with young children, it has also been adapted and is now used in Messy Church, inter-generational worship, worship in nursing homes and worship with adults who live with a developmental disability. 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.

In 2019, six training events were held in three provinces.

### **Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE)**

[apcenet.org](http://apcenet.org)

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has had a covenantal relationship with the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) for many decades. APCE supports educators and educational ministry through conferences, scholarships and publications.

In February 2020, ten members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada attended the APCE conference "Outside of the Box" in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Each year five grants of \$750 are available for Christian educators (volunteer or paid) wanting to attend the APCE annual event: [presbyterian.ca/funds](http://presbyterian.ca/funds).

### **Camping**

[presbyterian.ca/camping](http://presbyterian.ca/camping)

Through Presbyterians Sharing, curriculum for nine camps in The Presbyterian Church in Canada was purchased in 2019 for the following camps: Camp Geddie, Camp Keir, Gracefield Christian Camp & Retreat Centre, Camp d'action biblique, Cairn Camping and Retreat Centres, Camp Kintail, Huron Feathers Centre, Camp Christopher and Camp Kannawin. The above camps and conference centers, as well as Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre and Camp Douglas, also receive membership in the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association (PCCCA) through Canadian Ministries.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Equipping for...**

[presbyterian.ca/eq4](http://presbyterian.ca/eq4)

Canadian Ministries produces articles each year that equip congregations in the following areas: Christian Education, Evangelism and Mission, Leadership and Worship. The goal is to share programs, ideas and current experiences and to promote discussion across the church about innovative ministry.

2019 Equipping for...

- Ways to be a Caring Church Community
- Ways to be a Great Church Greeter
- How to Support Young Adult Leadership
- Tips for Effective Use of Photography
- Tips to Rock Your Church Newsletter
- Opening Your Church Covenant Box
- Ways for Churches to Create Partnerships in their Communities
- 12 Must-Read Books Recommended by Presbyterian Leaders in Canada
- Ways to be a Church that Visitors will want to Call Home

### **Ministry Matters**

[presbyterian.ca/ministrymatters/](http://presbyterian.ca/ministrymatters/)

Canadian Ministries regularly shares practical, fun and easy-to-use ministry ideas and good news stories on the Ministry Matters webpage to encourage and inspire congregations to deepen their faith, build their community and reach out to their neighbours.

### **Webinars**

[presbyterian.ca/webinar-wednesday/](http://presbyterian.ca/webinar-wednesday/)

In 2019 Canadian Ministries hosted the following webinars:

- Cooperative or Cluster Ministry: For Congregations Seeking a New Ministry Configuration – Mr. John Gilbert
- Restarting: For Congregations that are in Decline but Open to Significant Changes – The Rev. David Moody
- Ecumenical Shared Ministries: For Congregations Seeking a New Ministry Configuration – The Rev. Dr. Emily Bisset and The Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald.
- How to Choose the Right Curriculum for Your Church – Dr. Tori Smit
- How Congregations Can Care for Creation – Mr. Gregory Lynch, Director of the Green Churches Network and Ms. Elizabeth Churcher, Environmental Team Chair at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Tweed, Ontario
- Spiritual and Theological Dynamics for Congregational Vitality – The Rev. Tim Keener
- Presbyterians Read Advent Study Introduction – Dr. Emily Hill



## **The Outreach Partners for Mission**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a member of the Outreach Partners for Mission, an ecumenical partnership made up of representatives from seven denominations. This partnership focuses on sharing resources and best practices in the areas of new congregational development, congregational renewal, evangelism and grant programs.

## **Opening Doors to Discipleship**

odtd.net

Opening Doors to Discipleship is an online learning resource developed by the Presbyterian Reformed Education Partnership (The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Presbyterian Church (USA), Reformed Church in America, Moravian Church, Cumberland Presbyterian Church) that offers congregations free online volunteer training, leader development and faith formation. In 2018, the decision was made by representatives from the PREP partner denominations to end the partnership. The Association of Presbyterian Church Educators (APCE) is now spearheading this project and is in the process of updating the resource to reflect the current needs of Christian educators.

## **Reading Lists**

[presbyterian.ca/resources/suggested-reading-lists](http://presbyterian.ca/resources/suggested-reading-lists)

[presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries](http://presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries)

To further assist congregations choose books that are relevant to their emergent needs, Canadian Ministries has created suggested reading lists.

## **Presbyterians Read**

In 2019, Canadian Ministries developed an Advent book study for congregations and individuals based on Walter Brueggemann's *Celebrating Abundance*. Over 80 congregations and individuals signed up for the book study.

## **GRANTS AND FUNDS**

### **Grants Committee**

The Canadian Ministries Grants Committee, appointed by the Life and Mission Agency, has decision-making responsibility for grants from the budget and some internally restricted funds. The current members of the committee are Ms. Susan Ridlington (Prince Edward Island), the Rev. Joel Coppieters (Quebec), Mr. Matthew Barclay (Ontario), Ms. Martha Fergusson (Saskatchewan), the Rev. Jeff Lackie (Alberta) and the Rev. Herb Hilder (British Columbia); ex-officio members are the General Secretary and the Associate Secretary for Canadian Ministries without power to vote.

We are grateful to Ms. Lori Ransom and the Rev. Jeanie Lee who ended their service on the Grants Committee in 2019. The Life and Mission Agency is grateful for their years of service and willingness to help the church discern how to best allocate its granting resources.

### **Supporting Ministry Grants**

[presbyterian.ca/grants](http://presbyterian.ca/grants)

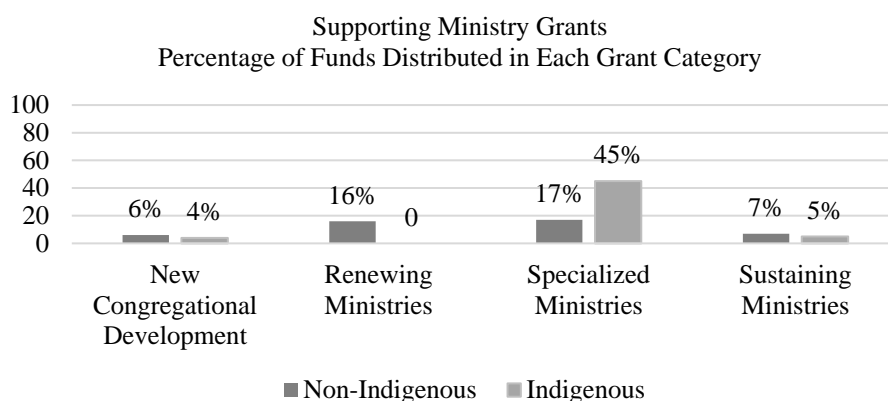
Through generous donations to Presbyterians Sharing, The Presbyterian Church in Canada supports ministry initiatives across the country.

### **Operating Grant Categories**

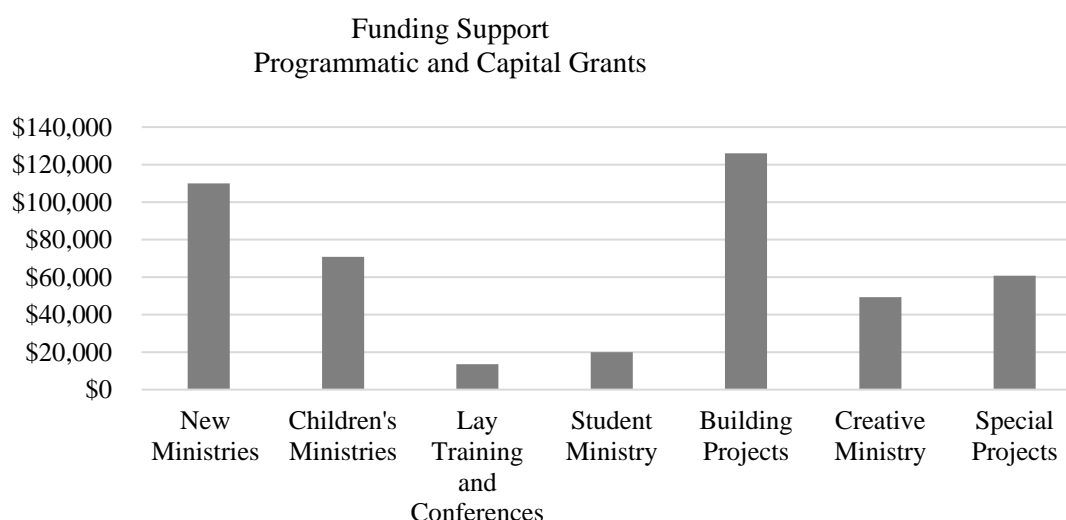
The Life and Mission Agency Committee has identified funding priorities based on the needs of the church designated in the following ways:

1. New congregation development
2. Renewing ministries
3. Specialized ministries (ministries with Indigenous People, inner-city ministries, Francophone ministries)
4. Sustaining ministries (rural and urban ministries)

It is expected that each congregation, pastoral charge or social ministry would be responsible for an increasing portion of its costs each year.



The Supporting Ministry Grants only tell one part of the story of how The Presbyterian Church in Canada financially supports congregations and outreach missions. In order to fully understand the breadth of this support one needs to take into account the impact of the programmatic and capital grants.



### **New Congregational Development**

These grants support completely new congregations. In 2019, \$128,318 was distributed in this category.

- The Well Church (Mississauga, Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca) – a church plant focused on reaching second-generation immigrants.
- Place of Hope (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg) – an Indigenous congregation that offers hope and healing to Indigenous people dealing with multi-generational trauma and abject poverty.

### **Renewing Ministries**

These grants support congregational ministries involved in a significant intentional program of change that results in something new and different arising from what had existed. In 2019, \$220,578 was distributed in this category.

- Northern New Brunswick Regional Ministry (Presbytery of New Brunswick) – a regional ministry constituted by four congregations that share ministry staff and collaborate on programs.
- Montreal West (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal) – a congregation that has shifted from a small homogenous congregation to a vibrant multi-cultural community with a Sunday School of over 60 children.
- Erskine (Hamilton, Presbytery of Hamilton) – a church replant with a vision to become a community hub that actively seeks to be “a healthy family for each and every neighbour”.
- Heritage Green (Stoney Creek, Presbytery of Hamilton) – a church replant that has designed its programs and worship services to help families with children embrace faith.
- Hamilton Presbytery Replanting Pastor (Presbytery of Hamilton) – a ministry that works with congregations in need of renewal to identify and step into new models of ministry. Kathryn – keep the bracket (Pres of Ham)

## **Specialized Ministries**

These grants support ministry done in non-congregational settings. In 2019, \$758,410 was distributed in this category.

### **Indigenous Ministries:**

- Kenora Fellowship Centre (Kenora, Presbytery of Winnipeg) – an outreach ministry that offers practical care, support, food, clothing and love to Indigenous people who have been displaced or ravaged by addiction and mental health issues.
- Winnipeg Inner City Missions (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg) – an outreach ministry that works towards healing and reconciliation by providing temporary housing, employment services and children/youth programs.
- Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry (Saskatoon, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan) – an outreach ministry that provides prayer, crisis counselling, nourishment, clothing and a weekly worship circle to people on the margins.
- Edmonton Urban Native Ministry (Edmonton, Presbytery of Western Han-Ca) – an outreach ministry that seeks to share the love of Christ with individuals facing issues of addition, violence, sexual exploitation, homelessness and poverty by providing clothing and food services, bible study, worship and children's programs.
- Hummingbird Ministries (Richmond, Presbytery of Westminster) – an outreach ministry that promotes reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through art, drama, dance, education and worship.
- Nazko and Area Dakelh Outreach (Cariboo Region, Presbytery of Kamloops) – a house church serving the Nazko First Nations Reserve and surrounding communities that provides worship, support and children's programs.

### **Inner-City and Social Ministries:**

- Action Réfugiés (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal) – a social ministry that helps refugee claimants held in detention centres gather their identification papers, navigate the refugee claimant process and integrate into Canadian society.
- Tyndale St-Georges Community Centre (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal) – a social ministry that provides education and support to families facing issues associated with poverty and racism in the south quarter of Montreal.
- ARISE (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto) – a social ministry that helps women caught in the sex trade by providing support and counselling.
- Life in Christ (Scarborough, Presbytery of Pickering) – a social ministry that helps recently arrived Arabic-speaking refugees learn English and navigate life in Canada.
- The Raw Carrot (Paris, Presbytery of Paris) – a soup producing social enterprise that provides meaningful employment for people on social assistance or with barriers to traditional employment.

## **Sustaining Ministries**

These grants support smaller congregations and pastoral charges, often located in rural and remote situations. In 2019, \$177,783 was distributed in this category.

- St. Matthew's (Grand Falls, Presbytery of Newfoundland) – a rural ministry in Central Newfoundland with a strong social outreach ministry that provides support to families living in poverty, newborn babies and ecumenical partners in the area.
- Two Rivers Church (Guelph, Presbytery of Waterloo Wellington) – a network of house churches with a focus on prayer and reaching new disciples.
- St. Andrew's (Thompson, Presbytery of Winnipeg) – a rural congregation in Northern Manitoba located in a mining community.
- Knox (Weyburn, Presbytery of Assiniboia) – a rural congregation with a focus on evangelism and a community-based music ministry.
- St. Andrew's (Swift Current, Presbytery of Assiniboia) – a rural congregation undergoing a visioning process.
- St. Andrew's (Moosomin, Presbytery of Assiniboia) – a rural congregation that is developing a Korean ministry.

- Mistawasis Memorial (Mistawasis First Nation, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan) – a rural congregation that serves the people of Mistawasis First Nation.
- Cariboo (Cariboo Region, Presbytery of Kamloops) – a network of house churches in Northern British Columbia.

### **Regional Resourcing Grants**

[presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/funds/regional-resourcing-grant](http://presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/funds/regional-resourcing-grant)

Through generous support from Presbyterians Sharing, The Presbyterian Church in Canada supports programming in the synods.

Four synods (Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda; Southwestern Ontario; Saskatchewan and Alberta and the Northwest) use the grants to help support various configurations of staffing. The remaining four synods designated the funds to support events focused on leadership, session and clergy support, training, youth programming, healing and reconciliation initiatives and retreats.

### **Funds**

[presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/funds/](http://presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/funds/)

Because of bequests and generous donations from Presbyterians in the past, the denomination provides one-time or short-term grants to congregations seeking to develop new programs or to undertake renovations or repairs on their property.

### **Program and Leadership Funds**

#### **The New and Renewed Ministry Fund**

This fund supports ministry leaders and congregations as they open themselves up to discerning God's vision and exploring new opportunities to live out Christ's mission.

- North Tryon (North Tryon, Presbytery of Prince Edward Island) – to create a coffee house ministry.
- Amberlea (Pickering, Presbytery of Pickering) – to launch a community outreach ministry targeting young families.
- University (Toronto, Presbytery of West Toronto) – to create a new ministry for Spanish-speaking families.
- St. Andrew's (Brampton, Presbytery of Brampton) – to create an Urdu-speaking outreach ministry for South-East Asians.
- St. Andrew's, Islington (Toronto, Presbytery of West Toronto) – to create a community "hub" in various locations.
- Knox (Dunnville, Presbytery of Niagara) – to run an outreach ministry for women and families.
- Innerkip (Innerkip, Presbytery of Paris) – to open a Woodstock location of The Raw Carrot social enterprise.
- Knox (Palmerston, Presbytery of Waterloo Wellington) – to run a community outreach program for children and youth.
- Prairie (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg) – to create a discerning community in Transcona East Kildonan.
- Knox (Calgary, Presbytery of Calgary Macleod) – To hire a coordinator to run a yoga and café community ministry.
- Presbytery of Westminster (Vancouver) – to create a new worshipping community in Vancouver's west side.
- Richmond (Richmond, Presbytery of Westminster) – to create an arts ministry and a food/outdoor ministry.

#### **The New and Renewed Ministry Fund (New Beginnings Renewal Program)**

This fund provides funding to congregations to offset the cost of the New Beginnings renewal program.

- St. James (Charlottetown, Presbytery of Prince Edward Island)
- St. Andrew's (Quebec, Presbytery of Quebec)
- St. Andrew's (Lindsay, Presbytery of Lindsay-Peterborough)
- Nigerian (Toronto, Presbytery of West Toronto)
- Mount Zion (Ridgetown, Presbytery of Essex Kent)
- Trinity (London, Presbytery of London)
- St. Andrew's (Kimberley, Presbytery of Kootenay)

### **The Avondbloem Experimental Fund**

This fund supports experimental projects that help to spread the message of Jesus Christ and further the Kingdom of God.

- Cote des Neiges (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal) – for an outreach ministry helping families move into clean and affordable housing.
- Presbyterian College (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal) – to develop an online course in congregational leadership.
- St. Andrew's (Picton, Presbytery of Kingston) – for a community outreach and evangelism program.
- Innerkip (Innerkip, Presbytery of Paris) – to open a Woodstock location of The Raw Carrot social enterprise.

### **The Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund**

This fund helps ministries develop new programs and innovative projects that reach out to children, youth and their families.

- Amberlea (Pickering, Presbytery of Pickering) – to support community outreach events and programming.
- Calvin (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto) – to support an arts club program.
- Evangel Hall Mission (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto) – to support at “Saturday Helpers” volunteer program for young children and families.
- St. Andrew's (Maple, Presbytery of Oak Ridges) – to support a Messy Church program.
- St. Andrew's (Dresden, Presbytery of Essex-Kent) – to support a children's ministry leader.
- Central (Hamilton, Presbytery of Hamilton) – to expand children's programming.
- St. Cuthbert's (Hamilton, Presbytery of Hamilton) – to develop a March Break arts camp.
- Heritage Green (Hamilton, Presbytery of Hamilton) – to support the study of youth ministry in a family ministry context.
- Knox (Palmerston, Presbytery of Waterloo Wellington) – to support a community outreach program for youth.
- Lucknow (Lucknow, Presbytery of Grey Bruce Maitland) – to support a Messy Church camp day at Camp Kintail.
- Place of Hope (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg) – to support a family summer camp program.
- Winnipeg Inner City Mission (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg) – to support a new arts ministry in partnership with Prairie Presbyterian Church.
- St. Andrew's (Brandon, Presbytery of Brandon) – to support a Vacation Bible School in partnership with other local Presbyterian churches.
- Hummingbird Ministries (Richmond, Presbytery of Westminster) – to support a children's dance and arts program.
- St. Andrew's (Nanaimo, Presbytery of Vancouver Island) – to support an after-school arts program.

### **Continuing Education for Christian Educators**

Drawing from the Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund, these one-time grants are available to Christian educators to participate in designated training events.

In 2019, three grants were given to Christian educators attending the Association of Presbyterian Christian Educators (APCE) annual event.

### **The Lay Bursary Fund**

This fund helps lay leaders attend educational workshops and conferences to further their training.

In 2019, seven grants were given to support continued education for lay leaders in the areas of congregational development, Indigenous culture, children's ministry and vocational discernment.

### **The Lorraine Major Fund**

This fund provides continuing education support for leaders of Indigenous ministries.

In 2019, one grant was given to support continued education through Vancouver School of Theology's Indigenous summer school program.

### **The Conference Support Fund**

This fund provides support for events that are intended to further educate and nurture faith within congregations, presbyteries and identified groups.

- St. John's (Bradford, Presbytery of Oak Ridges) – to hold a Prominent Presbyterians speaker series.
- The Presbytery of London – to hold a Faith Formers event for youth leaders and Christian educators.

### **The Rural and Remote Ministry Fund**

This fund assists rural and remote ministries access short-term leadership.

Student Grants: Richmond Bay Pastoral Charge and West Point Pastoral Charge (Western Prince County, Presbytery of Prince Edward Island), St. Andrew's (Geraldton, Presbytery of Superior), the Synod of Saskatchewan and the Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland.

### **Capital Funds**

#### **The McBain/Barker Small Community Capital Fund**

This fund helps provide congregations in small communities help with capital improvements to church buildings.

- Kensington (Kensington, Presbytery of Prince Edward Island)
- Hardwood Lands (Hardwood Lands, Presbytery of Halifax Lunenburg)
- St. Andrew's (Tweed, Presbytery of Kingston)
- St. Paul's (Hawkesbury, Presbytery of Seaway Glengarry)
- St. Andrew's-Knox (Fort Erie, Presbytery of Niagara)
- Knox-Zion (Carberry, Presbytery of Brandon)

#### **The Chisholm Fund**

This fund supports congregations and missions with grants for small capital projects or programs.

- Kildonan (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg)
- Knox (Briercrest, Presbytery of Assiniboia)
- Knox (Whitewood, Presbytery of Assiniboia)
- Norman Kennedy (Regina, Presbytery of Assiniboia)
- Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry (Saskatoon, Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan)
- Memorial (Rocky Mountain House, Presbytery of Central Alberta)
- Hummingbird Ministries (Richmond, Presbytery of Westminster)

#### **The Special Projects Fund**

This fund provides assistance to non-congregational ministries with small projects or programs.

- Camp d'action biblique (Richmond, Presbytery of Quebec)
- Action Réfugiés Montreal (Montreal, Presbytery of Montreal)
- Evangel Hall Mission (Toronto, Presbytery of East Toronto)
- Crieff Hills Conference and Retreat Centre (Puslinch, The McLean Estate)
- Kenora Fellowship Centre (Kenora, Presbytery of Winnipeg)
- Winnipeg Inner City Missions (Winnipeg, Presbytery of Winnipeg)

#### **The Worship and Liturgy Fund**

This fund supports leaders who are committed to improving their knowledge and skills in worship within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

In 2019, one grant was given to attend a roundtable discussion on intergenerational ministry.

## ADMINISTRATION

### 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).

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
Jon Wyminga	Nazko and Area Dakelh, Kamloops	Sept 1994	ongoing
Shannon Wyminga-Bell	Nazko and Area Dakelh, Kamloops	Sept 1994	ongoing
Mary Fontaine	Hummingbird, Westminster	June 2008	June 2021
Yvonne Bearbull	Anamiewigummig (Kenora), Winnipeg	April 2016	Sept 2022
George Agyei Kwabi	Toronto, Ghanaian, West Toronto	Aug 2019	Aug 2024
Mike Aldred	Erskine, Hamilton, Hamilton	Sept 2019	Aug 2022
Sowah Ablorh	Montreal, Ghanaian, Montreal	2016	2021*

\*In 2016, a five year appointment was made by The Presbyterian Church in Ghana to the Montreal Ghanaian Church.

### Ecumenical Shared Ministry

[presbyterian.ca/ecumenical-handbook](http://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 St. James 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 Lindsay Peterborough: St. Andrew's, Burnbrae shares ministry with Seymore United Church.
- g) Presbytery of East Toronto: Calvin, Toronto shares ministry with Deer Park United Church.
- h) Presbytery of Brampton: Knox, Grand Valley shares ministry with the United Church of Canada.
- i) Presbytery of Temiskaming: St. John's, Kapuskasing shares ministry with Kapuskasing United Church.
- j) Presbytery of Temiskaming: St. Paul's, Englehart shares ministry with Emmanuel United Church.
- k) Presbytery of Superior: St. Andrew's shares ministry with St. James Anglican, Greenstone.
- l) Presbytery of Winnipeg: Pinawa Christian Fellowship in Pinawa, Manitoba shares ministry with several other denominations.
- m) Presbytery of Peace River: Chetwynd Shared Ministry (Anglican, Evangelical Lutheran, Presbyterian, United).
- n) St. Peter's United Church, Hudson's Hope, British Columbia (Anglican, Presbyterian, United).

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.

### 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.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Presbytery/Synod</b>	<b>Property Type</b>
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	Cemetery
Saskatoon Native Circle	Northern Saskatchewan	Manse
Mistawasis Presbyterian Church	Northern Saskatchewan	Church
Mistawasis Presbyterian Church	Northern Saskatchewan	Manse
Carragana	Northern Saskatchewan	Land
Camp Christopher	Synod of Saskatchewan	Camp
Pouce Coupe	Peace River	Land
Victoria	Vancouver Island	Land

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

### **Canadian Ministries Advisory Committee**

The work of Canadian Ministries is supported by an advisory committee. Canadian Ministries is grateful for the many ways this committee's input has shaped its work in 2019.

Members: The Rev. Peter Coutts, Mr. Jay Hewlin, Esq., the Rev. Konnie Vissers and Ms. Lauren Wasyluk

### **The National Indigenous Ministries Council (NIMC)**

The NIMC exists to strengthen the relationship between the church and Indigenous people. Its primary areas of work include encouraging those working in Indigenous ministry to receive education in Indigenous culture and spirituality, advising the church on how to distribute funds for Indigenous ministry and to encourage the next generation of Indigenous leaders. Members of the NIMC along with the associate secretaries of Canadian and Justice Ministries gathered in Winnipeg, October 2019.

Member ministries: Kenora Fellowship Centre, Winnipeg Inner City Mission, Place of Hope Church, Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry, Mistawasis Memorial Church, Edmonton Urban Native Ministry, Nazko and Dakleth Outreach Ministry, Hummingbird Ministries and Cedar Tree Ministry.

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.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Ms. Barb Summers
	Web Coordinator:	Mr. James Laurenson
	Communications Coordinator:	Ms. Sylvia Brade (to January 2020)
	Communications Coordinator:	Ms. Sarah Curd (from January 2020)
	Communications Coordinator (contract):	Ms. Prachi Shailendra (from February 2020)
	Resource Production & Distribution Assistant:	Ms. Diane Walmsley

## **INTRODUCTION**

Congregations, church leaders, courts, groups, committees and agencies of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are supported by the Communications Office as they share their mission and ministry through a diverse and effective range of communications channels, materials and methods. The Communications Office also facilitates all communication for and through the denominational office of The Presbyterian Church and equips the church with resources and communications that are dynamic, timely and effective. The goal is to produce and promote useful, relevant resources, both in print and electronically and to improve access to church information through print and



digital channels. The Communications Office strives to lead the church in communication techniques and best practices, elevating the church's message within the denomination and to society at large.

The report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Presbyterian Connection Newspaper
- Section 2: Digital Operations
- Section 3: Resource Production and Distribution
- Section 4: General Communications
- Section 5: Advisory Committee

### ***PRESBYTERIAN CONNECTION NEWSPAPER***

[presbyterian.ca/connection](http://presbyterian.ca/connection)

The *Presbyterian Connection* newspaper highlights the work of the national church and strives to unite Presbyterians through stories, reflections, interviews and articles, allowing us to share and develop our ministries and our faith. It is distributed four times per year, free of charge. The first issue went out in the spring of 2017.

The newspaper is informative, uplifting and shares inspiring and encouraging news with other Presbyterians across the country. After three years in print, it has become a well-loved and valuable tool of communication and connection. Due to the growth in submissions, the page count has risen from 20 pages to 44 pages. The "Gatherings" section of photos from congregations and events has grown from two pages to ten and a half pages.

There are nearly 18,000 copies of each issue of the newspaper printed and distributed. We encourage people to sign up for free home delivery, in order to reduce mailing costs associated with bulk drops to congregations and to share the paper widely. The distribution list for the Women's Missionary Society publication, *Glad Tidings*, was added to the *Connection* subscription list, following the final regular edition of *Glad Tidings* in December 2019. An area of growth for the newspaper is with retirement homes and seniors' centres. Some congregations have requested copies to go to centres in their community for residents to share and enjoy.

To sign up, adjust the quantity of newspapers you receive, update mailing addresses, submit photos for publication or for any comments or issues, go to [presbyterian.ca/connection](http://presbyterian.ca/connection) or call 1-800-619-7301 ext. 243.

### **DIGITAL OPERATIONS**

[presbyterian.ca](http://presbyterian.ca)

The Presbyterian Church in Canada website is a valuable tool for the denomination. It is an informational and educational hub, providing access to a wide variety of resources and materials such as worship materials, resources for elders, official church documents and policies, as well as news, announcements and special events. It is the most widely used and easily accessible source for information and resources for the denomination.

In 2019, the website received approximately 132,200 unique hits. A trend that we are seeing is the increased usage of people accessing the site by smartphone and tablet. Approximately 41% of all site visitors in 2019 were using a mobile device.

The most popular web pages are the homepage, Worship, Pulpit Vacancies, 2019 General Assembly, About, Resources, Church Finder, Sexuality and Search.

The website has hundreds of educational and informational resources available to congregations as free downloads. Some of the most popular downloads in the past year were the 2019 Book of Forms, Book of Reports, Lectionary Year A 2019–2020, 2019 General Assembly Summary of Decisions Regarding Human Sexuality, Weekly Worship Planners.

### **Online Chat**

[presbyterian.ca](http://presbyterian.ca)

The Presbyterian Church in Canada's online chat service allows visitors to the website to live chat with staff of the Communications Office during office hours in order to receive an immediate response to a question. While launched in 2017 as a trial, the service has been extremely successful, with visitors to the website able to connect directly with someone who can provide assistance. In 2019, staff responded to 917 chat inquires. The service was updated in 2019 to allow visitors to the site to leave a message during off-hours, which is particularly valuable to site visitors located

in a different time zone. The number of people using the online chat or after-hours “Leave a Message” feature continues to grow.

### **PCConnect E-Newsletter**

[presbyterian.ca/pconnect](http://presbyterian.ca/pconnect)

As one of the most popular resources, PCConnect monthly e-newsletter contains the latest news and information from The Presbyterian Church in Canada in a clear, easy-to-read layout. The e-newsletter has snapshots of information such as announcements, updates, deadline reminders, mission trip opportunities, new resources for congregations, upcoming events, popular links to online materials and much more.

PCConnect e-news has an open rate of approximately 40–45% and the distribution list is currently at nearly 3,000 subscribers. Individuals from across the church are encouraged to sign up in order to reach a wider audience with timely, relevant news and information.

### **PCCWeb**

[presbyterian.ca/pccweb](http://presbyterian.ca/pccweb)

PCCWeb is a service to congregations, groups, presbyteries and synods that allows them to set up a website, free of charge, hosted by the denomination and funded through gifts to Presbyterians Sharing. We currently host 327 sites. Online tutorials are available to help people learn how to use WordPress more easily and the Communications Office is available to offer both technical support as well as suggestions for website improvement. Maintaining security features remains one of the most important components of the network. We are currently in the process of updating all PCCWeb sites to SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) encryption so each PCCWeb site has a secure connection.

Using the PCCWeb server, we host and support a number of other websites in addition to individual congregations and presbytery sites including Presbyterian World Service & Development, the Presbyterian Archives, Presbyterian camps, the Women’s Missionary Society, the Women’s Gathering, the Presbyterian Museum, the missionary blogs, Portland Place and Boarding Homes Ministry.

In 2019, we helped several congregations with one-on-one coaching for creating an improved church website. The demand for this service has shown that congregations are looking for this type of mentoring. As a result, a “Your Church” online template has been developed to provide congregations with a specific outline they can follow to build a simple but effective, church website. This template is being rolled out in 2020.

### **Online Donations**

[presbyterian.ca/donate](http://presbyterian.ca/donate)

Usage of The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s online donation system allows people to donate to the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada through an online form, making payment by credit card. In 2019, The denomination’s online donation system once again increased in the number of transactions. Over \$230,000 was received in online gifts.

Donors can make a general donation to Presbyterians Sharing or designate a gift to a variety of programs and ministries using a shopping cart format. Donations may be made as 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 sign up for monthly giving using a credit card. Donations are also processed for PWS&D as well as the Cutting Edge of Mission Award Fund, Presbyterian Connection newspaper, the Presbyterian Museum and the Archives.

### **Social Media**

#### **Facebook**

[facebook.com/pconnect](https://facebook.com/pconnect)

In the past year, the denomination’s presence on Facebook has risen to over 3,600 followers and this number continues to grow. The Facebook page is an easy way to both learn about the latest news and resources and interact with members of the constituency.

#### **Twitter**

[twitter.com/pconnect](https://twitter.com/pconnect)

There are just over 1,500 followers on The Presbyterian Church in Canada's @PCCconnect Twitter page. The Twitter feed is generated from content posted to the website newsfeed and is most active during General Assembly.

### **Instagram**

[instagram.com/presbyterian\\_church\\_in\\_canada](https://www.instagram.com/presbyterian_church_in_canada)

A new area of growth and opportunity is The Presbyterian Church in Canada Instagram page. News, photos and prayers are shared as another avenue for members of the constituency to connect with the mission and ministry of the church.

## **RESOURCE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION**

The Communications department assists in the production of a wide and diverse variety of resources. This includes the management and distribution of the PCPak collection of resources, the annual wall calendar, Prayer Partnership, Equipping for... educational resources, newsletters, flyers, certificates, web visuals, display materials and brochures, to name a few.

### **Resource Distribution Changes**

[presbyterian.ca/resources](https://presbyterian.ca/resources)

The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to produce a large variety of high-quality resources to support the work of congregations at the lowest cost possible.

On December 5, 2018, the agreement between The Presbyterian Church in Canada and Parasource for the distribution of The Presbyterian Church in Canada materials was formally concluded. This decision was made based on feedback from the constituency and dissatisfaction with the service provided. Orders for all materials are once again being fulfilled by The Presbyterian Church in Canada's national office.

In early 2020, following extensive work with Cober, The Presbyterian Church in Canada's printing company, a new online ordering tool was launched for congregations: The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Resource Ordering Portal. The portal allows users to more easily order materials, see the wide variety of resources available and includes an exciting new feature allowing congregations to customize certain resources with their own church name and information prior to printing. While the portal is a more dynamic and interactive tool, the original online order form is still available for congregations and guests to use, as needed.

### **PCPak**

[presbyterian.ca/pcpak](https://presbyterian.ca/pcpak)

PCPak is a collection of educational and informational resources for those bodies directly connected to the General Assembly, 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. Individuals may sign up to receive PCPak as either a print package in the mail or as an electronic notification to download materials online. All PCPak materials are available to view, download and print on the PCPak section of the website. People may phone in or use the online order form to request print copies.

## **GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Workshops**

Communications Office staff members are available for speaking engagements with groups, congregations, presbyteries and synods for the purpose of educating about a variety of communications-related topics, including website best practices, general communications, social media and technology.

The Associate Secretary for Communications conducted a workshop for church administrators at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre on May 14 and spoke during the Atlantic Synod meetings in Prince Edward Island on October 22. As well, the Associate Secretary led an online workshop on how to build successful church websites on October 16. The web coordinator led an online workshop for PCCWeb users on November 6.

## **Webinars and Online Meetings**

[presbyterian.ca/webinars](http://presbyterian.ca/webinars)

The Communications Office operates the Leadership Webinars service, the webinar and online meeting platform to conduct online learning opportunities. Online meetings reduce costs by allowing participants to avoid travel and provide opportunities for people from across the country to gather in a digital space, free of charge.

Participants can join a meeting from their computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking the available link or by telephone using the phone number and access code provided. The webinars are recorded and available for viewing after the event takes place. There are nearly 50 recorded webinars available for viewing on the subjects of Leadership & Renewal, Stewardship, PWS&D, Leading with Care, Healing and Reconciliation and Communications.

## **Online Forms**

The department hosts over 100 online forms for various departments and groups of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. 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 these online forms to register for events, apply for funds, submit feedback and order resources.

This service is also available to congregations and groups of the denomination. By accessing the denomination's account, they can save money and set-up costs. All form responses to the online form go directly to the form creator.

## **General Assembly**

[presbyterian.ca/ga2019](http://presbyterian.ca/ga2019)

During each General Assembly, the Communications Office provides and maintains the live video feed, monitors and engages in social media activities, shares photos, posts web content, writes content for the newspaper and provides technical assistance to commissioners.

There were over 5,600 total views of the web posts from GA 2019 and over 7,200 active sessions of the live video stream. The viewing countries of the live stream were: Canada, USA, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Ireland.

The Communications Office also assists the General Assembly Office in providing electronic materials and updates, including the digital Book of Reports, website updates and news items.

## **PCC Style Guide and Web Standards**

[presbyterian.ca/styleguide](http://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 The Presbyterian Church in Canada terms and a troubleshooting section. It is available as a free download on The Presbyterian Church in Canada's website, along with a Quick Reference Guide. The Style Guide is being updated in 2020.

## **Advisory Committee Members**

The Rev. Stephen Brown, the Rev. Kathy Fraser, the Rev. Andrew Johnston, the Rev. Allyson MacLeod.

## **INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES**

Staff: Associate Secretary:  
Program Coordinator:

The Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams  
Ms. Lily Ko

## **INTRODUCTION**

Jesus Christ calls us to faithful engagement in God's mission in Canada and globally. Joining together with church partners and Christian agencies outside Canada, International Ministries walks with them, learning from their experiences and praying for each other that the peace of Christ will reign. In so many parts of the world, where The Presbyterian Church in Canada has partners, Christians live out their faith in circumstances that we can hardly comprehend.

In India, some Christians trace their beginnings to the first century, when converted by the apostle Thomas who travelled from Palestine, eventually landing in south India. Today Christianity is the third largest religion in India, with 28 million followers. Our partner, the Church of North India (CNI), has 1.5 million members representing 0.1% of India's population. In spite of their minority status and increasing persecution among all minorities, in November 2020 they will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Church of North India. It was formed by uniting six denominations: Presbyterians, Anglicans, Brethren, Methodists, Baptists and Disciples of Christ.

The CNI General Secretary, Alwan Masih, said one of the highlights of the year will be the church debating the mission priorities for the future. "We will share our challenges and the difficulties, including the moments when we faced the worst kind of persecution. This is what we will share with each other. Our persecution and our joys, our challenges and our blessings." The Presbyterian Church in Canada maintains relationships with the CNI and supports Christian mission institutions, providing Canadian Presbyterians with the opportunity to witness powerful expressions of their Christian faith and service to their communities.

The world is a chaotic and dangerous place for so many people. It is tempting to avoid hearing disturbing news from friends in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. But as the apostle Paul urged us to do: we must "bear each other's burdens, fulfilling the law of Christ". (Galatians 6:2) We can only fulfill this role, if we are in relationship together.

The good news is that partners of The Presbyterian Church in Canada witness to the God of love, justice and compassion, in significant ways in their diverse contexts. They continue to worship, pray, learn and take action to respond to God's call. Partners tell us that our connections are crucial. When Vivian Bertrand worked day and night during the aftermath of Cyclone Idai in Malawi, she saw the devastation, fear and courage of the victims. The people also saw compassion and commitment in Vivian's attentive listening and knew that Canadian partners cared.

The "living links" are the Canadian Presbyterians appointed by the Life and Mission Agency to a variety of short or longer-term assignments with partners. Secondly, knowing that developing leaders is as important for our partners as it is in Canada, we support leadership development through theological education and other training. Finally, we support our partner churches by helping to fund programs and special projects. International Ministries opens a door into this world, the world that God created and loves.

Relationships matter and people matter! People are the "living links" with our global partners and we have seen the power of walking alongside partners, sharing experiences and learning the complexities of their contexts. Bishop István Csúry, of the Királyhágómellék Reformed Church District in Romania, thanked the Moderator, the Rev. Amanda Currie and the other trip participants, for taking the time to visit their region in September 2019. He wrote: "Your care, concern and partnership are deeply appreciated throughout Királyhágómellék." We thank God for these partners in Christ's mission.

International Ministries offers support to build the capacity of partners by funding studies in theology and medicine; appointing mission staff to work alongside global partners in Bible translation, refugee support, health care and theological education; and providing grants that enhance quality of life for children and families. We are committed to mutually beneficial and long-term partnerships. God is doing great things, in forgotten places, among humble and faithful people.

The report of the work of International Ministries is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Appointments
- Section 2: Partnership Events
- Section 3: Ecumenical Partnerships
- Section 4: Grants
- Section 5: Advisory Committee

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Regular mission staff are appointed for one year to five year renewable terms, at the invitation of a partner church or agency. Volunteers are appointed for varying terms of service, up to one year. One exciting initiative is the Malawi liaison position, a collaboration between the Rev. Joel Sherbino; the congregation of Paris Presbyterian Church; the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre Synod and their prison ministry volunteers and chaplains; and International Ministries.

Requests to send individuals or delegations to attend special mission events or to participate in an ongoing initiative, indicates that global partners value the interchange of experiences and theological perspectives, an attitude that is shared by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

To learn more, read the mission blogs: [pccweb.ca/missionblog](http://pccweb.ca/missionblog) and some stories of mission: [presbyterian.ca/resources/resources-mission#stories](http://presbyterian.ca/resources/resources-mission#stories).

## **REGULAR MISSION STAFF**

### **The Rev. Jeanie Lee – The Reformed Church in Hungary (RCH)**

The Rev. Jeanie Lee began her appointment in November 2019 with Kalunba Social Services, a refugee ministry of the church. Jeanie is building relationships with the refugee clientele, through community activities and providing leadership in a tailoring program where refugees learn new skills with the goal of employment. She supports the young children and mothers in the various programs and they feel welcomed, as Jeanie uses her many pastoral skills and her genuine joy in meeting people from Africa, the Middle East and beyond. Hungary can be challenging for newcomers to the country. Jeanie has a “ministry of presence” inspired by the call to “show hospitality to strangers, thereby welcoming angels without knowing it”. (Hebrews 13:2)

### **The Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand – Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Blantyre Synod, Malawi**

At Zomba Theological College (ZTC), Blair Bertrand’s responsibilities include teaching courses on the Minor Prophets and Practical Theology and mentoring doctoral students. As the Director of Research and Educational Quality Assurance (DREQA), his role is to ensure that research and teaching at ZTC are up to standard. His work with TEEM, Theological Education by Extension in Malawi, is offered to both clergy and laity. Blair is also affiliated with the Blantyre Synod Youth Department.

### **Ms. Vivian Bertrand – Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD-Malawi)**

Vivian Bertrand works with CARD, where her skills in monitoring, evaluation, research and writing have been put to good use. When Cyclone Idai hit Malawi in March 2019, Vivian focused on submitting grant applications for relief and strengthening relations with donors. One highlight of working at CARD during the flooding was participation in the preparation of a Danish Church Aid (DCA) proposal to the European Union (EU). For this she travelled with colleagues to Nsanje and Chikwawa in the south, an area hard hit by the disaster. Blair and Vivian’s first-hand accounts of the devastation experienced by over 900,000 Malawians, were invaluable. Read their blogs posted on The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s website.

### **Mr. David McIntosh – Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ)**

David McIntosh serves as the co-director of the Centre for Minority Issues and Mission (CMIM) that was established in 2017 as a Christian response to increased racist activity in Japan. He is jointly supported by The United Church of Canada and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This ecumenical initiative is led by our denomination’s mission partner, the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ). The Centre’s activities are divided into “four pillars”: fighting racism; youth programs; developing the spirituality of reconciliation and peace; and communications. In 2019, their projects focused on human rights and collaborating with civil society groups.

### **The Rev. Dr. Paul McLean – The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) and The Bible Society in Taiwan (BST)**

As the Bible Translation Advisor, Paul McLean visits Taiwan four times a year. When home in Toronto, he communicates regularly with his Bible translation teams via Paratext translation software. He is currently working with ten teams, one Hakka and nine Indigenous teams, ‘Amis, Bunun, Paiwan, Pinuyumayan, Tayal and Tsou (Cou). In March 2019, Paul became the translation advisor for three small dialects of Ngudradrekai: Maolin, Tona and Wanshan. Each group has about 300–500 speakers. One of the highlights of 2019 is that after nine months of careful typesetting and proofreading, 11,600 copies of the Revised ‘Amis New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs have been sent to print. The launch and celebration service was on March 3, 2020. Paul is blessed to be working in partnership with many passionate colleagues. One of whom is the Rev. Manias, the lead translator of the Bunun team, who turned 80 in December 2019!

## **LIAISON APPOINTMENTS**

### **The Rev. Joel Sherbino – Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Blantyre Synod, Malawi, Prison Ministry**

Joel Sherbino continues his appointment as Malawi liaison, partnering with chaplains and prison ministry volunteers, Friends of Prison, to minister to prisoners in southern Malawi. These dedicated volunteers visit 14 prisons travelling for many hours on crowded minibuses or on bicycles. They lead Bible studies and provide counselling to prisoners and guards. They deliver Bibles, hymn books, clothes, medicine, mats and soap to prisons that are overcrowded and underfunded. Joel travels to Malawi annually for two weeks and speaks about this ministry to groups in Canada, who participate in the ministry by donating generously. His most recent trip to Malawi was from January 14–24, 2020. Joel shared that the best part of the trip was witnessing the passion of the volunteers and the impact they were making within the prisons, with the guards and prisoners alike.

## **VOLUNTEER APPOINTMENTS**

### **Mr. Shaun MacDonald – Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine/Israel (EAPPI)**

From October 2019 to January 2020, Shaun MacDonald served as an Ecumenical Accompanier (EA) in Hebron, providing a protective presence and documented violations of human rights. On schooldays Shaun accompanied children through security checkpoints to reach their school; and monitored the long lines of boys and men who must navigate the checkpoints, as they seek work in Israel. He describes the job of an Ecumenical Accompanier as this: “To listen. To witness. To walk with those suffering a grave injustice. But most importantly, to tell their stories boldly.”

### **Mr. Stephen (Steve) McInnis and Ms. Nora Martin – Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Blantyre Synod, Malawi – Prison Ministry**

In January 2020, Stephen (Steve) McInnis and Nora Martin became the first international volunteers to work in the Chichiri Prison, teaching English, Chemistry and Mathematics. There are 246 students in primary and secondary levels and the headmaster is an inmate. Steve will also assist with a building project of the Ndirande Handicapped club. Nora and Steve are members of Knox Church, Woodstock, serving as elders and singing in the choir. When asked why they want to serve, Steve replied: “Jesus talked a lot about loving one’s friends and enemies. We serve a risen Saviour, who loves us, so we are called to love.” Nora understands mission as “a mutual sharing of experience and expertise among partners. Together as a church we must understand each other”.

## **MINUTES OF APPRECIATION**

Mission staff are appointed to many corners of the world, engage in diverse activities and share their areas of expertise. It is not only their professional skills that make a difference; the relationships and friendships they form provide important links with our partners. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is indebted to the following people whose appointments are completed this year.

### **Ms. Louise Gamble, Taiwan**

Ms. Louise Gamble fell in love with Taiwan in 1965, when she was invited by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) to serve in an Indigenous community. Having attended Toronto Bible College and Ewart College, she was designated to the Diaconal Order. After studying Mandarin Chinese, Louise worked for eight years alongside the Tayal people in the beautiful mountains on the northeast coast. She returned to Canada in 1973, studied social work and psychology at York University and worked as a social worker and psychotherapist.

After retirement in 2001, Louise returned to Taiwan and taught religious education in English at the Presbyterian Bible School in Hsinchu and later at Tamkang High School in Tamsui. Since 2007, Louise and her colleague, Mr. Chen Kuan-chou (James Chen), have transcribed and translated the reports and correspondence of the Canadian Presbyterian North Formosan (Taiwan) Mission. This includes over 7,000 documents from 1868 to 1923, many of them handwritten. There are three series of five volumes each; the first covers the life of the first Canadian missionary, the Rev. Dr. George Leslie Mackay. The reports and letters were written in English by the missionaries.

For historians, present and future, the work of James and Louise is a treasure trove. For the Christian communities in northern Taiwan, they eagerly anticipate understanding more fully their roots in the northern Taiwan history, which will soon be available to them in their own language. The skills required for this work are numerous: patience, curiosity, attention to detail, a love of archives, concentration and a sense of humour. Louise has a unique

perspective, dedicated to preserving and accurately translating the past history, so that future generations will know this period of their history. She loves history but is forward looking, delighting in learning. We thank God for Louise Gamble's many skills: an inquiring faith, quirky humour, commitment to the Canadian and Taiwanese Presbyterian churches and a good heart.

### **Mr. Sam and Mrs. Linda Ling, Central Asia**

In 2006, Mr. Sam and Mrs. Linda Ling approached International Ministries, requesting support from The Presbyterian Church in Canada, for their work in Central Asia. Sam was a founding elder of Celebration Presbyterian Church in Toronto and Linda led the Sunday school during the first two years. Sam's grandfather was the Rev. Edward Ling, founder of the Toronto Chinese Presbyterian Church. Together with their four children, Sam and Linda became missionaries with Interserve, working, in Central Asia since 2003. Years after the fall of the Soviet Union, this region still has many economic challenges and limited social freedoms.

Sam and Linda Ling began their work at the J Center, a community education program offering English and Korean classes, computer training and programs for children and the elderly. In 2013, the Ling's moved to Hope Academy, a school for missionary kids and local children. Sam is a computer technician providing technical support for the many foreign volunteers and their ministries. He has trained local apprentices, developing relationships and strengthening the work of their local agencies.

Linda has a background in occupational therapy, experience that helped during monthly visits to an orphanage – where the children eagerly greet her arrival. She is a counsellor to students and colleagues and has taught counselling courses. She is also an English teacher and leads English summer camps for kids, where their own children have helped. Sam and Linda are leaving Hope Academy but they believe that “Jesus is our hope and strength” and trust in him. We give thanks for the faithful commitment of Sam and Linda Ling and pray for God's deepest blessing upon them.

### **The Rev. Dr. Blair and Ms. Vivian Bertrand, Blantyre Synod, Malawi**

The Rev. Dr. Blair and Ms. Vivian Bertrand have completed a three year appointment with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Blantyre Synod, Malawi. Together with their three children, they have made many friends, worked and studied in diverse contexts and embraced the country known as “the warm heart of Africa”.

Vivian worked with Churches Action in Relief and Development, known as CARD. Sometimes, the best learning occurs during a crisis; and Cyclone Idai was just such a crisis for Malawi. People's lives were on the line and timing was critical. Vivian was an integral member of the CARD team, learning and writing grant proposals and engaging with donor agencies. She states that the approval of a three year project with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB), after 20 months of work is her most significant achievement, that will impact many people in the years ahead. Equally significant was Vivian's ability to invite us into the lives of the people; telling the story of a 12 year old girl, head of family caring for her three younger siblings. Capturing the pain and also the dignity, Vivian drew us into an unfathomable landscape. And she led us into prayer for resurrection and new life.

Blair taught at Zomba Theological College (ZTC); supported the work of Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM); and engaged in the work of the Synod Youth department. Blair has been a great lecturer at ZTC, teaching and encouraging students to ask important questions. Two of his ZTC teaching colleagues are also doctoral candidates, through Aberdeen University in Edinburgh, studying there three weeks in the summer. The obstacles they face are enormous – inadequate academic resources, no other academic colleagues, teaching at ZTC and little time for reading. Blair's encouragement and mentoring has been greatly appreciated. Blair has excellent administrative skills, writes clearly and quickly and has supported the Principal, the Rev. Dr. Takuze Chitsulo, with drafting policy and procedure manuals. He has been a good colleague. The desire to study scripture is found in many laypeople from within large and small communities in Malawi. The TEEM programs are in demand, to help lay leaders in local congregations. Blair has also shared his experience at TEEM, running lay education programs in Chichiri prison in Blantyre.

There will be many sad farewells as Blair, Vivian and family leave Malawi. There is also gratitude for their skills shared, friendships fostered and insights gained. We look forward with anticipation, seeing where God will lead them.



## **PARTNERSHIP EVENTS**

### **The Rev. Christian Robinson, India (May 6–July 5, 2019)**

The Rev. Robinson Christian is a pastor of the Gujarat Diocese in the Church of North India. He is working on a Doctor of Theology at Union Biblical Seminary in Pune and teaches at the Gujarat United School of Theology in Ahmedabad, India. While researching material for his thesis on the impact of the colonial legacy on preaching in India today, he was introduced to the Rev. Dr. Sarah Travis of Knox College, author of *Decolonizing Preaching. Embracing the belief that mission is about learning from one another and sharing resources*. International Ministries invited Christian Robinson to study in Toronto for two months. Most of his time was spent researching in the Robarts Library of the University of Toronto and connecting with scholars in homiletics. But he enjoyed attending the General Assembly and sharing his research with the national staff.

### **Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ) in Canada (June 11, 2019)**

In 2019, Korean Christian Church in Japan decided to hold their annual ministers retreat in Toronto, Canada. Twenty-one guests visited The Presbyterian Church in Canada's national office for a joint luncheon with representatives from the United Church of Canada and former mission staff to Japan. The highlight of the retreat was an unforgettable evening of reminiscing with nine former mission staff at a banquet hosted by the Toronto Korean Presbyterian Church. In attendance were Glen and Joyce Davis, Robert (Bob) and Priscilla Anderson, Ron and Susan Wallace, Rodger Talbot and his daughter Patti Talbot and Clarabeth (Beth) McIntosh. The banquet provided an opportunity for the KCCJ ministers to show their gratitude to former mission staff for their sacrifice, solidarity and accompaniment. The Presbyterian Church in Canada first supported mission among the Koreans in Japan in 1927.

### **Hungary Starpoint Festival (July 21–28, 2019)**

At the invitation of the Reformed Church in Hungary, three young adults participated in the 2019 Starpoint Reformed Youth Festival in Debrecen. Maya Kirstein (Prairie, Manitoba), Philip MacFie (Parkwood, Ontario) and Hanna Yun (Kitchener-Waterloo Korean, Ontario) were joined by 28 international guests from 11 countries representing 17 international partner churches. The biennial festival with the theme of the "Kingdom of God is Among You", featured over 3,000 participants and 600 volunteers from all over the Carpathian Basin (Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and other neighbouring countries). The young adults returned with a newfound appreciation for the Kingdom of God and reassurance that they are not alone, that the struggles and rewards of being a Christian were universally shared.

### **Moderator's Trip to Romania and Hungary (September 8–19, 2019)**

The Moderator of the 2019 General Assembly, the Rev. Amanda Currie and her husband Mr. Nicholas Jesson, were warmly welcomed by the Bishops of the Reformed Church in Hungary and the Királyhágómellék Reformed Church District in Romania. The trip included a small group from St. Giles Church, St. Catharines and St. Giles-Kingsway, Toronto and the Rev. Glynis Williams of International Ministries. In Romania, a highlight was the Samuel House ministry for poor children. Samuel House was the dream of Csilla Bertalan and her husband Loyos – a place where 33 vulnerable children receive nutritious food and homework tutoring so that their potential can be realized, in a caring Christian environment. We laughed and noted that the Moderator is a good tennis player. We also visited a Roma after-school program and worshiped in a local Reformed congregation. In spite of being in the European Union, poverty is widespread in Romania and family members seek work elsewhere, leaving grandparents as heads of the family. In Hungary, the Moderator met the Presiding Bishop Istvan Szabo and visited the Great Church in Debrecen, also known as Calvin's Rome.

### **Taiwan Study Trip (November 6–18, 2019)**

The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan hosted an amazing trip for a group of seven Presbyterian women. The Rev. Beth McCutcheon and Ms. Grace McCreary were group leaders. They met with Indigenous communities, listening to their stories and journeys of faith. Over delicious meals, they enjoyed conversations with Taiwanese leaders, elders and young people. They met with the students and teachers of the Yu-Shan Theological College and Seminary, Oxford College and Tamkang High School and learned about the Rev. Dr. George Leslie Mackay. A highlight of the trip was attending a 70th anniversary of a church. The church was filled with flowers and everyone was given a flower crown. All the church members were in traditional dress. The elders of the church were given a sash thanking them for their years of commitment to the church, some being there for more than 50 years. It was a beautiful celebration of faith, commitment and community.

### **Palestine-Israel (November 29–December 7, 2019)**

At the invitation of SABEEL, the Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center in Bethlehem, five Canadian Presbyterians attended a week-long conference on the situation in Palestine-Israel. It was the season of Advent and together with more than 100 delegates from Europe, North America, Africa and the middle east, we heard from over 35 excellent local speakers: Jewish, Christian and Muslim. These academics, theologians, activists, farmers, parents and pastors, of all ages, exposed us to the ongoing tragic situation. Equally impressive was the tenacity and commitment of those who dare to dream and work for peace with justice. We listened, worshipped, asked questions, sang, prayed and shed tears for this place where Jesus Christ was born. We heard the clear request to “go home and tell what you have learned” as an expression of active solidarity.

### **Visits from Overseas Partners to Canada**

General Assembly Visitors:

- The Rev. Byungho Kim, Korean Christian Church in Japan
- The Rev. Jonghyun Kim, Korean Christian Church in Japan

Other Visitors:

- The Rev. Dr. Jo-Ella Holman, CANACOM
- Dr. Carlington Keen, CANACOM

### **COMMUNICATION WITH PARTNERS**

Communicating regularly is a vital aspect of nurturing healthy reciprocal relationships with active church partners. Partners tell us how much they appreciate hearing updates from The Presbyterian Church in Canada, especially on matters of significance to people in this denomination. After the 2019 General Assembly rose, we wrote to ecumenical bodies, our active overseas partners and the mission staff about two important areas in the church's life. First, we indicated that we marked 25 years since we first made the Confession to Indigenous peoples for our participation in the Indian Residential School system. We further indicated the General Assembly's decision to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*. A copy of the church's Confession accompanied the letter. Secondly, we explained the denomination's discussions about sexuality, outlined the next steps and promised to inform them of any other developments related to the church's discussions about sexuality. A copy of all the decisions that the church made about sexuality in 2019 accompanied the letter. The following received the correspondence.

### **Active Church Partners**

Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM); Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba; Evangelical Theological Seminary of Matanzas (SET); The Presbyterian Church of Ghana; Evangelical Centre for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA); Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas (Association of Maya Women); The Reformed Church in Hungary; Kalunba Social Services (Refugees); The Church of North India; Christian Medical Association of India; Mid India Board of Education, Nurses League of CMAI; The Korean Christian Church in Japan; The Presbyterian Church of East Africa; The Presbyterian Church of Korea; The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) – Blantyre Synod, Livingstonia Synod, Synod of Livingstonia Health Department; Zomba Theological Seminary; Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM); David Gordon Memorial Hospital; Mulanje Mission Hospital; Formation Biblique et Théologique à Maurice (FBTM); Bible Society of Mauritius; The Middle East Council of Churches; Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees (DSPR); Joint Christian Committee (JCC) (Lebanon); National Evangelical Synod of Syria & Lebanon (NESSL); The Near East School of Theology (NEST); Joint Advocacy Initiative; The United Mission to Nepal (UMN); Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD); Abakaliki Literacy and Translation Trust; Presbyterian Church of Nigeria; The Transylvanian Reformed Church in Romania; Protestant Theological Institute of Kolozsvár/Cluj-Napoca; Reformed Church in Romania, Királyhágómellék District; The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan; The Bible Society of Taiwan; and The Hungarian Reformed Church in the Sub-Carpathian Ukraine.

### **Ecumenical Partners**

KAIROS, Canadian Council of Churches, Christian Reformed Church in North America, Reformed Church in America, World Communion of Reformed Churches, World Council of Churches and World Council of Reformed Churches. An in-person presentation of the same material was made at the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

## Parties to the Ecumenical Shared Ministry Agreement

Anglican Church of Canada, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and United Church of Canada.

## Mission Staff

The Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand (Malawi), Ms. Vivian Bertrand (Malawi), Ms. Stephanie Chunoo (Hungary), Ms. Louise Gamble (Taiwan), Mr. Sam and Ms. Linda Ling (Central Asia), Mr. David McIntosh (Japan), Mr. Paul McLean (Taiwan), the Rev. Joel Sherbino (Malawi Liaison), Mr. Stephen (Steve) McInnis and Ms. Nora Martin (Malawi) and the Rev. Jeanie Lee (Hungary).

## ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS

International Ministries participates in the following ecumenical organizations:

- Forum for Intercultural Leadership and Learning (Reference group of the Canadian Council of Churches) – the Rev. Dr. Heather Vais, Mr. Yamo Apea
- Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM) – the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams, the Rev. Deborah Stanbury
- Taiwan Ecumenical Forum for Justice and Peace (TEF) - the Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie

The churches and entities listed below are established partnerships of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Country/Region	Church or Agency	Appointment
Afghanistan	Community World Service Asia (CWSA), Pakistan/Afghanistan	
Asia	Christian Conference of Asia	
Caribbean	Caribbean and North America Council for Mission (CANACOM)	
Central Asia	Interserve Canada	Mr. Sam & Mrs. Linda Ling
China	China Christian Council (CCC) The Amity Foundation	
Ghana	The Presbyterian Church of Ghana	
Grenada	The Presbyterian Church in Grenada	
Guatemala	Maya Mam Association for Research and Development (AMMID) Evangelical Centre for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA) Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas (Association of Mayan Women) Francisco Coll School	
Guyana	The Guyana Presbyterian Church	
Haiti	Zamni Lasante (Partners in Health) MCC Haiti Partenariat Pour le Développement Local (PDL)	
Hungary	The Reformed Church in Hungary Kalunba Social Services Association	The Rev. Jeanie Lee
India	The Church of North India (CNI) MIBE Graduate School for Nurses Christian Medical Association of India (CMAI)	
Israel/Palestine	Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine/Israel (EAPPI) Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center Joint Advocacy Initiative	Mr. Shaun MacDonald
Japan	The Korean Christian Church in Japan	Mr. David McIntosh
Kenya	The Presbyterian Church of East Africa	
Korea	The Presbyterian Church of Korea	
Lebanon	Joint Christian Committee for Social Service (JCC) The Middle East Council of Churches	

Malawi	The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL)	
	The Near East School of Theology (NEST)	
	The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) – Blantyre Synod	Mr. Stephen McInnis, Ms. Nora Martin
	Mulanje Mission Hospital	The Rev. Joel Sherbino (Liaison)
	Neno School	
	Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM)	The Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand
	Zomba Theological College	The Rev. Dr. Blair Bertrand
	The Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) – Livingstonia Synod	
	Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Program (EHAP)	
	Livingstonia Synod AIDS Program (LISAP)	
	Synod of Livingstonia Development Department (SOLDEV)	
	Synod of Livingstonia Health Department – Embangweni Hospital	
	David Gordon Memorial Hospital	
	Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD)	Ms. Vivian Bertrand
Mauritius	The Presbyterian Church of Mauritius	
	Formation Biblique et Théologique à Maurice	
	Bible Society of Mauritius (BSM)	
Mozambique	Presbyterian Church of Mozambique	
Nepal	United Mission to Nepal (UMN)	
Nicaragua	International Nepal Fellowship (INF)	
	Instituto de Promoción Humana (INPRHU)	
	Asociación Soya de Nicaragua (SOYNICA)	
	Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD)	
Nigeria	The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria	
	Abakaliki Literacy and Translation Trust	
Pakistan	Interserve Canada	
	Community World Service Asia (CWSA)	
	Pakistan/Afghanistan	
Romania	Reformed Church in Romania, Transylvania and Királyhágómellék Districts	
	Protestant Theological Institute (PTI)	
Taiwan	The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT)	Ms. Louise Gamble
	The Bible Society in Taiwan (BST)	The Rev. Dr. Paul McLean
Ukraine	Reformed Church of Sub-Carpathian Ukraine (RCCU)	

## GRANTS

### Leadership Development Grants

Nelson Mandela said that “education is the most powerful weapon to change the world”. Leadership development grants provide opportunities for global partners to learn and develop their skills, thereby changing the world.

- János Antal, Reformed Church in Romania, Királyhágómellék District, studying for a Ph.D. in Christian Ethics at the Selye University of Komarno, Slovakia.
- The Rev. Robinson Christian, Church of North India, Diocese of Gujurat, Ph.D. research, University of Toronto.
- Ms. Miriam Gondwe and Ms. Roselyn Chisanga, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Blantyre Synod, Malawi, studying for M.Th. Ministry Studies, Aberdeen University, at Zomba Theological College.
- Ms. Dorica Nkhata, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP), Livingstonia Synod, Malawi, studying for a Bachelor of Medicine & Surgery, College of Medicine (University of Malawi), with notable support from Knox Church (St. Catharines, Ontario).

- The Rev. Patrick Thegu Mutahi, Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), Kenya, studying for a Ph.D. in Religious Studies at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Kenya.
- The Rev. Brian Theu and the Rev. Thomas Nyang'ama, CCAP Lecturers at Zomba Theological College, Malawi, enrolled in Ph.D. studies at Aberdeen University, Scotland (distance learning with an annual sojourn at the Centre for Ministry Studies Summer School Program at Aberdeen University).
- Eight female students studying for diploma program at Theological Extension by Education in Malawi (TEEM).

Grants help global partners by supporting Bible translation, theological institutions, lay training, children and youth education, prison and refugee ministries, church buildings, medical care and so much more that bears witness to God's grace and compassion.

#### Africa

Ghana – Lay Training Centres (Tamale, Ramseyer, Nsaba)  
Ghana – Presbyterian Interfaith Research & Resource Centre  
Kenya – Presbyterian Church of East Africa Kikuyu Hospital  
Malawi – Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (Blantyre)  
Malawi – Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (Livingstonia)  
Malawi – David Gordon Memorial Hospital  
Malawi – Ekwendeni Mission Hospital Grace Fund  
Malawi – Friends of Prison  
Malawi – Theological Education by Extension in Malawi (TEEM)  
Malawi – Zomba Theological College  
Nigeria – Abakaliki Literacy & Translation Trust  
Nigeria – Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (National Directorate of Missions)  
Mauritius – Bible Society of Mauritius  
Mauritius – Formation Biblique et Théologique à Maurice (FBTM)

#### Americas

Caribbean North American Council for Mission (CANACOM)  
Guatemala – CEDEPCA  
Guatemala – Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas

#### Asia

Christian Conference of Asia  
India – Christian Medical Association of India  
India – Ludhiana Medical Centre  
India – MIBE Graduate School for Nurses  
India – Vellore Medical Centre  
Japan – Korean Christian Church in Japan  
Nepal – United Mission to Nepal  
Nepal – New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Centre  
Taiwan – The Bible Society in Taiwan

#### Europe

Hungary – Reformed Church of Hungary – Secondary Schools  
Hungary – Kalunba Social Services Association – Refugees  
Romania – Reformed Church in Romania (Királyhágómellék District)  
Romania – Protestant Theological Institute  
Romania – Lorantffy Zsuzsanna Reformed Church High School  
Romania – Samuel House  
Ukraine – Reformed Church of Sub-Carpathian Ukraine – Schools

#### Middle East

Israel/Palestine – Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR)  
Israel/Palestine – Joint Advocacy Initiative – Olive Tree Campaign  
Israel/Palestine – Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center  
Lebanon – Joint Christian Committee for Social Service (JCC)  
Lebanon – Near East School of Theology  
Lebanon – Middle East Council of Churches

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The Rev. Marion Barclay Mackay (St. Andrew's, Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia), Ms. Huda Kandalaf Kanawati (St. Andrew's, Ottawa, Ontario), Dr. Rick Allen (St. Andrew's, Toronto, Ontario), the Rev. Dr. Ferenc Szatmari (Calvin, Kitchener, Ontario), Ms. Amy Zavitz (Knox, Waterloo, Ontario), Ms. Janet Brewer (WMS representative), the Rev. Sarah Kim (Executive Director, WMS), Mr. Guy Smagghe (Director, PWS&D).

## **CUTTING EDGE OF MISSION**

The Dr. E.H. Johnson Memorial Award was established in 1981 to recognize work on “the cutting edge of mission”. Many people live in ways that are faithful to what God is calling them to do. The “Cutting Edge of Mission” award seeks to lift up people and organizations that think creatively and approach issues in remarkable ways. These are the prophetic voices that call for justice and action. These women and men have a vision and passion for what is possible when others see only impossibility. Often, they are lone voices, speaking at great personal risk and sacrifice.

Dr. E.H. Johnson (Ted), in whose memory this award was established, was one such person. In his position as Secretary of Overseas Mission of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Ted Johnson had oversight of international mission staff and partnerships around the world. Ted was ahead of the curve. He imagined what was possible, saw what was needed and acted decisively.

The January 15, 2020 meeting of the committee coincided with the 50th anniversary of the official end of the Nigeria-Biafra war. We noted that the committee's namesake, Dr. E.H. (Ted) Johnson, was credited with providing key leadership in the humanitarian relief effort. In December 1968, Johnson brought together a group of people who bought an airplane and founded the airline, Canairelief. They later bought four more planes. They had no experience in operating an airline; they knew nothing about flying in war zones. But they knew how to organize, how to raise money and they were compelled by their beliefs to help alleviate the horrendous, unfolding humanitarian crisis. Johnson, in particular, inspired unprecedented support from the Canadian public. With the support of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, other Canadian churches, Jewish communities, Oxfam Canada and many, many individual Canadians, Canairelief completed 670 flights and delivered 11,000 tons of food and medical supplies into the blockaded state of Biafra. The final Canairelief report estimated that “Canairelief enabled about one million people, the majority of them women and children, to survive who would not otherwise have lived through the starvation period of the blockade.”

The committee seeks to be faithful in its work to honour and draw attention to remarkable mission initiatives. The E.H. Johnson committee members are grateful to the Life and Mission Agency and donors for their continued support of the work of the committee.

The 145th General Assembly in Waterloo in 2019 recognized Dr. Sheila Watt-Cloutier for her work on the “Cutting Edge of Mission”. Author of the acclaimed book, *The Right to Be Cold*, she was among the first to publicize the impact of global persistent organic pollutants and changing climate on those who live in Arctic. Dr. Watt-Cloutier is one of the world's most recognized environmental and human rights activists. She was nominated in 2007 for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The recipient of the E.H. Johnson Award at the 146th General Assembly will be The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking. Speaking on behalf of the centre will be Ashley Franssen-Tingley. The centre provides leadership designed to enhance collaboration, coordination and efforts to end human trafficking in Canada with community-based practitioners, relevant experts, law enforcement, members of the public and government representatives. The centre is also working to advance federal, provincial and municipal policy and programs through evidence-based measures and research and has spearheaded the implementation of the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline, launched in May of 2019, to address all forms of human trafficking in Canada.

## **Dr. E.H. Johnson Memorial Fund Committee Members**

- One Year: The Rev. Gordon Timbers (Orillia, Ontario), the Rev. Robert Smith (Toronto, Ontario)
- Two Years: The Rev. Shahrzad Kandalaf (Kemptville, Ontario)
- Three Years: The Rev. Joan Masterton (convener, Markham, Ontario), Ms. Annemarie Klassen (Arden, Ontario), Ms. Anne Saunders (Toronto, Ontario)

- 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

## JUSTICE MINISTRIES

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Dr. Allyson Carr (from September 2019)
	Program Coordinator:	Ms. Katharine Sisk
	Program Assistant (contract):	Ms. Carragh Erhardt

Justice Ministries collaborates with and assists congregations and courts of the church to respond faithfully to the justice imperatives of the gospel. The department does this through encouraging theological reflection on justice issues; supporting and facilitating social justice initiatives and workshops in the church and with its courts and members; responding to questions about the church's policies on justice issues; engaging in research and writing to inform the church's prophetic witness; engaging with elected officials and decisionmakers; taking part in ecumenical justice initiatives; and assisting the church in contributing to healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people by building new, strong and healthy relationships.

In reading this report, commissioners will be struck by how interrelated the issues in it are. While several common threads were apparent – the lethal effects of racism and colonialism being primary among them – a central theme emphasizing the life and death urgency and what seems like the insurmountable nature of the issues addressed in this report emerged. It is easy to read any number of these sections and feel despair. The issues are profound and devastating and their effects on human lives and on creation, is heartbreaking. There are no easy answers and no quick fixes to the crises described here. And yet, these crises can be addressed and as followers of Christ, who loves all the world, we must address them and in doing so will find hope.

The prophet Isaiah proclaims, “Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless and plead the widow’s cause,” (Isaiah 1:17). The very first part of this verse is instructive and sheds a good deal of light on our path forward as the church considers the following material and recommendations. In truth, we do not always know how to do good. Sometimes, we (the church, society, even each of us as individual people) have been complicit in doing grave harm even as we have tried to do “good”. But if we listen and truly seek the truth, we can see where we went wrong and where we can go right. The words of Isaiah remind us that “doing good” isn’t knowledge we have innately but rather something we have to *learn*, as God calls us to do; that justice is not something we possess either but rather something we must seek; that oppression cannot be allowed to continue unabated but must be corrected and that the rights of those who have been made most vulnerable by society must be upheld; not only upheld but we must “bring” justice to the targeted, the vulnerable. This is what God asked of the prophets and it is what God asks of us.

One of the things the church has been learning is that an important part of “seeking” and “bringing” justice to people means listening to what they say justice is in their situation. Only then can we truly learn to do good. It is our hope that the material presented in this report will also provide helpful opportunities to learn, even where such learning can be painful. God’s love for the world knows no bounds and neither should ours.

The Justice Ministries’ report is divided into 8 sections:

- Section 1: The Environment, Climate Change and Ecological Justice
- Section 2: Why Work to Decolonize? Responding to the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Section 3: Repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery in Practice
- Section 4: Poverty and Poverty Reduction in Canada
- Section 5: Racism, Xenophobia and Hate in Canada
- Section 6: Gun Violence
- Section 7: Updates
  - Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund;
  - The Carbon Footprint of Travel to General Assembly;
  - The Opioid Crisis
- Section 8: Staff Outreach, Ecumenical Partnerships and Advisory Committees

## THE ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

Living Faith reminds us,

Our care for the world must reflect God's care.  
We are not owners but stewards of God's good earth.  
Concerned with the well-being of all of life  
we welcome the truths and insights  
of all human skill and science about the world and the universe.

(Living Faith 2.4.1)

Given God's love of the world and God's designation of creation as "very good", we should be concerned and care about the well-being of all life as a matter of faithful response to God's love, even when creation is healthy and well. Now, however, we hear from those who have significant skill and are respected scientists that the well-being of all life and creation is increasingly under threat. It behooves Christians to take such threats to the well-being of God's creation seriously and respond accordingly.

### A brief walk through the problem

Last year, a report to General Assembly from the International Affairs Committee examined the issue of plastics and micro plastics in the watershed (A&P 2019, p. 282–83, 30). Plastics are an ongoing issue polluting the watershed in Canada and throughout the world, including the world's oceans but in addition to the challenges posed by plastics to marine flora and fauna, the warming planet is also having a significant effect on the interconnected systems and bodies of water that make up so much of our world – and the relative health and temperature of our planet's water affects the rest of the world. According to the United Nations 2017 factsheet on Oceans:

- 80 per cent of all pollution in seas and oceans comes from land-based activities.
- Nitrogen loads to oceans roughly tripled from pre-industrial times due to fertilizer, manure and wastewater. The global economic damage of nitrogen pollution is estimated at \$200–\$800 billion per year.
- In many parts of the world, (urban) sewage flows untreated or under-treated, into the ocean.
- Increased nutrient loading from human activities, combined with the impacts of climate change and other environmental change has resulted in an increase in the frequency, magnitude and duration of harmful algal blooms worldwide. These algal blooms can contaminate seafood with toxins and impact ecosystem structure and function.
- Sea level rise leads to coastal erosion, inundations, storm floods, tidal waters encroachment into estuaries and river systems, contamination of freshwater reserves and food crops, loss of nesting beaches, as well as displacement of coastal lowlands and wetlands. In particular, sea level rise poses a significant risk to coastal regions and communities.
- Almost two-thirds of the world's cities with populations of over five million are located in areas at risk of sea level rise.

As recent and ongoing federal studies show, these types of issues affect communities across much of Canada, since Canada has significant stretches of coastal area.<sup>1</sup> Additionally many of these issues, including blue-green algae blooms, are affecting the Great Lakes.<sup>2</sup> This pollution affects the earth's and the earth's plants' and creatures' ability to adapt to the changes humans are making. Additionally, carbon emissions from human activity contributes to rising global temperatures, which is already contributing to increased frequency and severity of natural disasters, including wildfires, hurricanes and typhoons, tornadic activity, flooding and dangerous heat waves.

### Carbon emissions, global warming and changing climates

According to the report *Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks: Executive Summary 2019*, "Canada represented approximately 1.6% of global GHG emissions in 2015 (CAIT 2017), although it is one of the highest per capita emitters. Canada's per capita emissions have dropped substantially since 2005, when this indicator was 22.7 t CO<sub>2</sub> eq/capita, reaching a new low of 19.5 t CO<sub>2</sub> eq/capita in recent years."<sup>3</sup> It is good to see our emissions decreasing but disheartening to hear that we are one of the highest per capita emitters, globally. While this is in part due to our reality as a northern nation requiring heat in the winter, looking at the numbers of nations like Finland should urge us that we can do much better. Finland's carbon emissions in 2015 were 55.7 million tonnes;<sup>4</sup> with a 2015 population of 5.472 million that puts the Finnish per capita emissions during the same period at 10.18 t CO<sub>2</sub> eq/capita – close to half our Canadian number.



The consequences of not having done better are already mounting. Summarizing some of the federal government's data on climate change impacts and adaptation, Climate Atlas notes that "Some of the projected and current effects of global warming in Canada include:

- Melting permafrost, threatening northern buildings and transportation and releasing methane, which further accelerates global warming.
- East and West coast sea level rise, threatening to flood cities, increase storm damage and accelerate erosion.
- Increased activity of pest and invasive species, posing risks to our ecosystems and our economy.
- More variable and more extreme weather, with increased risk of weather-related catastrophes such as droughts and floods.
- Hotter summers, bringing increased risks of heat-related health problems as well as longer and more severe forest fire seasons."<sup>5</sup>

They source this information from the federal government's web page on climate change impacts and adaptation, which includes information organized by area or concern.<sup>6</sup> There is also more detailed data available on that page, with links to other resources including reports for impacts on coastal regions, forests, Northern communities and suggested tools for adaptation.

The current global crisis of climate change is altering the way creation relates to itself; wind and water patterns are shifting, which has a massive impact on everyone and everything on this planet—humans, animals, plants. Living Faith reminds us, "We hold in reverence the whole creation as the theatre of God's glory and action". (Living Faith 2.1.2) Given where matters stand, holding the whole creation in reverence must entail seeking ways to mitigate the harm already done and to bring our human actions back in line with caring for this earth and loving it, rather than devastating it. To do otherwise is, put simply, to dishonour God's work and not be the faithful servants we are called to be. The earth matters to God and therefore as people of faith it must matter to us too.

### **Reducing carbon emissions and Just Transition**

The evidence is clear: we *must* reduce our carbon emissions, because we are harming creation and we are harming ourselves too. Our economy, as it exists currently and much of our social and work habits will need to change significantly in order to reduce emissions enough to ensure that life – including human life – on this planet can continue. Making the kinds of changes necessary will impact and disrupt lives and livelihoods, though not as much as ignoring the problem will if we don't make these changes. An important part of making the necessary changes, then, also needs to be looking at how to mitigate and address the human impact moving to a more sustainable economy and cutting our carbon emissions will do. This general concept is called "just transition" though it can have many different aspects.<sup>7</sup>

Generally speaking, when people speak about the need for a "just transition" they are talking about working toward action and policies to lower carbon emissions and counter climate change *while also* taking significant steps to support workers and families in the industries and communities affected (through such means as financial aid, job training and help finding employment). Many people also use the phrase to emphasize the need to support those communities – especially Indigenous communities and communities in the global south – who are already disproportionately affected by a changing climate.

### **A matter of faith: Christians and climate emergency**

One can see, just from a social perspective, why working to reduce or end human contributions to climate change and the adaptations we need to pursue to do that, are important. But there is an additional urgency for Christians. Christians have historically liked to talk about "creation care" and "creation stewardship" (or even dominion) but have often not framed such care through a lens of justice. This is beginning to change and needs to.

Several international Christian bodies, including the World Council of Churches and the World Communion of Reformed Churches have already officially declared that we, life on earth, are in a climate emergency. As the World Council of Churches states in their declaration, "The time for debate and disputation of established scientific facts is long over. The time for action is swiftly passing. We will all be held to account for our inaction and our disastrous stewardship of this precious and unique planet. The climate emergency is the result of our ecological sins. It is time for *metanoia* [conversion resulting from repentance] for all. We must now search our hearts and our most fundamental faith principles for a new ecological transformation and for divine guidance for our next steps to build resilience in the face of this unprecedented millennial challenge."<sup>8</sup>

The World Council of Churches and the World Communion of Reformed Churches, both of which The Presbyterian Church in Canada are members, have included recommendations for action in their climate emergency statements. These recommendations range from high level advocacy work such as calling on national and international bodies to change policies and practices to taking action on a congregational or personal level. As declarations such as these demonstrate, all layers of action and participation are vital for the worst of this crisis to be averted.<sup>9</sup>

Christians understand that the world on which we live is something that is valued not just as a “resource” for us but is good and loved by God, in itself. God called creation, of which we humans are one part, “very good”. Once we understand that, it is clear to see that caring for the earth and protecting it is both a moral and a spiritual imperative – not to mention an imperative for our and the earth’s survival.

In order to live up to this imperative, we need to challenge the norms and attitudes that many of us have grown so accustomed to vis-à-vis cultures of hyper-consumption. We must challenge ourselves to re-frame our understandings of our place in the web of life. As an example of these concerning mentalities, Sasha Adkins writes:

Disposable plastic is toxic not only to the body but also to the soul. The more we normalize short-term utility as the main criterion for evaluating the things around us, the more disconnected we become from a sense of the inherent worth of creation. The more we cultivate this habit of the heart of seeing things as disposable once they no longer serve us, the less able we are to find the beauty and value in our relationships with each other or even the intrinsic value in ourselves once we are no longer ‘productive.’<sup>10</sup>

It is both how we approach the small things – whether to use a disposable plastic item or its reusable counterpart – and the large things – like converting from economies based in oil to renewable energies – that will determine how successful we are at abating the current climate crisis. The following recommendations are tailored to how The Presbyterian Church in Canada can take strategic steps in reducing our climate impact.

**Recommendation No. 1** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 2** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 3** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 4** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 5** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 6** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 7** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 8** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 9** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

Note: For the full Declaration, see: [wrc.ch/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Climate-Emergency-Letter.pdf](http://wrc.ch/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Climate-Emergency-Letter.pdf)

## **WHY WORK TO DECOLONIZE? RESPONDING TO THE NATIONAL INQUIRY’S FINAL REPORT ON MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

The 2019 General Assembly agreed by consensus:

That *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* be referred to the Life and Mission Agency and the National Indigenous Ministries Council for study and to report with recommendations to the next Assembly to find the further actions that we can take. (A&P, 2019, p. 36)

This section of the report was prepared and written in collaboration between the National Indigenous Ministry Council (NIMC) and Justice Ministries of the Life and Mission Agency.

“It’s striking too, all their stories. They show how fragile we are and at the same time, how strong we are. And it still continues today. That’s what strikes me and how resilient we are.” – Pénélope, one of the Grandmothers guiding the National Inquiry, on the experience of hearing the stories brought to the Inquiry.<sup>11</sup>

“Believe me. Pray for me. Don’t forget me.” Cee-Jai, one of the women who testified about her sister’s murder and the violence that shaped her life as well.<sup>12</sup>

### Some background

In June 2019, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls released its final report, *Reclaiming Power and Place*. The report contains 231 recommendations, divided into several segments and worked to determine how the crisis came to be, why it has been allowed to continue, what can be done to stop it and steps Canada needs to take to support healing. In particular, the Inquiry highlighted the need to recognize and respect the agency of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people<sup>13</sup> and the ongoing need for core funding models (rather than project or grant-based models) for centres and programs supporting the rights and lives of Indigenous people.

The Inquiry heard from more than 700 survivors and family or friends of those missing or murdered either in private or community interviews, as well as from community members, expert witnesses, front-line workers in areas such as health care and social work and police officers or workers in child welfare agencies. In total, more than 2,380 people participated in the Inquiry.<sup>14</sup> It also studied earlier regional, provincial and federal reports on related issues. From the testimony, the stories and the learnings from previous reports, the Inquiry determined several things that can be summarized in three basic points:

- that there are four “pathways” maintaining the violence the Inquiry examined and that supporting four types of rights would disrupt those pathways;
- that the violence was targeted based on gender and that targeting violence in this gendered way has its roots in colonialism and certain interpretations of Christian theology; and
- that the violence as it has unfolded over the years has amounted to a genocide that is still underway.<sup>15</sup>

### Genocide

The part of the findings of the National Inquiry that has received perhaps the most attention is this last point – that Canada engaged in (and continues to engage in) genocide against Indigenous people, especially Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. The report states:

The violence the National Inquiry heard about amounts to a race-based genocide of Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Inuit and Métis, which especially targets women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. This genocide has been empowered by colonial structures, evidenced notably by the Indian Act, the Sixties Scoop, residential schools and breaches of human and Indigenous rights, leading directly to the current increased rates of violence, death and suicide in Indigenous populations.<sup>16</sup>

The Inquiry laid out its reasoning for coming to this conclusion in a supplemental report to the final report called “A Legal Analysis of Genocide”. There, they note that:

Genocide is defined in the Genocide Convention as: [...] any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.<sup>17</sup>

We know from the words of federal bureaucrats such as Duncan Campbell Scott<sup>18</sup> that the stated goal of governmental policy for many years was assimilation and erasure of identity until there was no longer any “Indian” group. Knowing that assimilation and erasure was the stated goal and setting that goal in the context of actions the government, in some cases with the help of the church, took leaves no room for any conclusion other than genocide by the definition of the 1948 convention. These actions include:

- forced relocation off ancestral land to unfamiliar or difficult to inhabit land;<sup>19</sup>
- placing Indigenous people on reserves in crowded conditions with inadequate housing and (in some cases) a lack of clean drinking water,<sup>20</sup>

- forced sterilization of Indigenous women,<sup>21</sup>
- forcibly transferring Indigenous children away from their parents and communities to be raised by non-Indigenous people, whether in residential schools, through the Sixties Scoop or through continued statistically higher rates of apprehension into the foster care system.<sup>22</sup>

All these and other actions make it clear that most if not all of these five acts legally defining genocide through the 1948 Convention have been committed in Canada against Indigenous people. Through the continuation of these policies and practices over generations, serious bodily and mental harm has been and continues to be inflicted on Indigenous people. We continue to see the lethal effects of such harm in the increased rates of death, disappearance and suicide that the National Inquiry's report cites. The devastating reality is that each incident in these "increased rates" is a name; a person with family, friends and community who mourn them, like sixteen year old Delaine Copenace, of Treaty Three territory, who disappeared one February night four years ago and whose body was discovered about a month later.<sup>23</sup> Her family and community are still searching for answers.

At a federal level, Prime Minister Trudeau accepted the findings of the National Inquiry and the government has said it will "develop and implement a National Action Plan to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and LGBTQ and two-spirit people".<sup>24</sup> The National Indigenous Ministry Council (NIMC) of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and Justice Ministries have spent the past year studying the report's findings and reviewing its considerable material. The findings of the Inquiry's report are significant and convincing and the National Indigenous Ministry Council and Justice Ministries have worked in collaboration to produce this report containing recommendations for actions for the church to consider making. Further resources for study are being produced.

### **Looking the other way: colonialism, racism and life and death**

A recurring theme of the report is the systemic callousness that pervaded so many interactions of service, police or health care providers with Indigenous women, girls or 2SLGBTQIA people in moments of crisis or need. Colonialism shapes precisely this kind of callousness, as in the testimony Robin R. gave the Inquiry about her young daughter's murder and the lack of care shown by the medical professionals who arrived while her daughter still lived.

The final report states, "In her testimony, Robin R. described how, after finding her two year old daughter badly beaten by her partner, she called an ambulance. However, as Robin described, when the emergency responders arrived, they refused to take her daughter to the hospital until she found her daughter's health card.

[The] ambulance came into my house and they checked my daughter's vitals. They went to get a stretcher and they asked for her care card. I didn't know the number of her care card off the top of my head and we didn't have a family doctor. But the ambulance insisted that they needed the care card before they drove her to the hospital. And it was like, they refused to leave my house unless I had her care card to go to the hospital. So I went into every drawer in my house and I ripped everything else out of the drawers. I ripped everything off the shelves. I ripped everything open. I was panicked. I was scared. And my house was in disarray after. I ripped apart my house looking for the care card because the ambulance said they wouldn't leave unless they had that number.

Robin's daughter later died of her injuries. In addition, detectives interpreted the disarray caused by her looking for the care card as her house being 'strewn with garbage' – a characterization that Robin believes contributed to her losing custody of her other child."<sup>25</sup>

The genocide described in the final report is not the kind of genocide we are used to hearing about; instead of happening over a few months or years, as with the 1994 Rwandan Genocide or the Holocaust, it has unfolded over centuries as part of the project of colonialism. Colonial genocide happens through millions of acts and inactions that target and traumatize Indigenous people, furthering the conditions for more trauma and more death.<sup>26</sup> It cultivates a set of racist attitudes, structures, practices and priorities that are used to justify systemic blindness to injustice while devaluing the knowledge and identity of Indigenous people – and devaluing Indigenous lives.

The Inquiry's interim report noted that colonialism produces "internalized and externalized thought patterns that support this occupation and subjugation"<sup>27</sup> and this insight is echoed throughout the final report. By this, the Inquiry means that colonialism teaches everyone – Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike – that Indigenous people are worth less or should have less rights than non-Indigenous people. Such attitudes are internalized and become the often-unconscious assumptions guiding our actions, whether we are Indigenous or non-Indigenous. To put it another way, colonialism is *inherently* exploitative and violent, not accidentally so. Its ideological goal is to keep people apathetic

or blind to racism, in themselves and in society and blind to or dismissive of the inherent violence that goes with that racism. Colonialism depends on dehumanizing Indigenous people; it creates and maintains the conditions that allow deaths and family separations such as what happened to Robin, her two year old daughter and her other child whom she lost custody of.

Given these goals it should come as no surprise, though it should still be shocking, that one of the effects of colonialism is to enforce social apathy or even tolerance of disappearances and murders of Indigenous women and girls, who are targeted in particular because patriarchal and misogynist values are a primary driving force of colonialism, as we examine later below. The National Inquiry's Final Report makes clear that this crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people did not come out of nowhere but instead is the direct result of policies, practices and attitudes that stem from colonialism.

Some of these policies that lead to violence and death can be as mundane as not issuing taxi vouchers, as a matter of course, to those who need them upon release from the hospital. Ensuring that someone who has just been through a medically significant and possibly traumatizing event has safe transportation home is one way of ensuring they arrive home safely. Conversely, leaving people without access to safe transportation creates conditions for violence and death. This is echoed in stories like Melissa's, who shared her testimony with the Inquiry.

I was visiting a cousin in the northwest area of the city. There was just the two of us and we were watching a hockey game. A woman showed up and she provided me with marijuana that had been laced with something and I didn't know. I overdosed. I stopped breathing. I had a grand mal seizure and I was transported to the [deleted] hospital. Despite the fact that I had no jacket, no shoes, no money, I was asked to leave at 6:30 a.m. on that cold fall morning...It was dark and it was cold and I was alone. Nobody knew where I was. And I lingered in the entrance because when I went outside, I was so cold and I had no shoes and I didn't know what I was supposed to do or where I was supposed to go. So, I went back and I begged them to help me. And the worker at that time only got annoyed with me but I was persistent, because I didn't want to go walking by myself. I still had the heart monitor stickers attached to me. After a lot of begging and asking, I was granted a taxi slip. The next month, they found a body right where I was, where I was supposed to walk by. And they told me that I had to walk with no shoes and no money".<sup>28</sup>

Other stories heard by members of the National Indigenous Ministry Council and Justice Ministries echo this story in cases where Indigenous youth were brought in not for overdoses but for self-harm and were then released, alone, at night and told to go wait for a bus in a dark secluded area – or, like fourteen year old Azraya Kokopenace were simply allowed to walk out of the hospital unaccompanied, despite being under the care of child services at the time of her hospitalization and despite the agency's awareness of her struggle with suicidal ideation. She was found dead of apparent suicide two days later in a wooded lot across the street from the hospital she left.<sup>29</sup> These kinds of institutional actions and inactions demonstrate the types of policies and practices that contribute to conditions for violence and death and also increase the likelihood that Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people won't seek help from places like hospitals. It is the responsibility of institutions, in collaboration with governments, to address barriers to seeking and receiving the necessary services for which they are responsible.

Once we understand colonialism and how it functions as an exploitative, life-devaluing ideology, it is clear that Christians cannot support such an ideology, since it runs counter to the Gospel. And so the answer to the question, "why work to decolonize?" also becomes clear. Christians should work to decolonize because the ideology of colonization has become infused in our own lives as a dominant ideology in the society in which we live but is ultimately incompatible with the gospel.

#### **Four pathways maintaining violence; four rights to disrupt it**

There are four pathways that the National Inquiry identifies that maintain historical and contemporary colonial violence, which must be countered if we wish – as we must – to decolonize. These four pathways are:

- Historical, multigenerational and intergenerational trauma
- Social and economic marginalization
- Maintaining the status quo and lack of institutional will
- Ignoring the agency and expertise of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people

These four pathways can be disrupted by supporting four kinds of rights: the right to culture, the right to health, the right to security and the right to justice. To understand some of the ways these pathways play out in the lives of

Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people, (and conversely, how supporting the four rights named would disrupt that violence and move Canada toward decolonizing) we'll look briefly at the testimony of a woman named Cee-Jai.

One of the women whose testimony weaves throughout the chapter in the final report on the right to security is a witness named Cee-Jai. The report explains, "Like many of the witnesses, Cee-Jai experienced repeated acts of physical, sexual and psychological violence throughout her entire life. From witnessing her father stab her mother when she was very young, to witnessing her mother being physically beaten and abused by men as a young girl, to repeated sexual and physical abuse and neglect in various foster homes, to the sexual assault and physical violence she experienced as a teenager and adult, violence permeates Cee-Jai's life story and her relationships reflect a truth that is unfortunately not uncommon. She shared, 'I feel like my spirit knows violence,' summarizing what many Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people experience as the almost constant presence of violence that contributes to an overall absence of basic human security".<sup>30</sup>

The Final Report details the damage from devastating experiences that were an intentional part of the process of colonization and how that damage has been passed from one generation to another through intergenerational or multigenerational trauma. Families disrupted and broken by removal of children to residential schools, through the Sixties Scoop or through child welfare agencies are often unable to form family bonds and unable to give children the tools to thrive. In fact, many witnesses drew parallels between ongoing child apprehension and residential schools.

To better understand what intergenerational trauma is, consider the following: "From our families of origin, we learn foundational life skills and ways of coping, inherit genes and knowledge and much more. In this way, we figuratively stand on their shoulders as we keep building upwards. But what happens when the 'shoulders' of one generation have been damaged by devastating experiences? How much does this damage matter to the success of future generations?"<sup>31</sup> The report shows in detail that it matters a great deal. It also noted that the ongoing impacts of the residential schools – the effects of trauma – are being used as reasons to apprehend children today, which continues to disrupt families, communities and access to culture; further continuing cycles of violence and exploitation.

This cycle is active in so many of the stories and lives the Final Report examined. Later in the report, we learn for example that Cee-Jai's mother was a residential school survivor. Cee-Jai speaks about being a child and seeing her mother drinking only to begin talking and crying, about her experiences in the residential school. She identifies that she believes it was the experiences her mother had in the residential school that left her mother prone to exploitative and violent relationships, which were then the context in which Cee-Jai and her sister grew up. It is in the context of the violence that happened to Cee-Jai's mother when she was a young child that Cee-Jai spoke about the first time she herself internalized the idea that violence was just something she should expect and accept:

I was playing in the playground and I remember this little boy, same age as me, he wanted me to sit on his lap and go down the slide. And I didn't want to. I wanted to go on the slide by myself. He ended up beating me up. I was in kindergarten. And I got a big, black eye. And I remember crying and running home, running home to try to get the – my parents – my mom or somebody to protect me. And all they said was – all the adults around me said that, 'Look how cute. Her boyfriend beat her up.' And they all laughed and thought it was funny or cute. And maybe that was the first time I really believed that it was okay for someone to beat me up and hurt me. So today, I know that's – was wrong. I would never have my nieces. I would never do that to my nieces today. It was instilled in my – my mind and in my memory, my belief system, that this was okay to – to be hurt. Another way of not giving me my voice. And learning that...the people that I think are going to protect me, are not going to do that.<sup>32</sup>

What Cee-Jai describes as "instilled in my mind and in my memory, my belief system" is a lesson from intergenerational trauma. In truth, Cee-Jai's life shows the presence of all four of these pathways, targeting her for physical, sexual and psychological violence. As the daughter of a residential school survivor, multigenerational and intergenerational trauma shaped her life; when her mother took Cee-Jai and her sister and left the home to escape her violent partner she and her children were left socially and economically marginalized and in that position more violence entered Cee-Jai's life and she was sexually abused;<sup>33</sup> as they grew, Cee-Jai's sister was unable to get the help she needed and ended up living on the streets where she was eventually murdered;<sup>34</sup> Through all this, Cee-Jai herself identifies "not giving me my voice" – not respecting her agency – as a significant part of the problem, which

she works to overcome. She notes that she would not treat her nieces in the way she was treated. She would listen to them.

Despite all these elements, Cee-Jai was eventually able to find help and housing – an important part of meeting her right to security – and is working to break the patterns of intergenerational trauma and colonial violence that harmed her. She now has a job as an outreach worker, helping women who are going through what she has gone through.<sup>35</sup> The report also identified at several points that while it is crucial to support Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people who are the targets of so much violence, Indigenous men and boys have also experienced trauma and violence through colonialism and also need support. This is a truth we have heard as members of the NIMC-Justice Ministries reading group as well. In the words of the report, “Men and boys are important as well; they need programs and support.”<sup>36</sup>

### **The church and gendered oppression**

Cee-Jai identified to the Inquiry that it was a church worker, a pastor who first helped her and her partner find adequate housing, setting her on a path to recovery and security. But the church has also been a source of trauma in many Indigenous people's lives and the Inquiry noted that it was Christian missionaries and teachers who helped instill patriarchal and misogynist ideas and practices in Indigenous communities. This is to say that at least part of the roots of the violence experienced by Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people stems from the missionary work and theological teachings of the Christian church.

The Final Report of the National Inquiry is very clear that Christian missionaries introduced patriarchal ideals and values of what it means to be male or female (and the belief that those are the only two acceptable options) and imposed these beliefs on Indigenous cultures. The report notes that many Indigenous cultures did not have a strict hierarchy of gender, with male persons valued more than female persons and many Indigenous nations did not confine gender to only male or female.<sup>37</sup> Sexual orientation, in many Indigenous cultures, was also not limited to heterosexuality as the sole acceptable orientation.<sup>38</sup> However, when Christian missionaries began to evangelize and work among Indigenous peoples, supported through the Doctrine of Discovery, they often taught strict beliefs about gender, sexuality and marriage as core aspects of their mission work. Speaking of Métis experience as one example, the report says,

Christian doctrine was instrumental in forcing Métis women into roles defined by gendered European expectations. Church fathers saw the husband as the head of the family and expected women to adhere to masculine authority. Catholic priests, in particular, related women to biblical Eve and constructed a view of them as naturally sinful. These gendered ideas would have a negative impact on the position of women in Métis society. In this world view, the position of women was domestic: they belonged in the home and in a marriage. Priests often counselled women to remain subservient in a marriage, no matter the conditions of the marriage, including abusive relationships.<sup>39</sup>

Since these teachings were based on understandings that women were of less value than men, they disrupted pre-existing power structures in Indigenous communities. Patriarchal teachings destabilized Indigenous women's leadership and were aimed at making Indigenous communities easier to dominate. In the report's words, “The imposition of patriarchal European values meant that exerting control and dominance over Indigenous women was an important aspect of colonization. The freedom and self-determination exercised by Indigenous women was seen as contrary to Christian values and ‘a great obstacle to the faith of Jesus Christ’.”<sup>40</sup>

While these beliefs no longer characterize the voice of the church today, beliefs such as these did shape the work of many Christian missionaries and helped contribute to the roots of the crisis of violence faced by many Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people today.

### **Respecting and supporting rights: moving forward**

With the Final Report of the National Inquiry before us, the church and Canadian society, are at a moment of encounter. We need to choose to contradict the destructive values and visions of colonialism and embrace pathways of love and justice instead. In order to support the rights the Final Report outlined and work to disrupt the pathways to violence we have identified, there are several actions the church can take and Presbyterians can also become involved as individuals, through responding to Calls for Justice through their personal or professional life, where there are calls aimed at professions or through building relationships with Indigenous ministries and Indigenous community groups. Relationship building can include actions such as contributing time, money or resources to help

meet the needs groups are experiencing which are a direct result of colonialism. All such efforts and relationship building, as the report emphasizes, must recognize and respect the agency, experience and expertise of Indigenous people.

Healing and reconciliation can only happen through substantially transforming social structures and relationships such that genocidal policies and practices end and their effects are redressed. We have drafted the following recommendations to help guide some of the church's next steps.

**Recommendation No. 10** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 11** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 12** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 13** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 14** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 15** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

## REPUDIATING THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY IN PRACTICE

In 2019 the General Assembly voted to “repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*”. (A&P 2019, p. 377, 35) This report outlines some answers to the question of how The Presbyterian Church in Canada can follow our words of repudiation with meaningful actions that redress the legacy of these concepts.

The Doctrine of Discovery refers to concepts enshrined in a series of 15th century decrees from the Pope that provided theological and legal backing to European monarchs to seize non-Christian lands and enslave non-Christian peoples. To support such endeavours, European monarchs relied on the legal concept *terra nullius* – which is Latin for “empty land” – to treat land as available for European occupation and ownership even if it was already occupied by Indigenous peoples on the grounds that they were not putting it to “civilized” use.<sup>41</sup>

These concepts were underpinned by the notion that all peoples who were not Christian were sub-human and undeserving of the same rights afforded to Euro-Christian peoples. In the centuries following, these attitudes have manifested in different ways including enslavement, disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples' lands and resources and attempts at assimilation into the “majority” culture. As described in last year's report to General Assembly, both the blatant and casual racism that Indigenous people continue to face – in Canada and around the world – can be traced back to the attitudes that were enshrined in the Doctrine of Discovery. (A&P 2019, p. 368–69) As we detailed above, in its final report, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls makes connections that point to the lingering impacts of the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius* in ongoing colonial violence against Indigenous peoples; violence that they found amounts to genocide.<sup>42</sup>

There are still many people in the church – and more broadly, many Canadians – who have never been taught the history of the Doctrine of Discovery or its contemporary impacts on the day-to-day lives of Indigenous peoples. To learn about and understand the role that the church has played in colonial systems that were established to violently take the lands of Indigenous peoples is a sobering process. Often, when Justice Ministries talks to Presbyterians about this history, reactions include shame, anger and sorrow. There is a desire for change but a sense of not knowing where to begin. For some who read this report, it may be the first time they have heard about the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*. It is Justice Ministries' hope that while emotions that arise from learning about the history of colonialism and the Doctrine of Discovery are difficult to sit with, they can guide us to important questions, to seek more information and to work to build relationship where relationship has been broken. As The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery, such steps in lament and towards understanding will set the foundation for faithful action towards reconciliation and justice alongside Indigenous peoples. Change is not only necessary; it is possible.

## Moving from Words to Actions: What does reconciliation look like?

It is important to ensure that repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery is not treated as a one-time statement. One criticism of terms like “reconciliation” is that they are often given only partial interpretation.<sup>43</sup> For example, while



apologies from the federal government or confessional statements from the churches are important in recognizing the wrongs of the past, the issuing of such statements does not stop ongoing injustices directed at Indigenous peoples. The report presented by the National Indigenous Ministry Council and Justice Ministries about the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls names the ongoing state of colonial violence in Canada as a matter of life and death for Indigenous peoples. Without meaningful actions to redress the legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery, Indigenous people will continue to be the targets of both systemic and personal violence.

One pathway towards repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery is advocating for all 94 of the Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action to be implemented. However, a report by the Yellowhead Institute in December 2019 found that only nine of the Calls to Action had been completed, despite significant commitments from the federal government to reconciliation. They describe the actions of the government as placing the "public interest" in opposition with the implementation of the TRC's Calls to Action and the full recognition of Indigenous rights.<sup>44</sup>

According to the Assembly of First Nations, another important part of repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery is "ensur[ing] that the violation of First Nations' rights to lands, territories and resources that were taken without their free, prior and informed consent are effectively redressed".<sup>45</sup> This applies to Inuit and Métis peoples as well. Max Fineday, Executive Director of Canada Roots Exchange, describes the important place of land in reconciliation by saying: "When I think about what reconciliation means for me, I think of freedom and prosperity and land back. It's the idea that Indigenous people cannot build wealth or wellbeing without gaining back that which was unjustly removed from our care: the land."<sup>46</sup> The Doctrine of Discovery was instrumental in shaping policies that sought to remove land from the care and control of Indigenous peoples in order to benefit the Crown and later the Government of Canada. These policies disregard Indigenous sovereignty and disrupt the distinct relationships of Indigenous peoples to the lands and waters in their territories. Such policies have caused and continue to cause trauma in generations of Indigenous communities, resulting in loss of language and culture and disproportionate rates of poverty, incarceration and experiences of violence. A comprehensive understanding of reconciliation needs to actively address these issues. Fineday goes on to say in his lecture: "I want nothing more than to be the last generation to have to discuss disparity. I want Indigenous youth to feel free to do whatever they want, not to feel like they must work their whole lives to close gaps that exist in their communities."<sup>47</sup>

### **What can The Presbyterian Church in Canada do?**

Where there is injustice, the church is called to act, particularly in cases where we have misunderstood and misused the word of God and in so doing, caused great harm.<sup>48</sup> At the national level, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has taken steps over the past several years to ensure that its practices are consistent with repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery and related concepts of European superiority. In 2018 a resource that demonstrates how the Doctrine of Discovery influenced The Presbyterian Church in Canada's mission and ministry with Indigenous people between 1866 and 1969 was created. The KAIROS Blanket Exercise – an interactive workshop that outlines over 500 years of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the lands that make up Canada – has been a helpful resource for Presbyterians across the country. Such training opportunities are provided to help bridge the knowledge gap identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that serves to maintain colonial violence. Bridging this knowledge gap is one of the first steps in acknowledging how these doctrines have had and continue to have devastating consequences for Indigenous peoples.<sup>49</sup>

The national church has a history of advocacy for the self-determination of Indigenous peoples dating back to its involvement in Project North and the Aboriginal Rights Coalition in the 1970s. This advocacy work has continued through ecumenical organizing around the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In January 2020, the Moderator wrote a public statement of support for Wet'suwet'en law and peaceful resolution to the ongoing conflict regarding pipeline development.<sup>50</sup> Ecumenically, The Presbyterian Church in Canada is involved in an ongoing dialogue about the legacy of Christian mission in Indigenous communities, what needs to happen to redress that legacy and how to prevent future harm and trauma.

Throughout 2019 and the beginning of 2020, the church has also been considering how to respect the self-determination of the Presbyterian Indigenous ministries by exploring the possibility of creating the National Indigenous Ministry Council as a standing committee of the General Assembly and researching an overture about investing in Indigenous businesses. The 2019 General Assembly set aside \$200,000 a year (above current grants from the budget) for leaders of the Presbyterian ministries with Indigenous people to determine how to disburse independent of outside participation. Through The Presbyterian Church in Canada's continued work as one of the parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the denomination has also been involved in responding to TRC Call to Action No. 46 regarding the creation of a national Covenant of Reconciliation. The

parties of the Settlement Agreement hope that when such a covenant is ready, other groups will sign on and that communities will develop similar covenants on a local basis.

The following recommendations outline next steps towards repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery.

**Recommendation No. 16** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 17** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

### **What can congregations, presbyteries and synods do?**

At the community level, there are many opportunities to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery in action. The following offers a range of options intended for groups with varying levels of experience in advocating for Indigenous rights and reconciliation:

- If your congregation has not already participated in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise, that is a good place to start.
- Learn more about the Doctrine of Discovery. A list of resources is available at [presbyterian.ca/justice/doctrine-of-discovery](http://presbyterian.ca/justice/doctrine-of-discovery).
- Arrange for members of your session and/or congregation to participate in anti-racism training. For instance, some friendship centres offer courses in Indigenous history and cultural competency.
- Build relationships with Indigenous communities or organizations near you. KAIROS' resource "Strength for Climbing: Steps on the Journey of Reconciliation" has suggestions for getting started ([kairoscanada.org/product/strength-for-climbing-pdf](http://kairoscanada.org/product/strength-for-climbing-pdf)).
- Meet with your elected officials about the importance of repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery and *terra nullius*.

**Recommendation No. 18** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

### **POVERTY AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN CANADA**

Poverty has been a long-time focus for of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Given the findings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Women and Girls (detailed above) that poverty contributes to an ongoing genocide targeting Indigenous people in Canada and findings referenced in our section on gun violence (detailed below) that poverty is a significant factor contributing to violence, including gun violence, it is important that the issue of poverty reduction and elimination remain among the foci of any group working for social justice and equality. The ongoing challenges of Canadians living in poverty cannot be understated. Living in or in fear of poverty can leave people feeling powerless and isolated, deeply scarring those who experience it. Experiencing poverty-related issues, such as hunger, homelessness and increased vulnerability to violence, can have lasting physical, emotional, relational and spiritual consequences. The impact such consequences can have on the most vulnerable in society, whom Christians are called to serve, is devastating. The church does well to inform itself on such matters and from that careful study speak in the public square.

#### **Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy**

The Government of Canada released the nation's first poverty reduction strategy, *Opportunity for All*, in August 2018. It sets specific overall targets for poverty reduction: using a baseline year of 2015, a 20% reduction by 2020 and a 50% reduction by 2030. Using numbers from Canada's population in 2015, meeting the 50% reduction by 2030 would translate to 2.1 million people no longer living in poverty in Canada. *Opportunity for All* also establishes for the first time an Official Poverty Line, a measure of what constitutes poverty, giving a firm standard for poverty reduction efforts. The measure that was chosen, known as the Market Basket Measure, is calculated regionally based on a set of goods and services including food, clothing, transportation, shelter, personal care items, access to telephone services, entertainment, reading, recreation and school supplies.<sup>51</sup> The strategy explains the Market Basket Measure as follows: "The cost of each item in the basket is directly linked the prices of these items in communities across Canada...[and] reflects poverty thresholds for 50 different regions across the country, including 19 specific communities. Wherever individuals and families are living across the country, if they cannot afford the cost of this basket of goods and services in their particular community, they are considered to be living below Canada's Official Poverty Line, that is, living in poverty."<sup>52</sup>

While there is always a question about what should be included in that basket (i.e., should access to internet be among the services listed?) using the Market Basket Measure is generally seen as a stronger standard for defining a

poverty line that truly reflects the cost of living than, for instance, using a “Low Income Measure After Tax” standard.<sup>53</sup> The strategy acknowledges that different populations face difficulties that may not be the same for everyone and that responses to reducing poverty will have to meet the needs of particular communities; one size does not fit all. To track progress towards meeting the poverty reduction goals, the strategy states that there will be a “dashboard of indicators” published online and regularly updated, so Canadians will be able to see whether the strategy is working effectively.<sup>54</sup> Lastly, the strategy calls for the founding of a National Advisory Council on Poverty that will advise the government and report on the strategy’s progress to Parliament and the public. At the same time, it calls for introducing legislation in the form of a new Poverty Reduction Act, thus establishing poverty reduction as an ongoing priority across future governments.<sup>55</sup> The “dashboard of indicators” was released in July of 2019 and can be found at [150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019053-eng.htm](https://150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019053-eng.htm), however, as of February 2020 it had not yet been updated after its release.

*Opportunity for All* outlines important commitments to substantially reduce poverty in Canada, though it is important to work not simply for reduction but rather poverty elimination. Additionally there remain several questions about the implementation of the strategy. In a letter to the Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, the Moderator of the 144th General Assembly asked:

- How will the government ensure that the National Advisory Council is given adequate independence and funding to fulfill its purpose, along with a strong mandate based in meeting human rights such as food and housing security and meeting our international legal obligations?
- How will the government hear and make decisions where there is indication of systematic continued infringement of basic human rights regarding food, housing and other necessities for an adequate standard of living?

Additionally, given that the strategy only outlined the \$22 billion in funding that had previously been established, the Moderator urged the government to “consider creating new and additional funding towards programs in areas such as job skills improvement, food security and income security which would be aimed at reducing or eradicating poverty in Canada”.

### **Implementing *Opportunity for All***

Concrete, informed and appropriate action is required for Canada to meet and exceed the goals it has set out in *Opportunity for All*. As the author of the letter of James bluntly wrote, “Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?” (James 2:15–16). Likewise, the best intentioned and well-researched strategy can fall short of what it hopes to accomplish if it is not backed by the necessary resources and will to see it through.

“Dignity for All”, a campaign organized by Citizens for Public Justice and Canada Without Poverty, has produced a series of primers that assess key policy areas of *Opportunity for All*.<sup>56</sup> These primers are a resource for Canadians to understand the strategy and necessary actions for Canada to follow through on poverty reduction. “Dignity for All” was endorsed by the 2010 General Assembly (A&P 2010, p. 449, 39).

Justice Ministries will monitor the government’s implementation of *Opportunity for All* and report further at a future General Assembly.

**Recommendation No. 19** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

### **RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA IN CANADA**

Canada is increasingly a diverse population and the number of Canadians who see this as a positive thing is on the rise, though that number still appears to fall just shy of a majority of Canadians.<sup>57</sup> It is not surprising, then, that despite this encouraging trend toward positive perceptions of diversity, racism and xenophobia continue to be problems in Canadian society, as elsewhere.

The Oxford Dictionary defines racism as: “Prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.”<sup>58</sup> Xenophobia is a related concept but one that includes a fear of what someone finds “strange” or “foreign”, whether that “foreignness” is based on national boundaries or simply on the perception that someone differs substantially from one’s self.<sup>59</sup>

It is easy to see and point at racism and xenophobia when it takes the guise of organized hate or violence – and indeed this report will briefly look at some of those issues. But it is important to remember that one of the things that normalizes racism and xenophobia and leaves more room for violence to take root and grow is the more subtle forms of racism and people not speaking out and interrupting racist dialogue when they see or hear it.

Racism is something The Presbyterian Church in Canada has taken a strong stance against, especially over the last sixty years. *“Growing in Christ: Seeing the Image of God in Our Neighbour” Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Allegations of Racial Harassment* states, “Racism, therefore, is a violation, a trespass against God’s purposes. Racism defines the comparative worth of a person as a human being by characteristics of race, over against a person’s value as one made in the image of God. It assumes, explicitly or implicitly, that one human group is superior to another and lives out that belief in ways that harms or even exploits others regarded as inferior. Racism is often a combination of prejudice and power.”<sup>60</sup> To say that The Presbyterian Church in Canada has taken a strong stance against racism is not to say that we do not still struggle as a church with racism or xenophobia in its legion forms or that individual members do not engage in racist practices or statements. Rather, it is to say that the church recognizes the centrality of the gospel message that God loves the world and that we are called to love our neighbor, no matter who our neighbour is.<sup>61</sup>

The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to work to find ways to eliminate racism and xenophobia in its policies and practices, including ways to build and maintain an ethos where racism is pre-empted by appreciation for diversity, plurality and inclusion in the church. As we continue to work toward achieving these goals, as some of the recommendations in the section of our report on the Doctrine of Discovery note, we need to continue to examine and update our policies and practices, to ensure they foster the kind of community in which racism and xenophobia simply can’t flourish.

### **Rising Hate: racist or xenophobic harm and violence**

It is of course not only the church that struggles with racism or xenophobia. As recent data from across the country shows, there is also an increasing number of people in Canada who escalate racist or xenophobic thinking to acts of hatred or even physical violence stemming from an intolerance of diversity. It has become clear, for example, that hate crimes in Canada are on the rise. According to the latest data from Statistics Canada:

- In 2017, police reported 2,073 criminal incidents in Canada that were motivated by hate, an increase of 47% or 664 more incidents than reported the previous year.
- The increase in the total number of incidents was largely attributable to an increase in police-reported hate crimes motivated by hatred of a religion (+382 incidents) or of a race or ethnicity (+212 incidents).
- Between 2016 and 2017, the number of police-reported crimes motivated by hatred of a race or ethnicity increased 32%, from 666 to 878. Much of this increase was a result of more hate crimes targeting the Black (+107 incidents) and Arab and West Asian populations (+30 incidents). Hate crimes targeting the Black population remained one of the most common types of hate crimes (16% of all hate crimes [reported]).
- Compared with 2016, the number of police-reported hate crimes motivated by religion rose 83% in 2017, from 460 to 842. Hate crimes against all religions saw increases. Police-reported crimes motivated by hate against the Muslim population rose from 139 incidents to 349 incidents in 2017 (+151%). Hate crimes against the Jewish population continued to rise in 2017, from 221 to 360 incidents (+63%).<sup>62</sup>

It is important to note that these statistics represented reported hate crime; communities who are hesitant to report crimes targeting them, due to issues such as mistrust of police or social services, will be underrepresented in this data.

One of the factors leading to rising hate crime in Canada is online forums promoting hate or allowing room for it. These online spaces have contributed to the rising numbers of hate crime in the physical world, as reported in the recent report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights titled “Taking Action to End Online Hate”.

As the report states:

online hate ‘undermines the well-being and sense of security of victims’ as well as their ‘sense of belonging.’ More generally, it increases discord in society and contributes to the marginalization of certain groups ‘by convincing listeners of the inferiority of the targeted group.’ As noted by Bradley Galloway from the Organization for the Prevention of Violence, ‘[t]he perpetuation of associated rhetoric can create an environment where discrimination, harassment and violence are viewed by individuals as not only a reasonable response or reaction but also as a necessary one.

Online hate also contributes to radicalization of people and leads to the risk that sympathizers of hate speech will take action.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to statistics such as those listed above, there is a deeply concerning rise of white supremacy certainly south of our border but also here in Canada. For example, Barbara Perry, an expert on hate crimes and professor in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology has noted that there are currently “at minimum” 130 active far-right extremist groups across Canada, which she points out is an increase of around 30 percent from 2015. She adds, “Most of these groups are organized around ideologies against certain religions and races, with anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish sentiments being the most common, followed by hatred for immigrants, Indigenous people, women, LGBTQ communities and other minority groups.”<sup>64</sup>

These groups often collectively referred to now as the “Alt Right”, actively recruit new members to their cause. Those who have left the movement explain that a primary tactic is using people who look and seem respectable to be the “face” of recruitment or interacting with the public. These individuals then find people dealing with insecurity, including in areas such as job loss or relationships. They identify the types of fears that person is experiencing and exploit those fears, blaming target minority groups such as those listed in the statistics above for the hardship, pain or anxiety someone who is economically or relationally vulnerable is experiencing and offering them a purported solution, to disempower or harm target groups in order to supposedly “regain” the power, wealth, security or sexual relationships they “should” have instead, “by natural right”.<sup>65</sup>

These trends of increased hate crimes and a rise in white supremacy in Canada are troubling but the church is not powerless to address them and could be a voice and a model of how racism and xenophobia must be rejected in favour of diverse, inclusive communities. Indeed, as early as 1972, The Presbyterian Church in Canada stated, “Racism practiced by the white-skinned against their darker-skinned brothers is one of the world’s basic problems and a blatant denial of the Christian faith.” (A&P 1972, p. 269–70, 59) This statement was made in the context of Apartheid but the sentiment that racism is “a blatant denial of the Christian faith” remains. There is no place in Christian belief, practice or identity for white supremacy or any kind of racism.

Racism disrupts the heart of society, cutting through community relationships and alienating neighbour from neighbour. More than that, it speaks the message that some people are worth less than others and so it matters less if bad things happen to them. The effects of such messages are chillingly apparent in the statistics cited in this report and in other reports such as the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls discussed earlier. Addressing and ending racism is further complicated by the fact that many of the communities targeted can be hesitant to speak to police, since there has been a significant history of racism in police forces in Canada as well. This history, which continues to manifest itself today, has taken the shape of racial profiling,<sup>66</sup> overrepresentation of minorities being arrested and harsher sentencing for minorities,<sup>67</sup> and even police brutality and statistically increased likelihood of lethal force being used by police against minorities. A look at the numbers is telling: “Indigenous people make up only 4.8% of the population yet represented 15% of total fatalities [of civilians shot by police]. Members of the Black community, which makes up only 3.4% of Canada’s population, represented 9% of the fatalities. Both racial groups are disproportionately affected by police violence relative to other ethnicities.”<sup>68</sup>

Racism is deadly and this is one of the reasons Christians must speak out against it. In the words of professor and lawyer Pam Palmater, “Racism is lethal for Indigenous peoples and easy access to guns by those who hold racist views increase the risk. To treat gun control as sex-neutral or race-neutral further perpetuates the risk to women and Indigenous peoples. Canada should be engaging with First Nations and Indigenous women’s groups to address the threat of gun violence by both white nationalist hate groups and individuals with extreme right-wing, racist views.”<sup>69</sup> As we can see in incidents such as the 2017 shootings at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec, the 2018 shootings at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and the 2015 Charleston Church shooting of Black parishioners, racism is deadly for other groups too.

## Gun Violence

Recent mass shootings in places around the world, including those mentioned just above and elsewhere and a rise in gun-related crime in Canada has led Justice Ministries to review The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s position on guns and gun violence.

While firearms did not yet exist when scripture was written, weapons certainly did and we are familiar with verses calling for both disarmament (swords beaten into ploughshares: Isaiah 2:4) and verses calling for taking up arms (if

you don't have a sword, buy one: Luke 22:36). In order to be read faithfully, scripture must always be read in its context and with a light to the particular concerns the text was speaking to. Thus, as we use scripture to guide us today, as Christians must, it is imperative to discern the arc of the biblical account when it comes to topics such as violence. We recall the words of Living Faith which reminds us, "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." (Living Faith 5.4)

The arc of the biblical account on violence is a complicated one but it seems to push in the direction of reducing violence and living instead in right relationship – with God, with each other and with the earth, God's creation. Thus, in taking positions on violence in general, amongst which gun violence is only one form, it seems most in line with scriptural teachings to work toward both reducing violence and toward creating right relations.

Working from that understanding, the church has spoken often on armed violence abroad but has also affirmed its stance on the regulation of small arms (which include such weapons as handguns, shotguns, semi-automatic rifles and automatic firearms such as machine guns) in all nations, including our own. Additionally, the church has consistently called for improved relations between people and between nations – relationships which, as the church has said, should be characterized by justice and peace (A&P 1991, p. 299–331, 56–57; A&P 1992, p. 323–31, 41). Means to reduce violence and create right relations such that the conditions for violence to happen are not ripe can take the shape of practices such as gun control (reducing access to violent weapons) and preventative programs, policies or social practices that address the root causes of gun control (creating right relations).

Currently, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has three basic positions on gun control and no fully articulated position yet developed on gun violence more broadly. On gun control, the church has affirmed through the voice of the General Assembly in 1973 and 1976 respectively that:

- The sale of firearms should be strictly regulated. (A&P 1973, p. 278–79, 283, 40)
- Owners of firearms should be licensed and should be obliged to take training in the safe use of firearms before a license is granted. (A&P 1976, p. 436, 470, 60)

It further affirmed through the voice of the General Assembly in 2006 (A&P 2006, p. 286, 21) that:

In order to reduce the contribution of trade in small arms to fueling and prolonging conflict, international criteria should be established in which nations:

- adopt global transfer principles or criteria that would prevent the shipment of small arms to countries at war or where there are serious human rights violations or to countries in which such arms are likely to undermine security and development efforts.
- agree to strengthen and harmonize national regulations on small arms that would include prohibiting possession of semi-automatic and automatic rifles, machine guns and all light weapons by those other than authorized entities.
- include small arms as part of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to promote greater transparency.

Thus it is already the stated position of The Presbyterian Church in Canada that the sale of firearms be strictly regulated, that licensing and safety training for gun ownership be mandatory and that international criteria should be developed to strengthen and harmonize national regulations which would prohibit individuals from possessing semi-automatic and automatic rifles.

The church does not currently have a fully developed position on gun violence itself but it has touched on the issue in speaking about gun control. In particular, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has stated that Canada should: "ensure that the small arms issue remains a priority in Canadian foreign policy and is integrated into wider conflict prevention, poverty reduction and security policy programming". (A&P 2006, p. 286, 21) While not itself a position on gun violence, this broad statement could be the basis from which a fuller position on gun violence can be extrapolated – one which focuses not only on gun control but also on fostering right relations and genuine social peace.

### **Is gun crime and violence a problem in Canada?**

While the rates of gun violence leading to death in Canada are significantly lower than our southern neighbour<sup>70</sup> our numbers could still be greatly improved and our overall homicide numbers (of which, according to Statistics Canada, 1 in 3 typically involves a gun) are higher than other Commonwealth nations.<sup>71</sup> While overall crime rates appear to be going down from the most recent available data from Statistics Canada, the same data shows that within all violent crime, rates of gun-related violence rose consistently between 2013–2017.<sup>72</sup> This is in contrast to the years from 2009–2013, when gun-related violence showed a steady decline. 2018 also showed a small decrease in firearm related homicides but comprehensive data was not yet available for 2019 at the time this report was written and so we are as yet unable to determine whether that lower number was simply a dip or the beginning of an encouraging trend.<sup>73</sup> The statistics we found also were related specifically to homicides from guns; there is additional, regional data that seems to indicate that gun violence itself, not all of which results in homicide, continues to rise.<sup>74</sup>

### **What are the causes of gun violence?**

The roots of gun violence are typically complex and difficult to pin down. That complexity often leads people to turn to greater and stricter gun regulation as a means to reduce gun violence. There is certainly logic in such an approach, since in order for gun violence to occur, a perpetrator must first have access to a gun. While affirming the ongoing need for gun control and regulation, such measures are not the only means to reduce gun violence here in Canada and elsewhere. There is increasing evidence that addressing social issues such as racism, economic and social marginalization, isolation and poverty leads to safer streets in general, including less gun violence.

There is also a growing body of evidence that in some cities and regions, urban design that intentionally segregated by race and class is a significant contributor to violence factors, including gun violence.<sup>75</sup> Many of these studies are looking at urban design in the United States but it would be worth considering whether problematic urban design is a contributing factor to the root causes of gun violence (poverty, social isolation and lack of connection, racism and other forms of marginalization) in Canada as well. Indeed, linking racism and marginalization with gun violence is what some Canadian writers are already publicly calling on politicians to address:

This is the starting point we must work from to properly address gun violence. We must reckon with the structural and other injustices that continue to plague marginalized communities in Toronto [and elsewhere] – namely, the racism, police profiling and poverty that make reaching for a firearm seem like a good idea. But politicians who do so might lose votes. Unfortunately, many voters believe gun violence represents moral failure, the result of poor impulse control. It's easy to see it that way. It means society doesn't have to change, only the 'criminals' do. It is much harder to face the difficult, everyday reality of those on the margins.<sup>76</sup>

### **Society needs to change**

This sentiment, that society needs to change, is echoed by scholars studying the problem of gun violence. One example of this comes out of a recent study involving six low-income neighbourhoods in the United States city of New Haven, Connecticut. The study, undertaken in 2017 by the Community Alliance for Research and Engagement at Yale School of Public Health, was meant to examine the prevalence of chronic disease and exposure to health risk factors in those neighbourhoods. The researchers purposefully included gun violence as a health risk factor and they found that while gun violence was a risk factor across the neighbourhoods, it was a significantly higher risk factor among residents of colour, with Black males aged 18–34 experiencing the highest risk increase.

The numbers the Yale study cites are stark and it goes beyond simply the number of those who die from gun violence to point out the effect gun violence has on communities and the way in which it contributes to an ongoing cycle of other risk factors for health and wellbeing even of community members who have never been shot. The word it uses to describe this is *trauma* which is a word that appears elsewhere in our report this year, linked to racism, murder and disappearance of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people. (As detailed above in the second section of this report, p. 34ff). The Yale study states very clearly that trauma resulting from violence often begets more violence. In the words of the study:

Gun violence disproportionately occurs in communities experiencing social and economic inequities, including residential racial segregation and concentrated poverty. In 2015, 369 people died in mass shootings in the United States; that same year, nearly 6,000 Black men were murdered with guns. Although Black men make up only 6% of the population, they represent more than one half of gun homicide victims. [Furthermore] The impacts of gun violence extend far

beyond the victim, resulting in long-term adverse effects on community well-being. More than 20% of injured trauma survivors have symptoms consistent with a diagnosis of posttraumatic stress disorder even after acute care or inpatient hospitalization. Among children, witnessing community violence is a risk factor for substance abuse, aggression, anxiety, depression and antisocial behavior. These behaviors contribute to the cycle of violence, as adolescent delinquency and substance use are predictive of violent offenses and substance use in adulthood.<sup>77</sup>

As our own Canadian inquiry – the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls – found, the roots of a crisis of violence are legion and manifest through targeted racism and colonialism as well as targeted social and economic marginalization. Furthermore, the crisis is compounded when communities have experienced trauma over generations and can reasonably expect – given present realities and past experience of how those realities have played out – to continue to experience such trauma. That some communities quite realistically expect and teach their children to brace for, trauma should shock the wider public and move it to action to end the cycle of trauma causing violence causing more trauma but that action has largely not been forthcoming. And so, the expectation that trauma will occur continues to shape the kinds of conversations had in communities and the ways parents raise their children.<sup>78</sup>

More study on the root causes of gun violence and what can be done to prevent it, is needed. But meanwhile, there are actions the church can take, which fall squarely within the mandate of Christians to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves. Given the even greater prevalence of gun violence in the United States, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has tackled some of these issues already and pulled together significant resources on the matter that congregations here in Canada may find useful as well; links to these resources are included after the recommendations below.

In addition to these resources, however, we can also look at our own communities to see where there are risk factors for gun violence and how those factors could be addressed. This requires truly working to understand where and how racism exists in our communities and our social interactions. It means looking to understand how marginalization or isolation happens and what can be done to end it. It involves seeking ways to reduce and ultimately work to eliminate poverty, as another section of this report briefly examines. In summary, it is finding means, rooted in the faith Christians profess, to truly love, in action and not simply words, each and every human, seeing in each one of us the image of God.

**Recommendation No. 20** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

Justice Ministries can be contacted for an up-to-date list of resources and webinars that can be used for this purpose.

**Recommendation No. 21** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 22** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

#### **Resources from the Presbyterian Church (USA)**

- General page re Gun Violence: [presbyterianmission.org/what-we-believe/gun-violence](http://presbyterianmission.org/what-we-believe/gun-violence)
- “Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God’s Call”: [presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/1-gun-violence-policy-2010.pdf](http://presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/1-gun-violence-policy-2010.pdf)
- Congregational tool kit on Gun Violence including suicide and how to respond: [presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence](http://presbypeacefellowship.org/gun-violence)

#### **UPDATES**

##### **Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund**

The Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund provides support to Presbyterian groups seeking to build relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. In 2019, the Healing and Reconciliation Advisory Committee approved funding for five projects for a total of \$19,100.

All of the projects applied for funding either to assist in providing honoraria for Indigenous leadership or to support the participation of Indigenous people in Presbyterian events where reconciliation was a core theme. The DOTAC 2019 Conference (received \$5,000) and the 2020 Women’s Gathering (received \$5,000) work from an international



and national level to promote conversations about reconciliation with the hope of inspiring participants to continue pursuing reconciliation in their communities.

The Presbytery of London's "Why Truth and Reconciliation Matters" conference (received \$1,350) and the "Two Row on the Grand" (received \$5,000, supported by the Presbytery of Paris) initiative are excellent examples of building relationships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people at the community level. The Presbytery of London partnered with local Elders Dan and Mary Lou Smoke and with Amanda Kennedy who is the founder of Yotuni, a charitable initiative that promotes the wellbeing of Indigenous youth to highlight issues of concern for Indigenous people in the London area. The Two Row on the Grand is an annual canoe trip along the Grand River in Ontario from Cambridge to Port Maitland bringing together up to 100 Indigenous and 100 non-Indigenous participants. The trip includes daily teachings from Elders and knowledge keepers and opportunities for dialogue about reconciliation.

In response to TRC Call to Action No. 60, Presbyterian College (received \$2,750) and its other partners at the Montreal School of Theology are taking steps to equip new clergy with an understanding "on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence".<sup>79</sup>

### **The Carbon Footprint of travel to General Assembly in 2019**

Since General Assembly was hosted in the same location in 2019 as it was the previous year, the carbon emissions from travel to General Assembly in Waterloo, Ontario in 2019 were quite similar to the numbers reported for 2018. In 2019, participants collectively drove 101,427 km to attend General Assembly, producing approximately 21,928.47 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e. There were 111 participants who travelled by plane, emitting approximately 133,406 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e. Other modes of transportation including bus, train and airport shuttles emitted approximately 1,745 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e. In total, transportation for the 352 participants produced 157,079 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e, averaging 446 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>e per person. Normally, funds that off-set the carbon footprint associated with General Assembly are given each year to a designated project that addresses climate change.

### **On the Opioid Crisis**

In 2018, the General Assembly received a report from Justice Ministries regarding the opioid crisis, including several recommendations to help congregations address the pastoral, theological, community support and social policy aspects of the opioid crisis. (A&P 2018, p. 351–60) The opioid crisis continues to devastate communities and families, with 2,142 opioid-related deaths reported between January and June 2019, of which 94% were accidental.<sup>80</sup>

On June 13, 2019, the co-chairs of the Special Advisory Committee on the Epidemic of Opioid Overdoses released a statement which emphasized that "the epidemic of opioid overdoses continues to be the most challenging public health crisis in recent decades and the devastating impacts of the crisis continue to be felt in many parts of the country, from Canada's largest cities to rural and remote communities".<sup>81</sup>

While the crisis is still a major problem, the Special Advisory Committee wrote that they have witnessed a combination of harm reduction measures saving lives, including supervised consumption sites, naloxone (a medication used to block the effects of opioids) and evidence-based treatments. Following a recommendation from General Assembly in 2018, the Moderator wrote to the federal, provincial and territorial Ministers of Health affirming decisions to approve such harm reduction measures. Responses have been received from the federal Minister of Health and the Ministers of Health from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon.<sup>82</sup> All responses indicated concern regarding the opioid crisis and included references to steps they were taking to develop and implement strategies to address the crisis. Many wrote about working on channels for people to access recovery programs. A few mentioned programs for making naloxone kits available.

The Public Health Agency of Canada has noted that Indigenous communities have been disproportionately affected by the opioid crisis and that there is a link between intergenerational trauma and higher rates of substance use.<sup>83</sup> The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls also spoke of the disproportionately higher effects of the opioid crisis on Indigenous people and produced "Deeper Dive", a section on opioid use as part of the report, examining the complex social and economic contributing factors. "Deeper Dive" can be found on p. 439–41 of volume 1a of the report.

Though it targets different communities in different ways and at different rates, the opioid crisis affects us all. Those interested in responding to the crisis should refer to the 2018 Justice Ministries report for more ideas on how to get involved in addressing the crisis or contact Justice Ministries. (A&P 2018, p. 351-60, 13)

## **STAFF OUTREACH, ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

### **Staff outreach, preaching and resources**

At the centre of Justice Ministries' work is engagement with Presbyterians across Canada. Since the 2019 General Assembly, Justice Ministries staff preached on four occasions – covering topics such as the Doctrine of Discovery and Inclusion/Exclusion – visited two ministries and a congregation and gave a lecture on “Healing and Reconciliation: Things to know to Prepare for Ministry” for the Introduction to Ministry course at Knox College. Justice Ministries also facilitated the KAIROS Blanket Exercise at the General Assembly and with seven congregations or groups throughout the year. The staff ran a teach-in on climate justice for the national office staff in September 2019 in solidarity with the Fridays for Future climate strikes.

Another way Justice Ministries seeks to connect with Presbyterians across the country is by presenting free webinars and producing other education resources. Between May 2019 and June 2020, four webinars were offered on the following topics:

- The Doctrine of Discovery
- Climate Justice and Why Churches Should Care
- The final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
- Racism and Xenophobia

Previous webinars may be found at [presbyterian.ca/webinars/previous-webinars](http://presbyterian.ca/webinars/previous-webinars). Justice Ministries also produced several resources for congregational or individual use, among them resources on: Learning About The Confession of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; Learning About Colonialism and Genocide in Canada; Learning About the Doctrine of Discovery; and Learning About Faith and Climate Justice.

### **Ecumenical Partnerships**

The Presbyterian Church of Canada is one member of the larger body of Christ and the work we do in the church and here in Justice Ministries is part of our unique response to God's call for justice. That call is too large for any one denomination to fulfill on its own and so ecumenical partnerships are formed to create vital and valuable networks and give us access to a broader base of experience and knowledge. Working in conjunction with groups such as KAIROS, the Church Council on Justice and Corrections and the Canadian Council of Churches, Justice Ministries can extend our voice and our efforts. Additionally, by ensuring that we aren't duplicating projects, we are able to make better use of the resources we have available, as well as better use of the expertise that the wider body of Christ can offer.

Currently, Justice Ministries is involved in ecumenical partnerships with the following groups, whether through staff participation or through representatives:

#### **KAIROS**

- Steering Committee
- Indigenous Rights Circle
- Partnership and Rights Circle
- Ecological Justice Circle

#### **Canadian Council of Churches**

- Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network (CEARN)
- Committee on Justice and Peace (CJP)
- Project Ploughshares
- Faith and Life Sciences Reference Group

#### **Church Council on Justice and Corrections**

#### **Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC)**

For more information on the work of any of these groups, please contact Justice Ministries.

## Advisory Committees

### Healing and Reconciliation Advisory Committee

The Healing and Reconciliation Advisory Committee provides suggestions to Justice Ministries staff regarding program plans and resources for healing and reconciliation. The committee also reviews applications and makes decisions regarding the administration of the Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund.

### Justice Ministries Advisory Committee

The Justice Ministries Advisory Committee reviews and provides suggestions regarding program plans and resources to Justice Ministries staff. Members of the committee are committed to working with and within the church to faithfully respond to justice issues on a local, national and/or international scale.

Justice Ministries is also the national office support staff to the National Indigenous Ministry Council and the International Affairs Committee.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> See for example: “Canada’s Climate Change Report”, Natural Resources Canada, last modified December 20, 2019, [nrcan.gc.ca/maps-tools-publications/publications/climate-change-publications/canada-changing-climate-reports/Canadas-changing-climate-report/21177](https://nrcan.gc.ca/maps-tools-publications/publications/climate-change-publications/canada-changing-climate-reports/Canadas-changing-climate-report/21177).

<sup>2</sup> See the Environmental Law and Policy Center’s 2019 report, “An Assessment of the Impacts of Climate Change on the Great Lakes by Scientists and Experts from Universities and Institutions in the Great Lakes Region”. As one example: increased frequency and severity of algae blooms, it notes, “in 2011, Lake Erie experienced the largest harmful algal bloom in its recorded history, with peak intensity more than three times greater than any previously observed blooms. In 2014, 500,000 people in the Toledo area were without safe local drinking water supplies for 72 hours because of toxic algae blooms in western Lake Erie. Algal blooms will likely become more frequent in the future as higher temperatures and heavy precipitation mix heavy nutrient loads with warmer waters. These pollutants have dramatically raised the cost of water treatment.” Ibid, p. 3. The full report is at [elpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Great-Lakes-Climate-Change-Report.pdf](https://elpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Great-Lakes-Climate-Change-Report.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> “Greenhouse gas sources and sinks: executive summary 2019”, Government of Canada, last modified August 19, 2019, [canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/greenhouse-gas-emissions/sources-sinks-executive-summary-2019.html](https://canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/climate-change/greenhouse-gas-emissions/sources-sinks-executive-summary-2019.html). Accessed December 12, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> “Finland’s greenhouse gas emissions decreased further,” Statistics Finland, May 25, 2016, [stat.fi/til/khki/2015/khki\\_2015\\_2016-05-25\\_tie\\_001\\_en.html](https://stat.fi/til/khki/2015/khki_2015_2016-05-25_tie_001_en.html).

<sup>5</sup> “Climate Change: The Basics”, Climate Atlas of Canada, [climateatlas.ca/climate-change-basics](https://climateatlas.ca/climate-change-basics). Accessed March 11, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> To learn more about the ways climate change is affecting communities and ecosystems across Canada, visit the webpage at [nrcan.gc.ca/climate-change/impacts-adaptations/10761](https://nrcan.gc.ca/climate-change/impacts-adaptations/10761).

<sup>7</sup> For example, in their factsheet on a Green New Deal, the Council of Canadians defines just transition as “an approach to policymaking developed by the labour movement that aims to minimize the impacts on affected workers as we transition to a fossil fuel-free future.” See the Council of Canadians, “Factsheet: It’s time for a Green New Deal”, at [canadians.org/factsheet-greennewdeal](https://canadians.org/factsheet-greennewdeal).

<sup>8</sup> “Statement on the Climate Change Emergency”, World Council of Churches (WCC), November 25, 2019, [oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/bossey-november-2019/statement-on-the-climate-change-emergency](https://oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/bossey-november-2019/statement-on-the-climate-change-emergency).

<sup>9</sup> As part of its recommendations, the World Council of Churches climate emergency declaration, “Calls on member churches, ecumenical partners, other faith communities and all people of good will and moral conscience to find the means whereby we can make a meaningful contribution in our own contexts to averting the most catastrophic consequences of further inaction and negative actions by governments – and may join in confronting this global crisis through concerted advocacy for climate change mitigation and adaptation, zero fossil fuel use and a just transition”, as well as through local action, everywhere – in our fellowship, our churches, our communities, our families and as individuals. See “Statement on the Climate Emergency”, WCC, 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Sasha Adkins, “Plastic and the State of Our Souls: Reclaiming Life in a Disposable Culture,” *Sojourners*, February 2020, p. 24–27.

<sup>11</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls”, The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Volume 1a, June 2019, p. 44, [mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final\\_Report\\_Vol\\_1a-1.pdf](https://mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 599.

<sup>13</sup> The acronym “2SLGBTQIA” stands for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex and Asexual. As the Inquiry began to address its task, it decided to include in its study the experiences of Indigenous 2SLGBTQIA people, since it became clear that that group of people are also targeted for increased levels of violence, including murder or disappearance, resulting from colonialism. We will discuss how colonialism impacted 2SLGBTQIA Indigenous people in the section on the church and gendered oppression on p. 35.

<sup>14</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place: Executive Summary of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls”, The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, June 2019, p. 1, [mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Executive\\_Summary.pdf](http://mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Executive_Summary.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> In the words of the Executive Summary of the Inquiry’s report, “Colonial violence, as well as racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people, has become embedded in everyday life – whether this is through interpersonal forms of violence, through institutions like the health care system and the justice system or in the laws, policies and structures of Canadian society. The result has been that many Indigenous people have grown up normalized to violence, while Canadian society shows an appalling apathy to addressing the issue. The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls finds that this amounts to genocide.” “Reclaiming Power and Place Executive Summary”, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 50.

<sup>17</sup> Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, December 9, 1948, 78 UNTS 277 (entered into force January 12, 1951), article 2 [Genocide Convention]. Cited on p. 3 of “A Legal Analysis of Genocide: Supplementary Report of The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls”, [mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Supplementary-Report\\_Genocide.pdf](http://mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Supplementary-Report_Genocide.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> Library and Archives Canada, RG10, volume 6810, file 470–2–3, volume 7, Evidence of D.C. Scott to the Special Committee of the House of Commons Investigating the Indian Act amendments of 1920, (L-2) (N-3).

<sup>19</sup> As just one example of this practice, see the government issued apology: [canada.ca/en/news/archive/2010/08/government-canada-apologizes-relocation-inuit-families-high-arctic.html](http://canada.ca/en/news/archive/2010/08/government-canada-apologizes-relocation-inuit-families-high-arctic.html).

<sup>20</sup> As of February 15, 2020, there were 61 long-term drinking water advisories in effect on reserves. An advisory is designated “long term” when it has been in effect for at least one year. See [sac-isc.gc.ca](http://sac-isc.gc.ca).

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of cases of forced or coerced sterilization of Indigenous women, see [amnesty.ca/our-work/issues/womens-human-rights/sterilization-Indigenous-women-canada-without-consent](http://amnesty.ca/our-work/issues/womens-human-rights/sterilization-Indigenous-women-canada-without-consent), [windspeaker.com/news/opinion/opinion-ending-forced-sterilization-Indigenous-women](http://windspeaker.com/news/opinion/opinion-ending-forced-sterilization-Indigenous-women) and [globalnews.ca/news/5733717/forced-sterilization-Indigenous-women-canada](http://globalnews.ca/news/5733717/forced-sterilization-Indigenous-women-canada).

<sup>22</sup> The numbers of Indigenous children taken from their families continue to be staggering. According to government data, “In Canada, 52.2% of children in foster care are Indigenous but account for only 7.7% of the child population according to Census 2016. This means 14,970 out of 28,665 foster children in private homes under the age of 15 are Indigenous.” See [sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1541187352297/1541187392851](http://sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1541187352297/1541187392851). For information on Presbyterian run Residential Schools, see [presbyterianarchives.ca/2018/08/17/narrative-history](http://presbyterianarchives.ca/2018/08/17/narrative-history). For information on the Sixties Scoop, see for example, [cbc.ca/cbcdocs/pov/features/the-sixties-scoop-explained](http://cbc.ca/cbcdocs/pov/features/the-sixties-scoop-explained).

<sup>23</sup> The first coroner who investigated Delaine’s death ruled that there was no foul play but this finding was later overturned by a second, regional coroner and was disputed by both her family and community members, who believe she was murdered. Delaine Copenace is listed on CBC’s spotlight on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, which reports on some of the details of her case. These include that police “did not bother to look for her” for three days, telling her mother “oh she probably just ran away”; that her face and lips still appeared to have colour when her body was found and her skin did not appear very wrinkled from water, despite the investigation concluding that her body had been in the water from the time she went missing; her mother stating that it looked like Delaine’s wrists had been bound; and also stating that the area where her daughter was found “had been searched at least 100 times by family, friends, police dogs and even police divers” and adding “There were no reported holes where her body was and the water is not very deep in that area...there was no current around the shores.” See [cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/mmiw/profiles/delaine-copenace](http://cbc.ca/missingandmurdered/mmiw/profiles/delaine-copenace). For more context, see also a news article interviewing Delaine’s mother after the first coroner’s findings were made public, which mentions stereotypes about Indigenous youth that community members, including Delaine’s mother, believe “led police and the coroner to the incorrect conclusion that her daughter was depressed and engaging in risky behaviour on the ice.” Jody Porter, “‘She was murdered’: Mother of teen found dead in Kenora believes police got it wrong”, posted May 11, 2016, see [cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/she-was-murdered-mother-of-teen-found-dead-in-kenora-believes-police-got-it-wrong-1.3575743](http://cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/she-was-murdered-mother-of-teen-found-dead-in-kenora-believes-police-got-it-wrong-1.3575743). It is important to understand that phrases like “engaging in risky behaviour” is prejudicial language rooted in colonial attitudes often used by authorities and media to describe missing or murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people as a means to dismiss parents or friends trying to report when they go missing and demean the missing or murdered person, placing blame on them for any violence rather than fully investigating causes.

<sup>24</sup> “Prime Minister welcomes final report from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls”, Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, June 3, 2019, [pm.gc.ca/en/news/statements/2019/06/03/prime-minister-welcomes-final-report-national-inquiry-missing-and](http://pm.gc.ca/en/news/statements/2019/06/03/prime-minister-welcomes-final-report-national-inquiry-missing-and).

<sup>25</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 470.

<sup>26</sup> The supplement “A Legal Analysis of Genocide” discusses this distinction but notes that a colonial-type genocide is still a genocide.

<sup>27</sup> “Our Women and Girls are Sacred: Interim Report”, The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, March 2018, p. 8, [mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ni-mmiwg-interim-report.pdf](http://mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ni-mmiwg-interim-report.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 462–63.

<sup>29</sup> For an in-depth look at several cases involving failures in child services, one of them Azraya Kokopenace’s, see [vice.com/en\\_ca/article/nem7zk/report-slams-ontarios-child-welfare-system-for-failing-to-prevent-12-deaths-8-of-them-Indigenous](http://vice.com/en_ca/article/nem7zk/report-slams-ontarios-child-welfare-system-for-failing-to-prevent-12-deaths-8-of-them-Indigenous). That report also notes that the hospital she walked out of was the same hospital where she had attended her brother’s death when he died earlier of mercury poisoning, the result of toxic materials dumped into the river near their home. For more information on Grassy Narrows and mercury poisoning, see [aptnnews.ca/2019/04/03/decades-of-promises-but-little-action-as-mercury-still-takes-lives-in-grassy-narrows/](http://aptnnews.ca/2019/04/03/decades-of-promises-but-little-action-as-mercury-still-takes-lives-in-grassy-narrows/) and [theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-for-grassy-narrows-families-mercury-is-an-intergenerational-trauma/](http://theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-for-grassy-narrows-families-mercury-is-an-intergenerational-trauma/). The mercury levels in Grassy Narrows have also become a focus of Amnesty International: see [amnesty.ca/category/issue/grassy-narrows](http://amnesty.ca/category/issue/grassy-narrows).

<sup>30</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 504.

<sup>31</sup> Evan Adams and Warren Clarmont, “Intergenerational trauma and Indigenous Healing”, *Visions Journal*, 11 (4) (2016): p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 510.

<sup>33</sup> “I think my mom took us off the reserve and she left the reserve because of my dad and his family, which is my family. She brought us to Prince George and same thing, violence. I learnt that. I learnt how to be afraid at such a young age. I remember my mom, being a single mother, she would have boyfriends. And they weren’t very nice men that came into our home. My mom being vulnerable. Must have been hard for her. Think we lived off welfare all my life, in poverty.” From “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 514. See also p. 511.

<sup>34</sup> The report notes, “For many Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA people, poverty makes access to any form of housing impossible and they are forced to live in shelters, on the street or in other forms of precarious housing. In sharing the circumstances leading up to the disappearance or death of their loved one, many family members described how their loved one was homeless or precariously housed at the time of her disappearance or death. For example, Cee-Jai explained that it was when her sister was living on the street that she was murdered. Despite Cee-Jai’s efforts to protect her sister, the vulnerability she faced as an Indigenous woman living on the street was too great.” From “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 543–44.

<sup>35</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 598.

<sup>36</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 24.

<sup>37</sup> In the words of the report on colonization and its effects on gender diversity in Indigenous cultures, “The belief that there were only two genders – therefore erasing an entire spectrum of people who had lived in communities since time immemorial – was racist, colonial and incredibly harmful.” From “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 239. The report also detailed how practices in residential schools had devastating effects on inter-gender relationships. In the reports words, “Christian dogma reinforced a patriarchal system that envisioned God as male and women as a secondary creation meant to keep the company of men...Overwhelmingly, schools were separated by the sexes – boys and girls had different dormitories, entrances, classes, chores, recesses and playgrounds. This separation had many effects. Families were separated – brothers, sisters and male and female cousins were forbidden from interacting with each other. Not only were children taken from their parents, extended families and communities to attend school but they were then forbidden from finding comfort with their relatives of other genders while they were there. This practice was completely foreign to Indigenous children’s experiences at home and it undermined the development of basic skills for maintaining healthy multigendered relationships”, p. 263.

<sup>38</sup> See for example “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 264.

<sup>39</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 285.

<sup>40</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 238.

<sup>41</sup> One measure used by European powers to determine ownership was whether people were using the land for European-style agriculture. See [nctr.ca/assets/reports/Final%20Reports/Executive\\_Summary\\_English\\_Web.pdf](http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Final%20Reports/Executive_Summary_English_Web.pdf). This wording can be found on p. 46. Accessed March 11, 2020.

<sup>42</sup> “Reclaiming Power and Place”, Volume 1a, p. 50.

<sup>43</sup> For further reading on this topic, see Tuck & Yang’s 2012 article “Decolonization is not a Metaphor”, [clas.osu.edu/sites/clas.osu.edu/files/Tuck%20and%20Yang%202012%20Decolonization%20is%20not%20a%20metaphor.pdf](http://clas.osu.edu/sites/clas.osu.edu/files/Tuck%20and%20Yang%202012%20Decolonization%20is%20not%20a%20metaphor.pdf) and James’ 2017 article “Changing the Subject: The TRC, Its National Events and the Displacement of Substantive Reconciliation in Canadian Media Representations”, [doi.org/10.3138/jcs.2016-0011.r1](https://doi.org/10.3138/jcs.2016-0011.r1).

<sup>44</sup> Eva Jewell and Ian Mosby, “Calls to Action Accountability: A Status Update On Reconciliation”, Yellowhead Institute, December 17, 2019, [yellowheadinstitute.org/2019/12/17/calls-to-action-accountability-a-status-update-on-reconciliation/](http://yellowheadinstitute.org/2019/12/17/calls-to-action-accountability-a-status-update-on-reconciliation/).

<sup>45</sup> “Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery”, Assembly of First Nations (AFN), January 2018, [afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/18-01-22-Dismantling-the-Doctrine-of-Discovery-EN.pdf](http://afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/18-01-22-Dismantling-the-Doctrine-of-Discovery-EN.pdf).

<sup>46</sup> “Reconciliation can’t happen without reclamation of land, argues Max FineDay”, CBC, January 20, 2020, [cbc.ca/radio/ideas/reconciliation-can-t-happen-without-reclamation-of-land-argues-max-fineday-1.5430069](http://cbc.ca/radio/ideas/reconciliation-can-t-happen-without-reclamation-of-land-argues-max-fineday-1.5430069).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> In the 1994 Confession regarding Indian Residential Schools, The Presbyterian Church in Canada confessed: “In our cultural arrogance we have been blind to the ways in which our own understanding of the Gospel has been culturally conditioned and because of our insensitivity to Aboriginal cultures, we have demanded more of the Aboriginal people than the Gospel requires and have thus misrepresented Jesus Christ who loves all peoples with compassionate, suffering love that all may come to God through him.” (A&P 1994, p. 376–77).

<sup>49</sup> “Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery”, AFN.

<sup>50</sup> To read the statement, [presbyterian.ca/2020/01/24/an-open-letter-and-special-statement-regarding-wetsuweten-territory](http://presbyterian.ca/2020/01/24/an-open-letter-and-special-statement-regarding-wetsuweten-territory).

<sup>51</sup> “Opportunity for All: Canada’s First Poverty Reduction Strategy”, Government of Canada, last modified October 15, 2018, p. 11, [canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/reports/strategy.html](http://canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/poverty-reduction/reports/strategy.html).

<sup>52</sup> “Opportunity for All”, Canada, p. 11.

<sup>53</sup> For more information, see [dignityforall.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Official-Poverty-Line-One-Pager.pdf](http://dignityforall.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Official-Poverty-Line-One-Pager.pdf).

<sup>54</sup> “Opportunity for All”, Canada, p. 13.

<sup>55</sup> “Opportunity for All”, Canada, p. 15.

<sup>56</sup> Laura Neidhart, “How does Opportunity for All measure up?” Dignity for All, August 29, 2018, [dignityforall.ca/how-does-opportunity-for-all-measure-up/](http://dignityforall.ca/how-does-opportunity-for-all-measure-up/).

<sup>57</sup> “In 2016, when Canadians were asked whether minorities should do more to fit in with mainstream Canadian society or whether we, as a country, should encourage cultural diversity and a focus on allowing new Canadians to keep their own customs and languages, 68% chose the former [with only 32% saying we should promote cultural diversity]. Now, Canadians have shifted towards promoting cultural diversity. Just over two-in-five (44%) Canadians now choose that side of the faceoff but a slight majority maintain the view that new Canadians need to do more to fit in.” See “Social Values in Canada: Consensus on assisted dying & LGBTQ2 rights, division over abortion rights, diversity,” by the Angus Reid Institute, released January 24, 2020 available at [angusreid.org/social-values-canada](http://angusreid.org/social-values-canada).

<sup>58</sup> “Definition of racism in English”, Lexico, accessed March 11, 2020, [lexico.com/en/definition/racism](http://lexico.com/en/definition/racism).

<sup>59</sup> “Xenophobia”, Merriam-Webster, accessed March 11, 2020, [merriam-webster.com/dictionary/xenophobia](http://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/xenophobia).

<sup>60</sup> From “Growing in Christ: Seeing the Image of God in Our Neighbour”, Policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for Dealing with Allegations of Racial Harassment, Assembly Council report, 2008; A&P 2008, p. 220–29, 429–30.

<sup>61</sup> From the Social Action Handbook, “The Church Speaks” section: “Any form of segregation based on race, colour or ethnic origin is contrary to the gospel; It is not enough for churches and groups to condemn the sin of racial arrogance and oppression; Racism practiced by the white-skinned against their darker-skinned brothers is one of the world’s basic problems and a blatant denial of the Christian faith; All forms of racism and apartheid are contrary to the mind and will of Christ.” Statements taken from A&P 1972, p. 269–70, 59.

<sup>62</sup> Amelia Armstrong, “Police-reported hate crime in Canada, 2017”, Statistics Canada, April 30, 2019, [150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2019001/article/00008-eng.htm](http://150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2019001/article/00008-eng.htm).

<sup>63</sup> Anthony Housefather et al, “Taking Action to End Online Hate: Report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights”, The House of Commons, June 2019, p. 8–9, [ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/JUST/Reports/RP10581008/justrp29/justrp29-e.pdf](http://ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/421/JUST/Reports/RP10581008/justrp29/justrp29-e.pdf).

<sup>64</sup> Jacky Habib, “Far-right extremist groups and hate crime rates are growing in Canada”, CBC, accessed March 11, 2020, [cbc.ca/passionateeye/features/right-wing-extremist-groups-and-hate-crimes-are-growing-in-canada](http://cbc.ca/passionateeye/features/right-wing-extremist-groups-and-hate-crimes-are-growing-in-canada).

<sup>65</sup> This is the process described by Elisa Hategan, former white supremacist, as cited in the Global News article “The Rise of White Supremacism and its New Face in the Twenty-First Century” by Emanuela Campanella and Elizabeth Palmieri, see [globalnews.ca/news/5329174/white-supremacy-white-nationalist/](http://globalnews.ca/news/5329174/white-supremacy-white-nationalist/).

<sup>66</sup> For just one discussion of this issue, see Brett Bundale, “‘For Black and Indigenous people it’s part of daily life’: The impact of racial profiling in Canada”, Toronto Star, May 28, 2018. Accessible at [thestar.com/news/canada/2018/05/28/for-black-and-Indigenous-people-its-part-of-daily-life-the-impact-of-racial-profiling-in-canada.html](http://thestar.com/news/canada/2018/05/28/for-black-and-Indigenous-people-its-part-of-daily-life-the-impact-of-racial-profiling-in-canada.html).

<sup>67</sup> See for examples [johnhoward.ca/blog/race-crime-justice-canada/](http://johnhoward.ca/blog/race-crime-justice-canada/). Accessed February 9, 2020.

- <sup>68</sup> “17 Years of police violence in Canada”, PIVOT, accessed February 9, 2020, [pivotlegal.org/17\\_years\\_of\\_police\\_violence\\_in\\_canada](http://pivotlegal.org/17_years_of_police_violence_in_canada).
- <sup>69</sup> Pam Palmater, “Guns and White Supremacists Don’t Mix”, *Macleans*, November 12, 2019. [macleans.ca/opinion/guns-and-white-supremacists-dont-mix/](http://macleans.ca/opinion/guns-and-white-supremacists-dont-mix/).
- <sup>70</sup> As stated in “How The U.S. Compares With Other Countries In Deaths From Gun Violence” by Nurith Aizenman and Marc Silver, “The institute [for Health Metrics and Evaluation] also estimates what it would expect a country’s rate of gun violence deaths to be based solely on its socioeconomic status. By that measure, the U.S. should be seeing only 0.46 deaths per 100,000 people. (That is comparable to the rate in Canada, where the statistic is 0.47 deaths per 100,000. Instead, the actual U.S. rate of 4.43 deaths per 100,000 is almost 10 times as high. And it is 29 times as high as in Denmark, which had 0.15 deaths per 100,000.” See [npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/08/05/743579605/how-the-u-s-compares-to-other-countries-in-deaths-from-gun-violence](http://npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/08/05/743579605/how-the-u-s-compares-to-other-countries-in-deaths-from-gun-violence).
- <sup>71</sup> The Statistics Canada report on homicide, “Homicide in Canada in 2018” by Joel Roy and Sharon Marcellus includes numbers on homicides using guns. It can be found at: [150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2019001/article/00016-eng.htm](http://150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2019001/article/00016-eng.htm).
- <sup>72</sup> See [150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-005-x/2018001/article/54962-eng.htm](http://150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-005-x/2018001/article/54962-eng.htm) and [150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-28-0001/2018001/article/00004-eng.htm](http://150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-28-0001/2018001/article/00004-eng.htm).
- <sup>73</sup> According to Statistics Canada, “In 2018, there were 249 homicides caused by a firearm (firearm-related), 18 fewer than in 2017 (Table 3a). Note: The firearm-related homicide rate (0.67 per 100,000 population) decreased 8% from the previous year (0.73 per 100,000 population) (Chart 5). Prior to 2018, firearm-related homicide had been increasing since 2014, with gang-related violence being the primary driver. In 2018, 51% of firearm-related homicide were related to gang activity.” Accessible at: [150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2019001/article/00016-eng.htm](http://150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2019001/article/00016-eng.htm).
- <sup>74</sup> In Toronto alone, victims of shooting-related injuries that did not result in death rose from 185 in 2018 to 248 in 2019, a substantial increase, though deaths from gun violence actually fell a bit during the same period from 51 in 2018 to 44 in 2019. See [theglobeandmail.com/canada/toronto/article-toronto-sees-record-number-of-shootings-in-2019-but-fewer-deaths](http://theglobeandmail.com/canada/toronto/article-toronto-sees-record-number-of-shootings-in-2019-but-fewer-deaths).
- <sup>75</sup> See for example [brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/08/28/to-build-safe-streets-we-need-to-address-racism-in-urban-design](http://brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2019/08/28/to-build-safe-streets-we-need-to-address-racism-in-urban-design).
- <sup>76</sup> See “Canada Election 2019: Stopping gun violence shouldn’t be a popularity contest” by Paul Salvatori, [nowtoronto.com/news/canada-election-2019-gun-violence/](http://nowtoronto.com/news/canada-election-2019-gun-violence/).
- <sup>77</sup> Alicia Santilli et al, “Bridging the Response to Mass Shootings and Urban Violence: Exposure to Violence in New Haven, Connecticut”, *American Journal of Public Health*, 107(3) (March 2017), p. 374–79, accessible at [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5296698](http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5296698).
- <sup>78</sup> Another look at gun violence in the United States reported that “anticipatory trauma” (expecting that violence is likely to happen to you, given the evidence you have seen in your life thus far) is a factor contributing to mental health and social factors around gun violence. This study, which examined what it called “anticipatory trauma” reported some of the last known words of Trayvon Martin, a young Black man who was shot while walking home from buying a snack from the corner store. He was on his cell phone with a friend and reported to her that he was being followed (by a local neighbourhood watch man, who suspected Martin was in the area to commit crime based solely on the fact that he was a young black male wearing a hoodie). Martin’s friend told him to run and he responded that he was tired of running. He was dead within minutes and the man who shot him was acquitted under Florida’s “Stand Your Ground” gun laws, even though there was no evidence that Martin had posed any threat. See Madison Armstrong and Jennifer Carlson, “Speaking of Trauma: The Race Talk, The Gun Talk and the Racialization of Gun Trauma”, *Palgrave Communications*, 5, 112 (2019), accessible at [nature.com/articles/s41599-019-0320-z](http://nature.com/articles/s41599-019-0320-z).
- <sup>79</sup> “Calls to Action”, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, [trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf).
- <sup>80</sup> “Opioid-related Harms in Canada”, Government of Canada, December 2019, [health-infobase.canada.ca/substance-related-harms/opioids](http://health-infobase.canada.ca/substance-related-harms/opioids).
- <sup>81</sup> “Statement from the Co-Chairs of the Special Advisory Committee on the Epidemic of Opioid Overdoses on Updated Data Related to the Opioid Crisis,” Public Health Agency of Canada, June 13, 2019, [canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2019/06/statement-from-the-co-chairs-of-the-special-advisory-committee-on-the-epidemic-of-opioid-overdoses-on-updated-data-related-to-the-opioid-crisis.html](http://canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2019/06/statement-from-the-co-chairs-of-the-special-advisory-committee-on-the-epidemic-of-opioid-overdoses-on-updated-data-related-to-the-opioid-crisis.html)
- <sup>82</sup> Copies of the letters to government and responses are available at [presbyterian.ca/justice/letters-to-the-government/](http://presbyterian.ca/justice/letters-to-the-government/).
- <sup>83</sup> “Government of Canada supports efforts to better understand how substance use affects Indigenous communities”, Public Health Agency of Canada, July 25, 2019, [canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2019/07/government-of-canada-supports-efforts-to-better-understand-how-substance-use-affects-Indigenous-communities.html](http://canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2019/07/government-of-canada-supports-efforts-to-better-understand-how-substance-use-affects-Indigenous-communities.html).

## MINISTRY AND CHURCH VOCATIONS

Staff	Associate Secretary:	The Rev. Tim Purvis
	Program Manager:	Ms. Liz Brewer
	Administrative Assistant:	Ms. Jackie Czegledi (until August 2019)
	Administrative Assistant:	Ms. Marjorie Copeland (from December 2019)

### INTRODUCTION

Ministry and Church Vocations helps the church to discern, prepare and support professional leaders in ministry. The department serves the church by, among other things, supporting discernment about candidacy for ministry; supporting the nurturing and development of professional church leaders; facilitating a profile referral system; coordinating the work of the Committee on Education and Reception; establishing and identifying resources to support crisis intervention and conflict resolution; creating and interpreting policies; engaging in theological reflection about ministry; and serving as a resource and sounding board to ministers and church courts on the foregoing.

The report is divided into three main sections:

- Section 1: Discerning, preparing and supporting ministers
- Section 2: Specialized Ministries (the Order of Diaconal Ministries and Canadian Military Chaplaincy)
- Section 3: Advisory Committee

### DISCERNING, PREPARING AND SUPPORTING MINISTERS

Presbyterians believe that Christ calls leaders to renew and nurture God's people to be Christ's hands, voice and heart. This belief is grounded in New Testament passages such as these verses from the letter to the Ephesians:

The gifts Christ gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, *some pastors and teachers*, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11–13)

This belief is foundational to the understanding of ministry in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The church affirms it each time the "Preamble to the Ordination Vows" (Book of Forms, 447) is read during the ordination, induction or recognition service of a minister of Word and Sacraments. Christ furnishes the people of God with pastors and teachers to equip them to share in his ministry in the world.

Effective, well-equipped ministers are essential for a vibrant church. The unique contribution of Ministry and Church Vocations is passion for ministers and for ministry. The Life and Mission Agency through Ministry and Church Vocations helps the church to discern, prepare and support ministers so that they can fulfill their calling.

The programs, resources and research of Ministry and Church Vocations are directed towards helping the church to achieve the first goal in the denomination's strategic plan – the provision of visionary leadership. One example is the guidance conference, where certified candidates for ministry engage in discernment of their gifts and calling to ministry in conversation with the ministers and ruling elders who serve as counsellors. Presbytery student certification committees rely on the confidential guidance conference reports as they decide whether to recommend recertification to the presbytery, which is charged with "listening" to the outer dimension of the call to ministry – a central tenet of John Calvin's theology of ministry that is part of our Reformed heritage. Guidance conferences offer all who participate – students and counsellors alike – opportunities for biblical and theological reflection.

Ministry and Church Vocations staff conduct much of their work by telephone, mail or email, answering questions and providing resources and a confidential sounding board to ministers, interim moderators and presbyteries, especially through the committees responsible for students, ministry or pastoral relations. Such communication equips leaders within church courts for their roles in governance and pastoral support by offering guidance on candidacy for ministry, search procedures, calls and appointments, cases of sexual abuse or sexual harassment and the dissolution of pastoral ties. Ministry and Church Vocations also facilitates the sharing of information and talent among various regions through the profile referral service, which assists congregational search committees to make connections with ministers seeking a call.



Some of the work of Ministry and Church Vocations to help the church build leadership capacity involves teaching. The Associate Secretary offers seminars to students at guidance conferences on conflict management in churches and provides workshops at the colleges on the church's candidacy process, sexual abuse and sexual harassment and seeking a call through the profile referral service.

Research and analysis comprise another significant area of the work of Ministry and Church Vocations. In some cases, these tasks are assigned by the General Assembly in response to overtures, while in others Ministry and Church Vocations initiates research and analysis to address needs it has observed in the church's practice and understanding.

With gratitude, Ministry and Church Vocations acknowledges the contributions made to its work by volunteers across the church. Special mention is due to the advisory committee, the various working groups and committees and the ministers, diaconal ministers and elders who serve as counsellors or chaplains to theological students at guidance conferences.

## **DISCERNMENT AND PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY**

### **Policy Updates**

[presbyterian.ca/mcv](http://presbyterian.ca/mcv)

In 2019, Ministry and Church Vocations updated the Candidacy Process of Preparation and Discernment booklet and the Calling a Minister policy for clarity and ease of use. The policies can be found online or print copies may be ordered from [presbyterian.ca/resources](http://presbyterian.ca/resources).

### **Guidance Conferences**

In 2019, guidance conferences were held at Crieff Hills Community, Puslinch, Ontario, in May and August.

- 11 candidates were recommended for re-certification.
- 1 candidate was recommended for re-certification with conditions.
- 0 candidates were not recommended for re-certification at this time, with conditions outlined before certification might be reconsidered.
- 0 candidates were not recommended for re-certification.

Two conferences are planned this year in May and in August at Crieff Hills.

### **Psychological Testing**

In 2019, seven certified candidates for the ministry participated in the mandatory psychological testing. With the consent of the candidate, the resultant report is forwarded to the candidate's presbytery student certification committee and to the college for inclusion in the candidate's academic file. Ministry and Church Vocations and the certifying presbyteries share the costs for psychological testing equally.

## **SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS**

### **Incentive Grants for New Colleague Covenant Groups**

[presbyterian.ca/mcv/colleague-covenant-group-grants](http://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 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. Grants are not provided to

cover costs for second and subsequent 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.

### **Continuing Education Committee**

[presbyterian.ca/con-ed-fund](http://presbyterian.ca/con-ed-fund)

The Continuing Education Committee convened three times in 2019 (January, April and December) to discuss continuing education, review the General Assembly established annual continuing education allowance and consider applications for grants.

In 2019, nine applications were received and nine were approved, with grants totaling \$5,570 being awarded to the various applicants. Grants were approved for graduate and doctoral studies, writing certificates, online teaching programs and the Pastor's Conference offered jointly by The Presbyterian Church in Canada colleges.

The continuing education grant application form is available on the church's website. The 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 2019: Ms. Liz Brewer (secretary), the Rev. Daniel Cho, Ms. Linda Herron and the Rev. John Read (convener).

### **Profile Referral Service**

[presbyterian.ca/vacancies](http://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 49 professional church workers and graduating students were seeking a call. A total of 34 pastoral charges (4.89% of 696 pastoral charges) are looking for a minister and have prepared a congregational profile, submitting it to Ministry and Church Vocations for assistance. Ten of these are part-time positions.

To provide some perspective on these figures, it may be helpful to categorize the 49 individuals who are known to be seeking a call. Six 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 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. Ten 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 individuals are ministers or licentiates of other denominations who have been declared eligible to be received; five of these persons live outside Canada. Since many ministers of other denominations who are declared eligible for reception never in fact receive calls to congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 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, 19 individuals are certified candidates of The Presbyterian Church in Canada 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. Between 2009 and 2018, the majority of candidates for the ministry graduating from Presbyterian Church in Canada colleges who were eligible to seek a call have been ordained (167 of 213 or 73%).

## **SPECIALIZED MINISTRIES**

### **The Order of Diaconal Ministries**

Diaconal Ministry formally encompasses the tri-fold emphasis of Christian education, pastoral care and social ministries and is expressed in a wide variety of contexts. Diaconal Ministers are members on the constituent or appendix of the presbytery in which they work and/or live.

### **Council**

The purpose of the Order of Diaconal Ministries includes the following stipulation: “To provide opportunities for mutual support and spiritual enrichment for all members in accordance with the Statement of Diaconal Ministries.” One of the ways this happens is for members to gather. To this end members will gather at Crieff Hills Community from September 20–23, 2020 for a time of fellowship, worship, study, business and reflection.

### **In Memoriam**

The Order of Diaconal Ministries records its gratitude for the faithful service and witness offered by the following members who now rest with the Lord: Ms. Alexandra (Sandra) Barker (designated 1958) died in Owen Sound, Ontario on July 25, 2019; Ms. Mary Campbell (designated 1952) died in Ottawa, Ontario on July 29, 2019; the Rev. Joyce Davis (designated 1987) died in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia on October 4, 2019; and Ms. Agnes Gollan (designated 1953) died in Toronto, Ontario on January 13, 2020. These members lived their faith and call to service as they ministered in a variety of settings across the countries of Canada, Nigeria and Japan.

### **International Diaconal Connections**

Diaconal Ministry is active around the world. The Order of Diaconal Ministries is a member of two associations: DOTAC (Diakonia of the Americas and Caribbean) and DIAKONIA World Federation (World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconal Communities). The Rev. Ann Blane is our representative on the DOTAC Central Committee.

### **DOTAC (Diakonia of the Americas and Diaconal Communities)**

Respecting Covenant – Risking the Journey of Reconciliation was the theme of the 14th DOTAC Conference held from August 14–20, 2019 on the campus of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, on the unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples. DOTAC is an ecumenical group of Christian diaconal communities in North America, the Caribbean, Central and South America. 160 people from different denominations in the member countries attended the conference. We are grateful to all members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries who helped with planning and local arrangements. Seven members were able to attend the conference in its entirety: Christine Ball, Ann Blane, Janice MacInnes, Ruth McCowan, Donna McIlveen, Lynda Reid and Margaret Robertson. We are grateful for bursaries received from the Christina H. Currie Memorial Fund, used to help offset the cost of attending the DOTAC conference.

We are also grateful for a grant received from the Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund that was used to assist with conference activities that explored healing and reconciliation issues as well as bringing together Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The conference theme was explored through three lenses: Indigeneity, Eco-Justice and Global Migration. Worship, business, workshops, speakers, small and large group discussion, Bible studies, site visits, early morning spiritual practices, a Blanket Exercise and a cultural evening, filled the tightly packed schedule. We were blessed that Mary Fontaine was able to be a workshop leader and to have a dance performance by the Hummingbird Ministries Starblanket Pow Wow Dancers during the conference’s cultural evening.

The 15th DOTAC Conference will be held in the Caribbean in 2023.

### **DIAKONIA World Federation of Diaconal Associations and Diaconal Communities**

DIAKONIA meets for a World Assembly every four years. The next World Assembly will be held in Darwin, Australia from June 30–July 7, 2021. The theme will be “Weavers in the World”.

## Grants and Bursaries

The Order of Diaconal Ministries 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. In 2020 two certified students from Knox College received grants to help offset the cost of attending the APCE (Association of Presbyterian Church Educators) annual event. The 2020 event was held from January 29–February 1, 2020 in Little Rock, Arkansas, with the theme “Getting Outside the Box – Discipleship through Retreat, Mission and Justice Ministries”.

Bursaries are available for Diaconal Ministers furthering their theological education. The Ewart College Alumnae/Alumni Bursary Fund provides up to \$1,500.00 per academic year to a maximum of \$3,000.00 to members who request assistance.

## The Goal of Diaconal Ministry

The Rev. Joyce Davis, the author of *From the Bottom Up* (a history of the Order of Diaconal Ministries) shares the following thoughts near the end of her book (p. 194):

The goal is to carry on ministry in which everyone's gifts are nurtured and respected. Whether ordained or designated, diaconal ministers are commissioned to share power with the Body of Christ, as they seek to equip every member for the work that God has given to the whole community.

Donna McIlveen  
Administrator

## The Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has a vital ministry through the 16 ministers who serve as chaplains in the Royal Canadian Chaplain Service (RCChS).

### Regular Force Chaplains:

Commander Bonita Mason	Ottawa, Ontario
Major Charles Deogratias	Kingston, Ontario
Major Kenneth MacRae	Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Captain David Stewart	Gagetown, New Brunswick
Lieutenant-Navy Mike Rundle	Kingston, Ontario
Captain Andrew Cameron	Valcartier, Quebec
Captain In-Seob Won	Ottawa, Ontario
Captain Kim Barlow	Gagetown, New Brunswick
Captain Seaton Brachmayer	Gagetown, New Brunswick
Captain Luke Vanderkamp	Petawawa, Ontario

### Reserve Force Chaplains:

Major Thomas Hamilton	Halifax, Nova Scotia (living in Prince Edward Island)
Captain David Clark	Toronto, Ontario
Captain Steven Filyk	Kamloops, British Columbia
Captain Gavin Robertson	Trail, British Columbia
Captain Francis Savill	North Bay, Ontario
Captain Charmila Ireland	Cambridge and Kitchener, Ontario

### Subsidized Education Entry Level Masters Program (completing educational program for military chaplaincy):

Captain Enoch Lee	Montreal, Quebec
Second Lieutenant Katie MacIntosh	Winnipeg, Manitoba

These women and men are called to serve as part of an ecumenical and interfaith chaplaincy. Our chaplains have a unique ministry supporting the moral and spiritual well-being of military personnel and their families during conflict and in peacetime. There are diverse and complex spiritual and pastoral needs that are within the scope of practice of military chaplains. Canadians have become aware of the toll that stress and trauma can take in the lives of the men

and women who serve in the Canadian Armed Forces. Chaplains are a valued and necessary part of the healing process of individuals and families. They provide a powerful ministry of presence and spiritual leadership within the Canadian Armed Forces, often providing direct care after significant life incidents. Some other responsibility of military chaplains include officiating at religious services and ceremonies; advising the Commanding Officer regarding religious accommodation, ethical dilemmas, as well as spiritual and moral issues of the unit; suicide prevention; deployment-related issues and challenges; nurturing the faith community that gathers on bases for worship and faith formation; liaising with civilian religious groups. The Presbyterian chaplains are well-respected for their expertise in pastoral care and their leadership in community and chapel life. They are often called upon to take major leadership responsibilities at all levels of the Canadian Armed Forces. As Presbyterians, we gather annually for a day of study, reflection and support as part of the larger *Exercise: Called to Serve* that brings chaplains from all denominations together for a five day conference in June.

Our chaplains have a dual accountability. As ministers of Word and Sacraments, they are responsible to the presbytery. 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 (army, air force, navy) into one chaplain service. It is the only interfaith, joint military chaplaincy in the NATO alliance.

It is my privilege to serve our chaplains and represent our church as The Presbyterian Church in Canada's representative on the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy. The Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy is a national committee with representatives from various Christian denominations, as well Jewish and Muslim faith communities. The Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy is the body that acts as a common channel of communication between faith groups in Canada, the Minister of National Defense, the Chief of Defense Staff and the Chaplain General in matters related the military chaplaincy. The Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy is also responsible for endorsing prospective candidates for military chaplains. As well as attending meetings of the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy, I participate in area conferences and base visits as I am able and am available to chaplains, at their request, for pastoral care and help with denominational matters.

Please remember our chaplains, their families and the work of the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy in your prayers.

M. Jean Morris

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Rev. Kathy Fraser, the Rev. Wally Hong, the Rev. Matthew Sams, the Rev. Dr. John-Peter Smit.

### **PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT (PWS&D)**

Staff	Director:	Mr. Guy Smagghe
	Finance and Administration Coordinator:	Ms. Alison Stirling (to September 2019)
	Finance and Administration Coordinator:	Ms. Dwan Billings (from November 2019)
	Administrative Assistant:	Mr. David Di Sera
	Communications Coordinator:	Ms. Karen Bokma
	Communications Assistant:	Ms. Anna Muir (to October 2019)
	Communications Assistant:	Ms. Stephanie Chunoo (from December 2019)
	Public Engagement Assistant (part-time):	Ms. Emma Clarke
	Senior Program Coordinator:	Ms. Julia Rao (to June 2019)
	Program Coordinator:	Mr. John Popiel
	Program Coordinator:	Ms. Kristen Winters
	Program Coordinator:	Mr. Rob Shropshire
	Program Assistant:	Mr. Sean Jeffrey (to August 2019)
	Refugee Program Coordinator:	Ms. Winnie Bower (from November 2019)
	Refugee Program Assistant:	Mr. Biniam Goitom

## **INTRODUCTION**

Inspired by God's promise of abundant life, Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D) envisions a sustainable, compassionate and just world. The following report outlines how PWS&D worked to fulfill this vision.

In 2019, PWS&D contributed to \$6 million worth of development and relief programs where most needed around the world – \$2.58 million in development and \$3.42 million in emergency relief programming. This was done with a total of \$3.88 million in donations from members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, including \$388,689 to our CFGB account and \$1,519,593 contributed in legacy funds and gifts of securities to the Loaves and Fishes Fund, of which one seventh is used to fund our work each year. We are grateful for the support of the Government of Canada and membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank which allows us to multiply and expand our resources through matching funds and our reach through collaboration with our ecumenical members and their partnerships. Lastly, PWS&D's refugee sponsorship work has allowed PWS&D to provide accompaniment to 54 congregations and five presbyteries involved in sponsoring 318 refugees during 2019.

The report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1: Foundational Statements
- Section 2: Programs Funded in 2019: Development and Emergency Relief; Refugee Ministry
- Section 3: Resources and Communications
- Section 4: Ecumenical Coalitions
- Section 5: Financial Responsibility and Stewardship
- Section 6: Governance and PWS&D Committee

## **FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS**

### **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**

Faithful to our calling, we respond together.

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.

### **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" (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 well-being 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.

## **PROGRAMS FUNDED IN 2019: DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY RELIEF; REFUGEE MINISTRY**

With the generous support of Presbyterians in Canada, PWS&D works in a partnership with local civil society organizations around the world to address root causes of poverty and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in the following three program areas: development, emergency relief and refugee ministry. This partnership model allows us to respond to a myriad of complex needs around the world in a targeted and systematic way grounded in the needs of those we seek to serve. PWS&D's strength lies in our ability to accompany critical in-country partners while leveraging global support through partnerships and alliances such as Canadian Foodgrains Bank and ACT Alliance.

Development programs focus on long-term, sustainable interventions in countries in the Global South in the following thematic areas: food security, sustainable livelihoods, health and human rights. These themes are broad and comprehensive, allowing PWS&D and its partners to address complex and intersecting issues of poverty in a more precise and meaningful way. Below are explanations of PWS&D's four priority development themes:

- **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, savings groups and small business development. With a special focus on women's empowerment, we believe that they will improve their quality of life, shape their future and inspire others in their community.
- **Health:** By ensuring mothers and children receive the medical care they need, by caring for people affected by HIV and AIDS and by providing access to water, sanitation and hygiene programs, families and communities can create a healthy foundation for a sustainable future.
- **Human Rights:** Injustices are challenged through a shared commitment to human rights, with a special focus on promoting and protecting rights for women, children, subsistence farmers, persons with disabilities and refugees.

PWS&D responds to humanitarian crises by contributing to emergency relief programs. When possible, PWS&D launches special appeals for funds to generate the necessary resources. Through a network of specialized disaster relief agencies, PWS&D can rapidly respond to natural disasters, conflicts and other emergencies. Food assistance is usually carried out through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) and other needs such as shelter, primary health care, clean water and sanitation, education in refugee camps and psycho-social support are implemented through the ACT Alliance and local partners when possible. PWS&D helps provide immediate and longer-term relief to ensure the most vulnerable people have access to food, shelter and medical attention and can recover from economic loss and psychosocial trauma in a meaningful and sustainable way.

PWS&D's refugee ministry is based on the belief that no one is a refugee by choice. This integrated program sponsors and supports refugees coming to and settling in Canada. At the same time, we advocate for and support refugees and displaced people around the world through a variety of networks and partnerships. The ultimate goal is that displaced people and families will be able to rebuild their lives without fear of persecution in a safe and secure home.

## **DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAMS**

This section presents all the projects supported by PWS&D in 2019. In each region, program countries are listed in alphabetical order with the name of the project, the funding source and the total value of programming including any matching funds, if applicable.

### **Development**

PWS&D contributed a total value of \$2,581,000 in overseas development programs in 2019. This includes the following:

Global Affairs Canada co-funded Maternal and Child Health Program*	\$1,284,892
Agriculture and livelihood projects through CFGB	\$553,935
Development projects funded directly with PWS&D funds**	<u>\$742,173</u>
<b>Total 2019 development programs</b>	<b><u>\$2,581,000</u></b>

\* this includes Canadian administration, consultants and program support

\*\* this excludes funds that were transferred to CFGB

### **Disaster, Relief and Rehabilitation**

PWS&D engages with compassion in support of people affected by disasters. It was 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, PWS&D can respond in communities where it has no historic or direct partnerships while ensuring accountability and results through the mechanisms of the Alliance.

### **Cyclone Idai**

Cyclone Idai made landfall in Southern Africa in March 2019. High winds and rains left a trail of devastation, impacting almost three million people across Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. When the storm hit the region, roads were submerged, houses demolished and crops and livelihoods destroyed. The cyclone caused over 1,000 deaths and left over 146,000 people without homes. PWS&D responded with multiple initiatives through ACT Alliance, Canadian Foodgrains Bank and through its partners like the Mulanje Mission Hospital.

### **Disaster, Relief and Rehabilitation Expenditures in 2019**

(Excluding food assistance through Canadian Foodgrains Bank)

PWS&D contributed a total value of \$3,420,105 in relief programs:

Food Assistance and Nutrition projects through CFGB	\$3,125,577
Responses through ACT Alliance appeals	\$164,000
Responses through local/other partners	<u>\$130,528</u>
<b>Total 2019 emergency relief programs</b>	<b><u>\$3,420,105</u></b>

## **AFRICA DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAMS**

### **Burundi: Agriculture, Livelihoods and Food Assistance – Mennonite Central Committee (CFGB) – \$100,000**

The Mennonite Central Committee Canada supported Help Channel Burundi with a three-year agriculture, livelihood and food assistance project in the provinces of Kirundo, Makamba and Rutana. Years of conflict, population pressure, land degradation and extreme poverty left the country highly dependent on foreign aid. In the context of this civil insecurity and accompanying economic downturn, there was a disruption to markets, farming activities and livelihoods creating a humanitarian crisis in many parts of the country. In response, this project provided food assistance for four months during the lean season for 300 highly vulnerable households (about 1,500 people). An additional 207 vulnerable households (about 1,035 people) took part in food-for-work activities during the hunger season in support of government-led soil and water conservation activities. The project also provided intensive agricultural training and support in post-harvest processing to improve agriculture production and strengthen livelihoods. These training activities worked with about 1,233 households (about 6,165 people). In total, about 1,740 households (about 8,700 people) benefitted. PWS&D contributed \$25,000 towards the third and final year of this project, which received a 3:1 match with CFGB funds.

### **Democratic Republic of the Congo: Mennonite Central Committee (CFGB) – \$49,224**

The Mennonite Central Committee Canada is supporting Oasis de la Culture with a two year project to improve the food security of 325 households, including 250 internally displaced persons affected by conflict and food insecurity in the territory of Fizi in the Sud-Kivu Province of Democratic Republic of the Congo. The project also supports 75 host families receiving displaced persons by providing them with food assistance for four months. PWS&D contributed \$12,306 towards this project, which received a 3:1 match at CFGB.

### **Ghana: Garu Community Based Rehabilitation – Presbyterian Church of Ghana – \$50,000**

This five year project is targeting 25,000 persons with disabilities with schooling and vocational training, access to health services and information and strengthened livelihood opportunities and engagement within their communities. In 2019, the fourth year of the project, 4,323 people (1,802 men and 2,521 women) were assessed and registered for



the program. Farmers were trained in techniques to improve crop production and provided with improved varieties of seeds. Some farmers received improved breeds of livestock and were trained in livestock production while others were trained in agro-processing, value addition and business development to boost income generation. To increase financial literacy and access to local credit, self-help groups and community savings and loans associations were established and trained. To promote improved health outcomes, the project sensitized 6,420 people (2,967 men and 3,456 women) on sexual and reproductive health issues and disability prevention, provided nutrition training to 2,881 pregnant and lactating women and screened 917 people (420 men and 497 women) for early detection and disability prevention. Additionally, 4,380 people (1,767 men and 2,613 women) were trained in advocacy and lobbying to promote disability rights.

**Ghana: Gambaga: Go Home – Presbyterian Church of Ghana – \$31,835**

This project addresses the status of women in Gambaga who have been accused of witchcraft and banished from their homes. Through community sensitization and education, the project reduces stigma and promotes the human rights of accused women. In 2019, 12 sensitization sessions were conducted at the community level in efforts to reduce the community banishment and brutal attacks on women accused as witches. The project also supported the reintegration of 20 accused witches back into their communities through advocacy, as well as discussions with local leaders and family members. The project supported the 57 women residing in the camp to engage in livelihood activities, register for health coverage and ensure that accommodations are repaired when needed. The project also provided support for children and grandchildren residing at the camp to attend school.

**Mozambique – Cyclone Idai Appeal – ACT Alliance Appeal SAF191 – \$60,000**

In Mozambique, PWS&D contributed to an ACT Alliance response targeting 29,256 families in cyclone-affected zones, delivering food, safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services, shelter and psychosocial and livelihoods support. Funds were directed toward the relief effort carried out by Ecumenical Committee for Social Development (CEDES) in Mozambique. CEDES supported over 5,000 households with food and non-food items such as blankets and temporary shelter. CEDES also targeted a total of 10,000 households with early recovery and livelihood support in the form of seeds and tools for farming.

**Malawi: Cyclone Idai – Food Assistance (Phases 1 and 2) – Churches Action in Relief and Development (CFGB) – \$626,284**

Phase 1: PWS&D supported Churches Action in Relief and Development with a four-month food assistance project in the Mulanje District of Malawi. About 900,000 people in 15 districts of the country were affected by the destruction from the cyclone which forced the displacement of 86,980 people. These events interrupted livelihood activities, damaged infrastructure, washed away household assets including farmland and food and severely limited market functionality and access. Many households struggled to access basic needs, including food. In response, this project provided monthly food baskets to 2,000 vulnerable households (approximately 10,000 individuals) and 800 households were provided with a seed package to engage in winter cropping. Food baskets consisted of maize flour, beans and cooking oil. Monthly distributions of supplemental food (known locally as Likuni Phala) were also provided to 500 households with children under the age of five to ensure they receive the proper essential nutrients.

Phase 2: A second four month food assistance project in the Mulanje District began in December. In November 2019, over 40,000 people were classified as facing crisis levels of food insecurity in the district. This second phase of food assistance supports 1,600 households (approximately 8,000 people) to sustain food security needs until the harvest of crops in the spring. Beneficiaries are provided with cash transfers as markets are functioning and food is available.

**Malawi: Cyclone Idai Response – Mulanje Mission Hospital – \$30,987**

Severe flooding caused by the cyclone affected thousands and destroyed large numbers of homes and latrines in southern Malawi. Due to rising water tables, many latrines collapsed and waterpoints no longer provided safe drinking water. Following an emergency assessment by Mulanje Mission Hospital (MMH), it was estimated that 4,000 latrines had collapsed in the hospital's catchment area. Without these basic facilities, there was a high risk of diarrhoeal diseases such as cholera and typhoid, particularly for those under five years old. PWS&D supported Mulanje Mission Hospital to rebuild 525 damaged latrines. A number of other structures, including houses, also collapsed in the catchment area. PWS&D also supported the reconstruction of two houses belonging to the families of orphans benefiting from the hospital's Orphan and Vulnerable Children Program were damaged in the floods. This project benefited approximately 2,625 families.

**Malawi: Neno Girls Secondary School Scholarships – Blantyre Synod Education Department – \$20,036**

Neno Girls Mission Secondary School opened its doors with 33 girls in 2002 with support from missionaries of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. It enrolls both boarders and day scholars and students mostly come from the Southern Region of Malawi. This all-girls school strives to retain girl students until they complete Form 4 – the last grade of secondary school in Malawi. The Neno Scholarship Program, established to assist with school fees for orphans and vulnerable girl students, supported 20 girl students in the 2018/2019 school year. All students at the school passed the national examinations, against the national pass rate of 50 per cent.

**Malawi: Orphan Care – Mulanje Mission Hospital – \$57,628**

This program supports 300 orphaned and vulnerable children in the hospital's catchment area. Working with village level OVC committees, the program assesses the most vulnerable households and identifies those that would most benefit from health and education support. In 2019, 254 primary school children were provided with uniforms, shoes, soap and school bags to support their education. In addition, eight students were supported to attend secondary school and 18 enrolled in vocational skills training. Children received nutritional supplements, in the form of Likuni Phala, a locally produced fortified porridge and medical care. The most vulnerable children's households also participated in a livestock keeping program, providing nutrition and income for the children and their caregivers.

**Malawi: Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Program Integrated Development Project – \$99,966**

This three year integrated project focuses on improving the living standards of 27,240 vulnerable people, particularly women and girls, in targeted communities in Ekwendeni and Enukweni in northern Malawi. This is being achieved through improving health outcomes, increasing social and economic status at household and community levels and supporting education. In 2019, 20 orphans and vulnerable children were supported to go to secondary school and six to college through the payment of school fees and provision of school supplies. The project facilitated the establishment of new community-based childcare centres to allow more children to access psychosocial care and early learning. To promote school attendance, 20 village education committees were established at the community level. The project strengthened community awareness on health issues through sensitizations on safe motherhood, nutrition, hygiene and cancer awareness, reaching 6,237 households. Health outcomes were also improved through malaria prevention and treatment to 239 households. To support income generation and business development, 14 self-help groups were established and mentoring and support was provided to 123 existing groups. The project also promoted awareness and advocacy on gender-based violence in communities and supported the establishment of gender-based violence reporting mechanisms in primary schools.

**Malawi: Every Girl Empowered Project – Livingstonia Synod AIDS Program – \$79,359**

This three year project is being implemented in 14 communities in the catchment area of Mabiri health centre, in northern Malawi, with a population of 14,053 people. In an effort to improve the sexual and reproductive health of young people in the area, the project is providing youth with increased access to sexual and reproductive health services and information, life skills, nutrition and advocacy skills to fight harmful cultural practices that inhibit them from completing their education. In 2019, one teen club comprised of adolescents living with HIV was established and 19 sexual and reproductive health in-school youth clubs were established. In addition, 37 youth were trained in comprehensive sexuality education, 650 young people were sensitized on family planning and one youth friendly health facility was established. The project is addressing the structural causes of marginalization by involving parents, local and church leaders and local governance structures in upholding the rights of children and women. Meetings were conducted in 2019 with service providers and leaders in the community to develop a strategy for combatting gender-based violence and early marriage and to develop reporting mechanisms for reporting and addressing cases of abuse.

**Malawi: Partnerships for Strengthening Maternal, Newborn and Child Health 2016–2020, Global Affairs Canada – \$280,330**

The project entered the final year of a four year agreement in 2019. In Malawi, it is being implemented by Embangweni Mission Hospital, administered by the Synod of Livingstonia Health Department in the north of the country and Mulanje Mission Hospital in Blantyre Synod in the south. The project is empowering women and girls and promoting male participation in sexual reproductive health. Vulnerable groups are proactively seeking and advocating for health services. This is being done by reducing the barriers preventing women from accessing reproductive health services, increasing women's decision making for their own and their children's health, increasing male support for this decision making and changing behaviours that puts women and girls at risk.

The project has reached an estimated 131,244 direct beneficiaries in Malawi: 69,618 women and girls and 61,626 men and boys. The quality of health service delivery was increased through the construction of two outreach clinics at Mulanje Mission Hospital. Through both static and mobile outreach clinic services, both hospitals provided maternal, newborn and child health services in the form of antenatal care, immunization, postnatal care, family planning, skilled deliveries, anti-retroviral therapy for the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV, growth monitoring and cervical cancer screening at the community level. To promote improved knowledge and understanding of nutrition and vitamin intake, project beneficiaries were screened for malnutrition and referred for nutritional supplements where necessary. To increase preventative practices to reduce the burden of diseases for women, men, girls and boys, awareness meetings, door-to-door visits and open days were conducted on a range of health issues, including the importance of hospital delivery, antenatal and postnatal care, family planning, sexually transmitted diseases and hygiene and nutrition. The quality of health care services continued to increase as staff received training in a variety of areas such as infection prevention, ultra-sound scanning, neonatal care and integrated maternal, neonatal and child health. This project receives a 4:1 match from the Government of Canada.

#### **Malawi: Mpata Conservation Agriculture – Livingstonia Development Department (CFGB) – \$78,717**

The second phase of this drought mitigation project targets farming households from 15 villages in the Mpata area of Karonga district in northern Malawi. Crop production is negatively affected by the combination of consistent dry spells and annual floods, leaving many perpetually hungry. Not enough food can be grown year-round and food reserves are rapidly depleted. The situation is worsened by few alternatives to gain cash outside of farming and a lack of social protections or savings to purchase food elsewhere. This project is reducing cyclical hunger and building the resilience of participating households by training them on conservation agriculture (CA) farming methods, which work to increase production while improving soil structure and protecting soil against erosion and nutrient losses. The project promotes the formation of self-help groups to help households raise funds together to purchase agricultural inputs and develop small businesses to supplement farm income. The groups provide an emergency fund to use when food reserves are depleted and must be purchased elsewhere. By 2019, 560 farming households were enrolled in the project and 23 self-help groups were established and trained. Household food security increased as is evidenced by the increase in months that families were able to consume from their own production, from six months at baseline to eight months after the second year of the project. The project has also seen an increased role for women in decision-making both at the project and household level. PWS&D contributed \$48,395, which was matched 1:1 through CFGB.

#### **Somalia: Nutrition Response – Development and Peace – \$100,000**

Development and Peace is supporting Trocaire Somalia with a 12 month nutrition project in Belet Xaawo, Luuq and Doolow districts in the Gedo region of south-central Somalia. Five consecutive inadequate rainy seasons from 2016 through mid-2019 have left Somalia with over half of the population in need of food and livelihood assistance as food insecurity has steadily increased and livelihood assets continue to be depleted. Malnutrition, especially for children and women is critically high and the demand for nutrition interventions exceeds resources currently available. This project is providing ready to use supplementary food and therapeutic food to approximately 3,900 individuals, including 1,400 children (aged 6 months to 5 years) with severe acute malnutrition, 2,000 children with moderate acute malnutrition and 500 pregnant and lactating women. Additionally, the project is providing meals to about 900 caretakers who accompany children receiving treatment in stabilization centres. These individuals, including another 900 children and 2,000 women receive timely and crucial nutrition information through outreach activities. In total the project is targeting 7,700 individuals. PWS&D contributed \$20,000 with a 4:1 match from the Government of Canada at CFGB.

#### **South Sudan: Water, Sanitation, Hygiene – Norwegian Church Aid – ACT Alliance Appeal SSD181**

PWS&D and Norwegian Church Aid partnered to implement an emergency water, hygiene and sanitation project as part of a larger ACT Alliance response to the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan. Initially, the project targeted both the Jur River County and Baggari Corridor areas. However, project implementation was delayed due to insecurity and accessibility issues in both areas. Subsequently, it was decided that the project be implemented in Jur River County only. A total of 8,405 individuals were reached through the project. In total, 40 latrines were constructed, serving 268 individuals and 20 handpumps were repaired, serving 5,994 people. In addition, water point committees were established in five locations, 56 people were trained to provide sanitation and hygiene awareness in the communities and 1,200 hygiene kits were distributed. The project also conducted awareness raising and sensitizations on sexual and gender-based violence to 768 people, including girls, women, boys and men. Note: the funds were transferred in 2018

**South Sudan: Water, Sanitation, Hygiene – ACT Alliance Appeal SSD191 – \$54,000**

The South Sudan States of Upper Nile, Jonglei, Unity, Northern Bahr el Gazal and Eastern Equatoria were seriously affected by flooding caused by heavy continuous rains in 2019. The floods affected over 900,000 people with an estimated 420,000 people displaced and in need of immediate emergency assistance. Infrastructure damage was also caused by the floods and livelihoods threatened. PWS&D is supporting Presbyterian Relief and Development Agency and Christian Aid to address water, sanitation and hygiene needs in the affected areas. While originally planned for 2019, the project will now be carried out in 2020.

**AMERICAS DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAMS****Guatemala: School Support for Vulnerable Children – Francisco Coll School – \$33,867**

Located in Guatemala City, Francisco Coll School sits on a landfill site opposite the garbage dump. Settlements have sprung up in the area and families make ends meet by searching through the dump – collecting, recycling and selling trash. Francisco Coll School provides quality education to vulnerable school-aged children in a safe and nurturing environment, offering a holistic curriculum that includes a school garden project and music and arts classes. First aid is offered to students and their families as needed. Parents receive support and counseling to ensure their children succeed in school. The teachers implement educational strategies that promote innovative and dynamic classrooms that take into consideration the students' socioeconomic context and family lives. This project offers operational support and in-country capacity training that empowers the school staff. In 2019, 244 students were enrolled and 214 passed to the next grade. Eight students received scholarships to support their education beyond grade 6. The school celebrated its 25th anniversary during the year.

**Guatemala: Women's Empowerment Dairy Cow Program – Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas**

Fraternidad de Presbiteriales Mayas is a local organization run by Indigenous women from Mam, Quiche and Kakchiquel communities in Guatemala. Formed over 30 years ago, the organization helps women build their spiritual, economic and social capacity, with programs focused on promoting self-esteem, values and leadership. In 2019, FPM finished the third and final year of a livelihoods project that provided loans and training to women to start their own dairy cow production business. Forty women, from seven communities, received high quality cows and targeted training and another 73 women received training to help them with their animals. These women formed self-help groups, where they combined their funds to expand dairy milk production and pay back their loans with monies earned, allowing more women to join the program annually. The dairy cows are now producing calves and the initial investment from 2016 is showing results. PWS&D is in discussions with FPM to enter into a new agreement but due to delays in finalizing a new agreement, no funds were sent in 2019.

**Guatemala: Agroecology Production for Food Security in Comitancillo – Maya-Mam Association for Research and Development (AMMID) (CFGB) – \$86,258**

This project provides agriculture and livelihood support to farmers in eight communities in the San Marcos Department of Guatemala. Technical support is provided to farmers who experience low yields due to poor soil management and seed selection techniques, coupled with a lack of fertile lands and diverse crops. In 2019, the fourth year of the project, 310 farming families expanded the number and types of fruit trees grown and increased maize and vegetable production. Families also received training on swine production and marketing. PWS&D contributed \$21,280 and received a 3:1 match through CFGB.

**Guatemala: Gender Empowerment and Defense of Maya-Mam Territory – Maya-Mam Association for Research and Development (AMMID) – \$30,357**

This project focuses on increasing women's rights and voices within the household and within local governance structures. AMMID implements a comprehensive educational program called Siempre Vivas ("always alive") which focuses on developing self-esteem and political participation. Concurrent to the empowerment of women is the engagement of local authorities on the pressing issue of mining incursions on sacred land in Comitancillo, San Marcos. This project has enabled greater coordination and awareness of citizens on their rights and defense of their territory, which is inextricably linked to the CFGB food security project described above. In 2019, 333 women and seven men participated in the program, along with 79 women from municipal organizations and 11 teachers. Gender awareness workshops were conducted in high schools and reached 400 students. The project also carried out trainings on political advocacy, women's participation and gender equality for women in the community. Radio and television announcements were conducted on issues relating to gender-based violence and positive gender relationships.

**Haiti: Life-Saving Targeted Malnutrition Treatment Program for St. Marc Children – Partners in Health (CFGB) – \$559,294**

Haiti faces extreme levels of hunger and malnutrition due to high poverty rates exacerbated by damage from ongoing drought in the northern and central parts of the country. In 2019, political unrest and ongoing demonstrations impacted many aspects of Haitian life and led to closures of schools, hospitals and commerce as people could not go out in public due to insecurity. Produce from the countryside could not move to the cities and products could not be shipped out from urban areas. This affects health and nutrition for children in St. Marc. Many children suffer from nutrient deficiencies because they do not receive the proper food at critical development stages and there is minimal health infrastructure to prevent or treat diseases. Consequently, many children are underweight or experience severe stunting. This project established a mobile clinic to identify and treat malnourished children under the age of five. Community health workers screen children for malnutrition and provide food supplements, as well as train community-based and health facility staff. They also work with mothers to encourage best breastfeeding practices to prevent diseases caused by malnourishment. In 2019, approximately 2,146 acutely malnourished children were identified and enrolled in the treatment program and approximately 2,504 children received medical treatments to improve their overall health. PWS&D contributed \$64,630 to this project, which was matched 4:1 from the Government of Canada at CFGB.

**Haiti: Sustainable Food Security through Agroecology & Cooperative Associations – Partenariat pour le Développement Local/Mennonite Central Committee Haiti (CFGB) – \$87,500**

This agriculture and livelihoods project is being implemented by Partenariat pour le Développement Local in the communities of St Michel de L'Attalye, St. Raphael and Pignon. In these three communities, many households are unable to feed their families year-round due to low agricultural productivity. In 2019, project activities were disrupted by political demonstrations and fuel shortages made transportation challenging. This project works with three farmer-owned cooperatives in each of the communities to improve agricultural production and nutritional diversity using agroecological farming techniques. These techniques help farmers adapt to growing food in changing climate conditions by providing training on practices that protect water sources, restore soil fertility and emphasize growing diversified food sources. Specific techniques include using cover crops, establishing seed banks and planting trees. Through the local associations, 2,661 farmers were trained in agroecological techniques, 445 association leaders were trained in organizational management and 55,370 trees were planted. PWS&D contributed \$21,875 to this project which is matched 3:1 through CFGB. This project is co-funded by the Mennonite Central Committee of Canada (MCCC) with 50 per cent of the needed equity provided by each partner. Cantave Jean Baptiste, the executive director of PDL, served as the southern partner representative of the PWS&D Committee in 2018/2019.

**Haiti: Agroforestry, Farmer Support and Natural Resource Management Training – Mennonite Central Committee Haiti (CFGB) – \$50,000**

This five year agroforestry project, targeting the Desarmes area of the Artibonite valley, finished in 2019. Overall the project was highly successful in reducing food insecurity and long-term risk, in spite of the significant challenges posed by climate change and the current political and economic situation. The aim was to increase food consumption among 17,300 subsistence farmers by supporting farmers, tree nurseries and youth training on natural resource management. As part of its agroforestry program, MCC Haiti established kids' clubs to provide experimental gardens to get children involved in learning about food security, nutrition and environmental protection. Farmers improved their farmland by using intercropping methods and planting an increased number of crops to increase and diversify production. Production was supported through grain banks that enabled farmers to store seeds for the upcoming season, also serving as food storage in the event of future droughts. In 2019, 281 farmers were trained in agroforestry techniques, soil conservation and group formation. The project also trained 241 people as community volunteers in three areas: tree nursery committees, youth club monitors and youth club members. As well, 442,030 trees were distributed to help produce 177 micro forests in the project catchment area. The additional tree cover from reforestation efforts likely slowed down winds at ground level and secured the soil to prevent landslides. Lower-lying areas that had reforested land above them also experienced fewer floods. The project was highly valued by the community and was unique within the Artibonite region for its approach, scale and success. PWS&D contributed \$25,000 to this project which was matched 1:1 with CFGB funds.

**Nicaragua: Food Security – Promoting Agroecological Practices – Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua (CEPAD) (CFGB)**

This three year food security project in Pantasma and Teustepe departments in central Nicaragua, ended in 2019. The aim of the project was to improve food security by training families in innovative farming techniques, focused on sustainable agriculture methods through improvements in soil, natural pest management, conservation of water and the use of certified seeds with higher yields. The project provided families with various types of seeds to plant fruits and vegetables in order to establish community plant nurseries. This allowed families to increase the production of basic grains, fruits and vegetables, which alleviated food insecurity and chronic malnutrition. At the end of the project, all participating families had increased their knowledge of nutrition and diversified their diet. In 2019, 336 farmers received training on sustainable agricultural techniques, 224 farmers received plants grown in 14 nurseries and 56 farmers were trained agroecological techniques including soil and water conservation, pest management and water capture systems. An additional 308 community members participated in community assemblies to discuss and share project information. This project was matched 3:1 through CFGB.

**Nicaragua: Health and Food Security – Peer to Peer Training and Prevention – Institute of Human Promotion (INPRHU) – \$45,000**

This three year health and food security project targets youth and their families who live and work in two markets of Managua, Nicaragua. The project uses peer-to-peer methodology, building the capacity of young people to engage with other adolescents, their families and community members. The project has two areas of focus – the prevention of gender-based violence and teenage pregnancies and improved nutrition among adolescents and their families. In 2019, 115 youth were educated on nutrition. Additionally, 200 youth were sensitized on sexuality and reproductive health topics, 53 youth were educated on gender-based violence in their community and prevention and response and youth who were victims of violence received support. Twenty youth leaders are actively reaching out to other youth in the communities to share the information they have learned.

**Nicaragua: Health and education – Infant Nutritional and Development Program – Nicaraguan Soya Association (SOYNICA) – \$30,000**

In 2019, Soynica began implementing a three year project titled “Healthy Start, Smart Start” in Villa Guadalupe, a poor neighbourhood of Managua. The project aims to improve the nutritional health of families, as well as train parents how to stimulate early childhood development in their babies, from newborn to three years of age. Using the popular education methodology “learning by doing”, beneficiary families are the key actors in all learning processes and bring about positive changes in their families and community. The families obtain new knowledge to improve their eating practices, in order to increase the consumption of nutritious foods and reduce the consumption of junk food. The project also promotes the practice of exclusive breastfeeding in infants and extended breastfeeding until two years of age, to improve of the nutritional status and health of girls and boys under three years of age and the family. During the year, 76 mothers learned about the importance of breastfeeding and how to monitor their children’s development and 62 boys and girls were monitored for their motor, coordination, social and language skills.

**ASIA DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAM**

**Asia Regional: Women and Leadership Program (regional training) – Community World Service Asia – \$20,000**

The role of women in leadership has not progressed substantially despite the level of education, employment experience and opportunities currently available. Indeed, there has only been slow improvement in the number of women leaders and culture in the workplace. With this in mind, Community World Service Asia developed a program focused on women and leadership, holding a workshop from November 24–29, 2019 in Bangkok Thailand. The program focused on developing existing skills and capabilities possessed by participants, helping them to use existing gifts, skills and talents to create change around them regardless of socioeconomic status or position in society. Particular attention was paid to understanding “the modern leader”, making an impression, networking, self-care and putting one’s best foot forward. Sixteen participants were drawn from ACT Alliance members based in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Tanzania and Sri Lanka. PWS&D contributed \$7,500 towards this project, which also received support from Canadian ACT Alliance members, PWRDF and the United Church of Canada.

### **Afghanistan: Cash Voucher Drought Response in Bamyan – Community World Service Asia (CFGB) – \$623,058**

In 2018, Afghanistan was facing a drought, the scale of which had not been seen since 2011 due to a severe rain deficit and limited snowfall during the winter season. Approximately 6.2 million people, mostly in rural areas, were affected: 3.9 million were in urgent need of food assistance whereas 1.8 million required livelihood assistance in the 22 worst affected provinces. In response, PWS&D partnered with Community World Service Asia to mitigate the risk and reduce the threat of food insecurity. Following a baseline survey, 800 families (6,854 people) were selected for assistance in Saighan district of Bamyan province. The project provided cash assistance of \$90 per month per household for five months in 11 Community Development Councils of the district.

### **Afghanistan: Girls Education Project – Community World Service Asia – \$60,000**

In 2019, Community World Service Asia continued to work on this three year project in the provinces of Bamyan, Laghman and Nangarhar in Afghanistan; PWS&D has been supporting the project since 2011. Decades of conflict, poverty, lack of infrastructure and insufficient transportation make education a distant dream for many children. Cultural barriers and the lack of female teachers contribute to lower enrolment of girls than boys. This project is enhancing the quality of girls' education in a sustainable way, involving communities and schools in decision-making, as well as the government who creates incentives and reinforcements for girls' school enrolment and attendance. Teachers are trained with improved pedagogy and best teaching practices that are more inclusive of girls. School Volunteer Committees actively engage with local communities to promote girls' education. Civic Education Camps addressing democracy, good governance, elections, leadership, human rights, child rights and gender are an important project component. In 2019, the project operated 28 schools (10 more schools than last year), with a total of 5,700 students.

### **Afghanistan: Maternal Neonatal and Child Health–Community World Service Asia – \$768,508**

The project entered the final year of a four year agreement in 2019. PWS&D's implementing partner, Community World Service Asia, engaged in activities to reduce the rates of maternal, child and newborn mortality in a country where they are exceedingly high. Implemented in four districts of Laghman Province in eastern Afghanistan, the key activities included the establishment of new health facilities with delivery rooms, employing female health professionals, allowing midwives to be present at births and the provision of health services and vaccinations. As well, men were educated about the importance of access to health services for women and children and of women making their own health decisions, especially when pregnant.

In this fourth year of the project, construction of the final three of six sub-health centres (also referred to as delivery rooms) established through the project was completed and Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health services moved from their temporary residences in community-donated houses to the newly constructed facilities by the end of September. These fully functional health facilities will be a permanent fixture in areas that previously had no health care structures. In addition, 23 health posts were fully operational, delivering a package of services including: essential reproductive health services (antenatal care visits, delivery care, postnatal care visits, family planning, screening, micronutrients supplementation and tetanus vaccination to women of child bearing age); newborn care services (warming, cleaning, resuscitation and provision of Tuberculosis and Hepatitis B vaccines); and child health services (immunization, screening, early diagnosis and treatment).

Overall, in 2019 the project continued to provide improved delivery of essential health service to women of childbearing age and their children. Partners continued to coordinate with government, NGO stakeholders and community members, while community mobilization, regular support and supervision and community health education events took place. This led to an increased demand for maternal, neonatal and child health services and resulted in positive changes in health seeking behaviours. Through the improved health services provided to mothers, newborns and children, 42,698 people (20,922 women/girls and 21,776 men/boys) benefitted directly, while 4,744 people (2,377 women/girls and 2,367 men/boys) benefitted indirectly and the region has a healthier, more empowered population. This project receives a 4:1 match from the Government of Canada.

### **Bangladesh: Food Assistance for Displaced Myanmar Nationals – World Renew (CFGB) – \$250,000**

Bangladesh, one of the world's poorest and most densely populated countries, has witnessed an unprecedented influx of Rohingya refugees arriving from Myanmar. Since August 25, 2017, over 700,000 Rohingyas crossed the border, adding to the existing Rohingya population of more than 200,000 in Cox's Bazar. The majority of these refugees, 91 per cent, access food only through humanitarian actors. ICCO Cooperation, World Renew's local partner, has been working alongside the World Food Programme since 2018, initially supplying 14 food items to

4,779 households through a voucher program allowing the purchase of sugar, iodized salt, milk, onions, garlic, dried fish, egg, fresh spinach, eggplant, potato, turmeric powder, chili powder, dry red chili and green chili. In February 2019, the project scaled up its 2018 intervention to blanket coverage of camp 14 and camp 16 (11,454 households/53,580 individuals) and blocks A&B of camp 15 (1,939 households/8,698 individuals). PWS&D contributed \$50,000 towards this project, which received a 4:1 match from the Government of Canada at CFGB.

**India: Empowering Young Women in rural Bihar for Improved Maternal and Child Health – Christian Medical Association of India – \$58,560**

The Christian Medical Association of India is a charitable health care organization with a strong network of 10,000 health professionals and 340 mission hospitals/health care institutions spread across India. It promotes a just and healthy society irrespective of religion, economic status, caste and gender. It is committed to delivering affordable, ethical, relevant and compassionate care especially to the most marginalized sections of society. This project is implemented through the Duncan Hospital, located in Raxaul, Bihar. The project goal is to improve young women's reproductive and sexual health knowledge, enhance their ability to take part in important family decision-making with regards to their welfare, improve their social support networks and prevent early and forced child marriage. In six months of 2019, 666 training sessions were implemented for 352 girls ages 12 to 18 covering topics including teenage skin conditions, sexual abuse and assault and HIV and AIDS. Almost 300 training sessions were held for 169 young married women and girls, aged 13 to 22, covering post-delivery complications, postnatal care, breast feeding and family planning, as well as how to deal with physical, financial, social, mental and spiritual crises. Information on similar topics was provided to 736 pregnant in one-to-one counselling, while 336 information/training sessions were held for 213 mothers-in-law. Under the project, 2,389 doses of vaccine were administered. Training sessions explored the power imbalance between women and men and girls and boys in India.

**Nepal: Banke Leprosy and Tuberculosis Referral Clinic – International Nepal Fellowship – \$60,467**

PWS&D has been supporting the International Nepal Fellowship's (INF) health programs for many years, most recently Banke Hospital's Leprosy and Tuberculosis Clinic. In the final year of the previous program, which ended in July, there were 15,634 visits to the hospital's outpatient department, an increase of 22.3% over the previous year, of which 184 people were newly diagnosed with leprosy. A total of 141 patients were admitted to the in-patient department, where they received nursing care, voluntary muscle test/sensory tests, assistive devices, food and accommodation. A total 196 patients received footwear and other assistive devices. Additionally, leprosy outreach camps benefited 2,162 people.

In August 2019, a new phase of support began. Planned interventions include a separate self-care unit for systematic teaching of patients on leprosy care, prevention and safety. Septic surgeries will be organized for patients to prevent further disability. Female Community Health Volunteers, government health workers and health workers will be mobilized through a mobile phone app. Additionally, influential persons will be used as "ambassadors" and students will be mobilized as champions for creating awareness on leprosy in the community. In April 2019, Hospital Manager Mrs. Nirmala BM participated in PWS&D's committee meetings as a southern partner representative and shared the INF's leprosy work with churches.

**Pakistan: Umerkot Drought – Food Assistance – Community World Service Asia (CFGB) – \$736,973**

Working with Community World Service Asia (CWSA), PWS&D responded to a serious drought in Sindh Province, Pakistan. The province has received less rain than normal since 2016. Pakistan Metrological Department issued an alert in June 2018 reporting the 2018 monsoon season to be the driest in the last two decades. Crop production for wheat was reduced by 23 percent, rice by 35 per cent, cotton by 18 per cent, cluster beans, millet and sesame by 83 per cent each and pulses by 95 per cent compared to 2018. To meet the immediate and dire need for food, CWSA, with the support of PWS&D and CFGB, planned a food assistance project to support 1,600 drought affected households of Umerkot for six consecutive months during the critical hunger period, until farmers could harvest from their own fields. Village Management Committees were set up with participation from both men and women (46 per cent of members were women). Of the 1600 recipient households, 62 per cent were women-headed and the project ensured provision of sufficient food for everyone in the household. There were 11,788 beneficiaries who received distributions of wheat flour, rice, pulses, cooking oil, sugar, loose tea and a salt and match box pack, as well as millet seeds to restart production at the end of the project. PWS&D contributed \$21,305 towards this project, which received a 4:1 match from the Government of Canada at CFGB.



## **MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAM**

### **Syria**

The war in Syria, which began in 2011 as a peaceful protest, has devastated this Middle Eastern country and affected others in the region. Government forces and armed opposition groups continue to vie for control of territory throughout the country. The conflict grew even more complex with the emergence of armed forces loyal to Daesh (also known as ISIL) in the spring of 2014. The continuing, brutal violence has forced millions of residents to flee in search of safety. The United Nations reports that over 6.6 million people had been displaced within Syria, while more than 5.6 million people have fled Syria since 2011, seeking safety in countries including Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan.

#### **Syria: Internally Displaced – Food Assistance– World Renew (CFGB) – \$250,000**

World Renew is supporting Middle East Revive and Thrive and Fellowship of Middle East Evangelical Churches to implement a 12 month food assistance project which aims to provide 12,250 beneficiaries with monthly food rations. This project is being implemented in poor, underserved and primarily rural areas of As-Sweida, Damascus, Hama, Homs, Lattakia and Tartous governorates with large numbers of internally displaced people. PWS&D contributed \$50,000 to this project which received a 4:1 match from the Government of Canada at CFGB.

#### **Yemen: Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Response – Islamic Relief Canada – \$99,541**

Millions of people in Yemen are affected by the armed conflict, a looming famine and multiple outbreaks of preventable diseases. In coordination and with the support of three other denominations (United Church of Canada, the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (Anglican Church) and Canadian Lutheran World Relief), PWS&D is supporting a water, sanitation and hygiene project through Islamic Relief Yemen for affected population in Sada'a Governorate. The rapid need assessment conducted by Islamic Relief in the targeted areas in March 2019 revealed that people were drinking water from unprotected sources and there was an increase in waterborne diseases, cholera and diarrhoea. While originally planned to take place in 2019, due to challenges in coordinating with local agencies, the intervention is expected to take place in 2020. The key interventions will include the rehabilitation of a water source, including the installation of solar water system and water pumps, the formation and training of a water management committee and water quality testing. The project targets 857 households to ensure safe drinking water.

#### **Yemen: ADRA Yemen – Emergency Food Assistance in Marib – (CFGB) – \$150,000**

Yemen is experiencing a serious humanitarian crisis where the population faces constant threats to their lives and livelihoods. The ongoing conflict has led to a severe economic decline and collapsed essential services, taking an enormous toll on the population and exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. The expansion of the conflict has also led to large-scale displacement, food insecurity and high rates of malnutrition. ADRA Yemen implemented a food assistance project targeting 1,100 households (approximately 5,991 people) for six months in Harib Al Qaramish district, Marib Governorate. PWS&D contributed \$30,000 to this project which is matched 4:1 by the Government of Canada through CFGB.

## **REFUGEE MINISTRY**

This is what the Lord says: Do what is just and right... do no wrong or violence to the foreigner...  
Jeremiah 22:3, 13–17

In 2019, the interest in sponsorship through the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program remained high as congregations and presbyteries continued to receive a high number of requests to sponsor named refugees from overseas. Since the Syrian refugee crisis captured the world's attention in 2015, this number has grown each year and, unfortunately, the requests continue to exceed the annual sponsorship quota allocated to The Presbyterian Church in Canada by the government.

This year, we had an allocation for 82 people, the same number as 2018. Requests to sponsor from Presbyterian sponsorship groups, totalling over 200 people, continued to exceed the actual allocation, while some groups did not submit all of their requests knowing that they could not be accommodated within the 2019 quota.

Since 2016, when The Presbyterian Church in Canada saw a rise in requests to sponsor named refugees from its sponsoring groups, a Refugee Sponsorship Selection Task Group has worked to prioritize who would be sponsored. In 2019, the task group included volunteers Ms. Birgit Ritzhaupt and Ms. Erin Whittaker, along with PWS&D staff

Mr. Rob Shropshire. The task group gives priority to requests to sponsor those individuals who are facing urgent or immediate threats to their life or physical well-being in their country of asylum or those experiencing vulnerability based on factors such as gender, age, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, need for medical treatment or experience of torture and/or violence. Family reunification in Canada and the duration of the time the individuals have been outside of their country of origin are also considered.

The rise in sponsorship requests over the course of 2017, 2018 and 2019 was largely due to the fact that many sponsoring groups were responding to requests to sponsor relatives and friends of individuals whom they had previously sponsored. This trend is often referred to as the “echo effect”. As the desire to sponsor named individuals remained high in 2019, fewer groups participated in Blended Visa Office Referred sponsorships (sponsorships of UNHCR referred individuals whose numbers are not limited to annual quotas and whom have already been approved by Canadian visa offices overseas).

In 2019, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada implemented post-arrival assurance activities throughout the Private Sponsorship of Refugees program to ensure that standards of support to newcomers were being met. While only one case sponsored by The Presbyterian Church in Canada was reviewed, a significant amount of time and resources was spent throughout the year ensuring that sponsoring groups were aware of these standards and offering them support in the course of the sponsorship.

By the end of 2019, a total of 25 applications were submitted for 81 named individuals sponsored by 15 congregations or presbyteries. While not all of those initially selected were ready to proceed by the end of year deadline, individuals on other applications had married or had family members who were not initially made known to The Presbyterian Church in Canada bringing the final total to 81. Additionally, three Blended Visa Office Referred applications were submitted by three sponsoring groups during the year, for a total of five individuals.

In 2019, refugees originally from the Democratic Republic of the Congo were among the highest number of individuals sponsored: five applications for 15 individuals were submitted by two churches. Others sponsored during the year included individuals from Syria, Burundi, South Sudan, Egypt, Somalia, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Myanmar, Uganda and Iran.

### **Sponsorship Applications Submitted in 2019**

(81 named refugees and five Blended Visa Office Referred refugees)

<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>Applications</b>	<b>People</b>
Democratic Republic of Congo	5	15
Syria	5	12
Burundi	3	12
South Sudan	2	11
Egypt	3	5
Somalia	3	9
Afghanistan	1	8
Ethiopia	2	5
Pakistan	1	4
Myanmar/Burma	1	3
Iran	1	1
Uganda	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>86</b>

### **2019 – Arrivals of Sponsored Refugees**

During the year, 77 sponsored people arrived originally from 11 countries. This number included the five people who were sponsored through the BVOR program.

<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>Applications</b>	<b>People</b>
Syria	18	26
Eritrea	5	8
Iraq	3	6
Pakistan	3	8
Burundi	2	5
Somalia	3	3

Ethiopia	2	7
Egypt	1	4
Burma/Myanmar	3	6
Iran	3	3
Uganda	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>77</b>

In addition, there are 37 applications, representing 97 people, for which approval from the government and/or arrival is pending. This includes one application from 2016, 16 from 2017 and 20 from 2018.

The church's evolving response to refugees comes in a context where the world is experiencing the highest levels of displacement on record. In June 2019, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that there were 70.8 million forcibly displaced people worldwide. This number had increased from 68.5 million in 2018 and 65.6 million in 2017. Among them, those identified as refugees (i.e. those who had left their countries seeking safe haven) numbered 25.9 million people, over half of whom are under the age of 18. Additionally, 41.3 million people had fled their homes for similar reasons, however remained within their home countries. Referred to as internally displaced persons, these individuals rarely qualify for resettlement in countries like Canada, a special program would be needed.

More than 50 per cent of the world's refugees under the UNHCR's mandate in 2019 came from three countries – Syria (6.7 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million) and South Sudan (2.3 million). The countries hosting the greatest numbers of refugees in 2019 were Turkey (3.7 million), Pakistan (1.4 million), Uganda (1.2 million), Sudan (1.1 million) and Germany (1.1 million). Developing countries host 85 per cent of the world's displaced people. In 2019, the UNHCR reported that 37,000 people are forced to flee their homes each day due to conflict.

### **Sponsorship processing times and Advocacy**

Over the course of 2019, the sponsorship program has seen a slight decrease in processing times for applications to sponsor named refugees, however the program continues to experience complex guidelines regarding the implementation of the Quality Assurance program. In October 2019, the PWS&D Committee passed a resolution to write to the newly appointed Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Marco Mendicino, regarding these complex guidelines. The letter expressed that the guidelines do not fit well with the kind of community and family-based support provided by our sponsoring groups and that too often, the application of these guidelines is overly bureaucratic and does not prioritize the best interests of the newcomers. At the time of writing this report, no response had been received from the minister.

### **Involvement in Sponsorship of Refugees in 2019**

PWS&D is very grateful to everyone who contributed to the church's sponsorship effort's in 2019. This includes the congregations, presbyteries and other groups listed below. Over the course of the year, they developed applications, prepared to receive those they had sponsored, awaited arrival and/or assisted with the first year of settlement in Canada, helping newcomers from around the globe to build new lives.

(Note that some groups may not be listed below if their participation was under the umbrella of a presbytery, another congregation or another sponsorship agreement holder.)

### **Congregations, Presbyteries and Other Groups**

Arabic, Montreal, Quebec	Beaches, Toronto, Ontario
Brant Hills, Burlington, Ontario	Calvin, Kitchener, Ontario
Central, Cambridge, Ontario	Centennial, Calgary, Alberta
Chapel Place, Markham, Ontario	Chedoke, Hamilton, Ontario
Coquitlam, Coquitlam, British Columbia	Dayspring, Edmonton, Alberta
Doon, Kitchener, Ontario	Erindale, Mississauga, Ontario
Erskine, Hamilton, Ontario	Fallingbrook, Toronto, Ontario
First, Brockville, Ontario	First, Edmonton, Alberta
First, Regina, Saskatchewan	First, Thunder Bay, Ontario
Grace, Calgary, Alberta	Grace Orleans, Ontario
Grace (West Hill), Toronto, Ontario	Innerkip, Innerkip, Ontario
Knox, Calgary, Alberta	Knox, Kincardine, Ontario
Knox, Kouchibouguac, New Brunswick	Knox, Oakville, Ontario (with ICNA Relief Canada)

Knox, Vankleek Hill, Ontario  
 Knox, Waterloo, Ontario  
 New St. James, London, Ontario (with the  
 London Ecumenical Refugee Committee)  
 St. Andrew's, Brampton, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's, Guelph, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's, Kitchener, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's (Streetsville), Mississauga, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's, Sackville, New Brunswick  
 St. Andrew's (King St.), Toronto, Ontario  
 St. Cuthbert's, Hamilton, Ontario  
 St. James, Stouffville, Ontario  
 St. Luke's, Bathurst, New Brunswick  
 St. Paul's, Hamilton, Ontario  
 Varsity Acres, Calgary, Alberta  
 Action Réfugiés Montréal, Montréal, Quebec

Presbytery of Hamilton  
 Presbytery of Pickering (with LInC Ministry)  
 Presbytery of Winnipeg

Knox, Waterdown, Ontario  
 Knox-Calvin, Harriston, Ontario (with Minto  
 Refugee Committee)  
 Living Faith Community, Baxter, Ontario  
 North Bramalea, Brampton, Ontario  
 Rosedale, Toronto, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's, Edmonton, Alberta  
 St. Andrew's, Kingston, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's, Markham, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's, Ottawa, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's (Islington), Toronto, Ontario  
 St. Andrew's, Westville, Nova Scotia (with the WARM  
 Hearts Refugee Committee)  
 St. Mark's (Don Mills), Toronto, Ontario  
 The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal, Quebec  
 Westmount, Edmonton, Alberta

Presbytery of London  
 Presbytery of Seaway Glengarry  
 Life in Christ Ministry (LInC), Toronto, Ontario (with  
 Presbytery of Pickering and independently)

## RESOURCES, COMMUNICATION, PROMOTION AND GRANTS

In 2019, PWS&D Communications continued to focus on ensuring supporters have easy access to current information on PWS&D programs, stories and downloadable resources. Through the website, people can also sign up for PWS&D communications such as the e-newsletter.

### PWS&D Champions Network

In 2018, PWS&D launched its Champions network. PWS&D Champions are volunteers who are passionate about the work of PWS&D, stay informed about PWS&D's projects and partners, promote the work of PWS&D within their church, school or community and encourage others to get involved. PWS&D Champions are equipped with resources and information to help build relationships and raise support and funds for PWS&D. PWS&D would like every congregation from across Canada to identify a Champion.

As of early February 2020, we had recruited 100 PWS&D Champions, representing 90 churches (just over 10 per cent of The Presbyterian Church in Canada churches). While the majority of Champions are currently centred in Ontario, Champions have been identified in congregations from coast to coast. Champions participate in the Champions Connect Facebook group, monthly Champions Pray events and occasional in-person networking gatherings. They also receive resources to share with members of their community. This year, Champions were involved in the Ride for Refuge, VBS fundraisers, walkathons, special dinners and benefit concerts. If your congregation has not yet identified a Champion, please consider recommending someone who has a passion for PWS&D and a desire to use their unique gifts and interests to engage with PWS&D's work. Visit [WeRespond.ca/be-a-Champion](http://WeRespond.ca/be-a-Champion) for more information and to sign up.

### Resources for Congregations, Groups and Individuals

Every fall, a package of resources containing worship resources and promotional materials is sent to congregations and designated PWS&D Champions. The 2019 package included worship liturgies, a poster, placemat, offering envelope, annual report, bulletin cover and bulletin insert. Congregations and Champions are encouraged to use and broadly distribute materials from the fall package in order to keep constituents informed about PWS&D's programs around the world and show how donations are being used to make a difference in our global village.

Print and electronic resources continue to be used widely by congregations across the country. In 2019, 2,300 people received our electronic newsletter on a monthly basis. The most used PWS&D print resources continue to be Advent and Lenten liturgies. In addition to the seasonal liturgies, the most downloaded resources from our website include worship resources, educational materials for Sunday schools and information regarding refugee sponsorship.

PWS&D produces a variety of free resources for congregations to use during worship, for youth ministry, fundraisers and other special events. Some new resources from 2019 include:

- The Giving Tree, a joint resource with Presbyterians Sharing, which provides congregations with resources to use in conjunction with the Gifts of Change catalogue.
- *School's In*, an educational resource to accompany the Sunday School Challenge *Opening Classroom Doors*. *School's In* teaches youth about how important universal education is to achieve poverty reduction. The resource can be found at [WeRespond.ca/schools-in](http://WeRespond.ca/schools-in).
- Downloadable bulletin inserts for Canada Day, World Food Day/Thanksgiving, World AIDS Day, conflict and hunger in Yemen and the 40 year anniversary of refugee sponsorship in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

For the most current PWS&D news, information and resources, visit [WeRespond.ca](http://WeRespond.ca) or follow us on any of our social media platforms: Facebook ([facebook.com/pwsd.canada](https://facebook.com/pwsd.canada)), Instagram ([instagram.com/pwsd\\_canada](https://instagram.com/pwsd_canada)) and Twitter ([twitter.com/pwsd\\_canada](https://twitter.com/pwsd_canada)).

### **Fundraising, Emergency and Special Appeals**

In the wake of natural disasters and emergencies, PWS&D sends out special appeals to supporters. Canadian Presbyterians responded generously to both domestic and international disaster situations. An emergency appeal was issued in response to Cyclone Idai in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Presbyterian congregations responded generously, raising almost \$160,000. Emergency funds were also received in response to Hurricane Dorian, which struck the Bahamas in August 2019. Additionally, congregations and refugee sponsorship groups were asked to consider making a contribution to ensure continuing support for the refugee sponsorship program in 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.

PWS&D participated in the Ride for Refuge for the fourth time in 2019. Ride for Refuge is an annual, multi-generational cycling/walking fundraiser that takes place in locations across Canada. More than 50 participants on seven teams in five locations (Victoria, Edmonton, London, Toronto and Waterloo) raised over \$16,000 in support of PWS&D's maternal, newborn and child health programs in Afghanistan and Malawi. Those funds were matched 4:1, with financial support from Global Affairs Canada, for a total value of over \$85,000.

### **Speaking Engagements**

PWS&D staff, committee members and overseas partner staff 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 about PWS&D's development and emergency relief programs.

In 2019, PWS&D completed 83 speaking engagements at Sunday worship services, presbytery and synod meetings, WMS gatherings, youth events and workshops. Congregations and church groups interested in arranging a PWS&D speaker are encouraged to give at least two months' notice by contacting Karen Bokma ([kbokma@presbyterian.ca](mailto:kbokma@presbyterian.ca) or 1-800-619-7301 ext. 240).

Guy Smagghe (PWS&D Director) spoke in the following churches and gatherings:

- Atlantic Mission Society, Annual Meeting, Miramichi, New Brunswick
- Fallingbrook Church, Toronto, Ontario
- First Church, Penetanguishene, Ontario
- Grace Church, Calgary, Alberta
- Morningside-High Park Church, Toronto, Ontario
- St. Andrew's Church, Lethbridge, Alberta
- St. Andrew's Church, Scarborough, Ontario
- St. Paul's Church, Eckville, Alberta
- Varsity Acres Church, Calgary, Alberta
- Weston Church, Toronto, Ontario

### **ECUMENICAL COALITIONS**

#### **ACT Alliance**

Action by Churches Together (ACT Alliance) is a coalition of more than 145 churches and church-related organizations working together in over 125 countries to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor

and marginalized people regardless of their religion, politics, gender, race or nationality in keeping with the highest international codes and standards. ACT Alliance is faith-motivated, rights based, impact focused, committed to working ecumenically and inter-religiously, with the communities we seek to serve and accompany at the centre of our work. Our members respond in areas where suffering, poverty and injustice occur, regardless of location.

As the world's largest Protestant and Orthodox alliance, ACT is an expression of who we are as church and related members, what we uphold and how we work together. Churches are local. They have been an integral part of communities across the globe for millennia, bringing hope and healing often in remote and marginalized locations. They will continue to be so in the years to come. As a result, ACT is firmly rooted in the communities that it serves. ACT members are committed to leaving no one behind. Hope in action seeks to include those who are otherwise excluded or marginalized. ACT seeks to release the agency of people affected by poverty and crisis by moving them from being passive recipients to actors in their own development and relief. In doing so, ACT Alliance enables, supports, brings specialist skills, enhances voices and shares learning, enabling and accompanying communities to realize their hopes and ambitions through joint action. In promoting a just, inclusive and sustainable world, ACT Alliance implements effective humanitarian, development and advocacy work at national, regional and global levels by saving lives, providing emergency assistance and supporting sustainability, enhancing the rights of those whose rights are not realized.

In line with the ACT Alliance global strategy for 2019–2026, PWS&D will promote and enhance the following priorities: climate justice, gender justice, peace and human security, migration and displacement and emergency preparedness and humanitarian response.

As a member of the ACT North America Forum, PWS&D participated in annual meetings as well as in workshops aimed at revisiting the forum's mandate and priorities in light of the new global strategy. A working group on migrant justice was established – given the particularly dire situation happening at the southern border of the United States of America. PWS&D will be chairing the ACT North America forum in 2020–2021.

PWS&D contributed to the following ACT appeals in 2019: South Sudan (SSD191), Southern Africa Cyclone Idai (SAF191) and Rapid Response Fund (RRF191).

### **Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)**

For 50 years, the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) has united, inspired and promoted Canada's community of organizations working globally in international development and humanitarian assistance. Our sector is better because of CCIC's contributions as a convener, an advocate and a thought leader.

CCIC's Strategy 2018–2023 recognizes and responds to the challenges this landscape presents. Just as important, it acknowledges and advances the inherent opportunities: to enhance our sector's engagement with local, domestic and global actors in a spirit of inclusion and solidarity; to lead and inform our sector in maximizing our impact as development actors; and to catalyze new and dynamic approaches to programming, policy and organization. With this vision, CCIC positions itself to continue being a leader in and for Canadian civil society and a champion for a fairer, more sustainable and safer world.

CCIC plays an important role as a convener for Canadian international development agencies to have a common voice in dialogue with the government of Canada. This includes discussing the mechanisms used by the government to allocate its funds, as well as trouble shooting on challenges faced by the sector.

### **Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR)**

In 2019, the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) celebrated 41 years of leadership promoting and defending the rights of refugees and other vulnerable migrants. Over the course of the year the Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) held two consultations, one in the spring and one in the fall. These consultations were a chance for member organizations to gather and discuss current issues relating to immigration and refugees in Canada. The theme of the spring consultation held in Victoria, British Columbia was *Roots: Reconciling the Global with the Local*. There was a special focus on newcomer settlement on Indigenous land and building bridges with Indigenous People. Over 300 participants from across Canada were in attendance. The fall consultation, held in Ottawa, Ontario titled: *Sharing responsibility: Nationally, regionally, globally* explored current issues affecting refugee protection and newcomer settlement. Over 400 participants were in attendance. PWS&D was pleased to send representatives from the refugee sponsorship team to both consultations.

Over the course of the year, CCR continued to promote its vision for strengthened international human rights implementation regarding refugees and newcomers in Canada; advocating for increased family reunification; an increase in the number of government-assisted refugees resettled in Canada each year to 20,000; and called on the government to provide more basic services to refugee claimants. The CCR Youth Network continued its efforts to strengthen newcomer youth voices within the CCR's work, with opportunities for members to get involved.

### **KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives**

KAIROS is an ecumenical organization working with partners in Canada and internationally to promote and advocate for human rights, ecological justice, 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.

In 2018, Global Affairs Canada approved the funding for “Women of Courage: Women, Peace and Security” – a multi-country program responding to systemic violence against women and sustaining the work of women human rights defenders. This funding from the Government of Canada means PWS&D contributions to the project are matched 3:1. This initiative is rooted in the understanding that in situations of conflict and post-conflict women are victimized many times over, through gender inequity, poverty, racism, military conflict and sexual violence as a strategy of war. At the same time, women and women's organizations are integral actors in the defense of human rights and in processes for peace, justice and reparations. KAIROS works with partners in Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Israel/Palestine, the Philippines and South Sudan to end gender-based violence in militarized conflict and to increase the participation of women in peacebuilding processes at all levels. PWS&D is proud to support this initiative and grateful that it is being supported through GAC.

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 and The Presbyterian Church in Canada were represented on the KAIROS Steering Committee by the Rev. Laura Kavanagh (Victoria, British Columbia) and Ms. Allyson Carr (Justice Ministries). PWS&D also participates in the Partnerships and Rights Circle.

### **Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC)**

The Manitoba Council for International Cooperation (MCIC) is a coalition of more than 40 regular and affiliate member 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.

### **Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC)**

The Ontario Council for International Cooperation (OCIC) is an expanding community of Ontario-based international development and global education organizations working globally for social justice. As a Council, OCIC strives to increase the effectiveness and collective impact of all its members' efforts to promote sustainable, people-centred development in a peaceful and healthy environment. OCIC is committed to principles of fair and equitable cooperative international development and promotes public engagement that helps Canadians develop a global perspective and take action for social justice. This provincial association coordinated network and strategy meetings with PWS&D and 60 other organization members as well as a range of capacity building sessions in which PWS&D staff participated. OCIC has facilitated meetings with and about the government department responsible for international development, Global Affairs Canada. In 2019, PWS&D program staff participated in a variety of educational opportunities through OCIC. These types of events allow PWS&D to network and discuss and develop strategies and actions for the Canada's most pressing international concerns.

### **Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation (SCIC)**

The 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. The Government of Saskatchewan no longer funds SCIC; therefore PWS&D no longer receives financial support from the organization. However, we maintain membership representation and solidarity with SCIC's mission that 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."

### **World Council of Churches (WCC)**

In 2019, PWS&D contributed \$20,000 to two initiatives at the World Council of Churches (WCC).

### **Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA)**

The EAA aims to strengthen the common prophetic voice of member churches and ecumenical partners in promoting human dignity, rights and justice in economy, ecology, climate change, water, food, health and healing, children, youth and gender-related issues. The EAA focuses on two priority areas: HIV and AIDS and food security.

- The Live the Promise campaign aims to make a significant contribution to the vision of "getting to zero" – zero new infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths.
- The Food for Life campaign works to make progress in efforts towards eradicating hunger, promoting adequate nutrition and striving towards just and sustainable food systems.

### **Human Dignity and Rights**

This WCC initiative aims to provide a stronger, more consistent and more effective ecumenical voice for human dignity and rights, at national and international levels, using international human rights law and processes to strengthen public witness and action for human dignity by churches and ecumenical partners. Priority areas of concern in 2019 included racial discrimination and xenophobia, migrants' rights, freed of religion or belief, gender justice, the churches' commitments to children, the elimination of statelessness and disarmament particularly the abolition of nuclear arms.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND STEWARDSHIP**

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 2019, PWS&D received \$3,655,201 from Presbyterians to carry out work in development, relief and refugee sponsorship initiatives. PWS&D also received \$1,519,593 in bequests and planned gifts this year. The generous support of Presbyterians was then further leveraged to maximize the impact of PWS&D programs with partners, thanks to the support of government agencies as well as other denominations and their relief and development ministries.

The following provides a more comprehensive picture of PWS&D resources in 2019.

<b>Revenue in 2019</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Undesignated contributions	1,347,628	1,282,76
Transferred from Loaves and Fishes Fund	569,935	416,821
Designated contributions (excluding relief projects)	324,629	249,103
Designated relief	447,999	212,291
Government funds from		
Global Affairs Canada	953,463	1,023,66
Government of the Province of Manitoba	27,567	
Other income – interest	11,547	15,714
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,655,201</b>	<b>3,227,92</b>

### **Designated and Undesignated Contributions**

Undesignated donations are gifts that are not earmarked for specific programs. They allow 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.

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. In 2019, PWS&D also received designated funds in response to Cyclone Idai in southern Africa and Hurricane Dorian in the Caribbean.



Every donation, whether designated or undesignated, is valued and allows PWS&D to access matching funds through various ecumenical and government channels when possible. Matching sources include Global Affairs Canada, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, the Manitoba Provincial Government and other ecumenical relief and development agencies.

### Loaves and Fishes Fund

The Loaves and Fishes Fund is a legacy 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 legacy 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 to PWS&D, ensuring that funds get time to grow but that they are also fully put to work within a period of seven years.

In 2019, PWS&D received \$1,519,593 in bequests and planned gifts. The market was favourable this year and the fund's value increased by \$517,660. One seventh of the fund, \$569,935, was transferred into PWS&D's operating budget in support of its programs and operations.

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Opening fund balance	2,471,787	2,595,746
Bequests and planned gifts	1,519,593	323,036
Interest and market revaluation	517,660	(30,174)
Transfer to PWS&D	(569,935)	(416,821)
<b>Closing fund balance</b>	<b><u>3,939,095</u></b>	<b><u>2,471,787</u></b>

### Support from the Government of Canada

The Maternal, Newborn and Child Health project in Malawi and Afghanistan began in March 2016. In this agreement, PWS&D contributes just over 18 per cent of the total amount of the project – equivalent to a 4:1 match.

### EXPENDITURES IN 2019

PWS&D spent \$3,658,632 in 2019, of which \$388,689 was transferred to Canadian Foodgrains Bank. PWS&D managed \$2,513,264 in projects at Canadian Foodgrains Bank in 2019.

How our resources were used:

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Disaster, relief and rehabilitation *	568,262	414,436
Overseas development projects *	862,173	817,550
Relief and development programs support	395,028	446,804
Global Affairs Canada – PWS&D overseas program	1,284,892	1,742,468
Memberships, partnerships and coalitions	58,559	152,307
Resources, communication, promotion and grants	262,649	246,265
Administration	227,069	162,101
<b>Totals</b>	<b><u>3,658,632</u></b>	<b><u>3,981,931</u></b>

\*Note: Disaster relief and rehabilitation and overseas development project expenditures included \$388,389 of 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 work effectively 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 it works to increase and deepen the engagement of Canadians in ending global hunger.

We are thankful for our membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank which allows us to reach out with food security programming. It also allows us to multiply Presbyterian resources thanks to donations from other denominations, matching grants from CFGB and greater access to government funds.

In 2018/2019 CFGB provided over \$38 million of assistance to more than 800,000 people in 34 countries. Twenty-three million dollars was spent on food assistance and nutrition programs in humanitarian emergencies and \$13 million was spent on agriculture and livelihood working towards sustainable solutions to hunger.

CFGB is funded by donations of grains and monetary gifts, as well as by government contributions. Funds contributed by members, especially related to food assistance projects, are usually eligible for 4:1 government matching funds. Other agricultural and livelihood programs (food security) are generally matched 3:1, as long as matching funds are available. Programs can also be eligible to receive General CFGB fund matching at a 1:1 ratio.

PWS&D is 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 \$237,985 in gifts and grain donations from individuals in its CFGB account. In 2019, PWS&D managed projects at CFGB worth \$2,513,264.

### **Growing Projects that Supported PWS&D's Account at CFGB in 2019**

In 2019, 17 growing projects across Canada supported PWS&D's account at CFGB. In each case, farmers donated time and sought in-kind support from local suppliers to maximize the donations resulting from the harvested fields. The following is a list of growing projects that supported PWS&D in 2019.

<b>Growing Project</b>	<b>Location</b>
Alberta	
St Paul's Church and Community Growing Project	Eckville
Manitoba	
Boissevain, Morton, and Whitewater Growing Project	Boissevain
FOCUS Growing Project	Portage La Prairie
Ontario	
St Paul's Carluke Growing Project	Ancaster
Bluewater Growing Project	Camlachie
Inverhaugh Community Growing Project	Elmira
Harriston Community Growing Project	Harriston
Holstein Community Growing Project	Holstein
Loaves & Fishes Growing Project	Innisfil
Tricounty Growing Project	Lakeside
St Andrew's Calvin Growing Project	Listowel
Bighead River Community Growing Project	Meaford
Centreville Church Growing Project	Millbrook
Knox Church Growing Project	St. Thomas
York Region Growing Project	Stouffville
Knox Crop Share Growing Project	Teeswater
Woodstock Growing Project	Woodstock

### **Grow Hope Project**

In 2018, PWS&D launched its first Grow Hope Project. A Grow Hope Project is when urban congregations contribute to sponsor acres to grow crops in a rural location, which are then sold with the proceeds donated to CFGB to address hunger issues in the world. The Grow Hope Danforth project grew in 2019 to include the participation of Westminster and Riverdale Presbyterian churches and Church of the Resurrection (Anglican), in addition to the East End United Church Ministries in Toronto. Together they contributed \$5,000 which was used to sponsor 12.5 acres. This was done in collaboration with the York Growing Project in Stouffville (Mennonite). The proceeds from the harvest (\$6,975) were split between the respective churches' accounts proportionately (Anglican 10%; Presbyterian 20%; United 70%).

These funds may be programmed with a match of up to 4:1 which provides a potential value of \$34,875 in food assistance where most needed.

PWS&D can help urban congregations to set up a Grow Hope project in their area, with the support of CFGB regional staff.

### PROJECTS LED BY PWS&D AT CFGB IN 2019

PWS&D led projects in Agriculture & Livelihoods (AL) of a value of \$259,011. PWS&D also led food assistance (FA) and nutrition (NU) projects of a value of \$2,231,577.

### Contributions from other CFGB members to projects led by PWS&D

In 2019, CFGB members contributed their resources to PWS&D in Haiti, Nicaragua, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Members who shared their equity at CFGB with PWS&D were the United Church of Canada (UCC), Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM), Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada (EMCC), Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF), Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Canada (NCM), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Emergency Relief and Development Overseas (ERDO) and the Salvation Army (SA). PWS&D is grateful to these member agencies at CFGB for generously contributing to these initiatives.

Country	Partner/Project	PWS&D Fund \$	CFGB Funds \$	CFGB Match \$	Total Financing \$
<b>Africa</b>					
Malawi	Strengthening Production and Marketing Capacity (CARD) – AL	22,055		66,164	88,218
Malawi	Mpata Drought Mitigation Project (Livingstonia)– AL	39,363		39,363	78,727
Malawi	Cyclone Idai Flood Response (CARD) – HC* – FA	51,850		396,289	448,138
Malawi	Cyclone Idai Flood Response, Mulanje District Phase 2 (CARD) – FA	35,629		142,517	178,146
<b>Africa Sub-total</b>		<b>148,897</b>		<b>644,332</b>	<b>793,229</b>
<b>Asia</b>					
Afghanistan	Drought Response in Bamyan (CWSA) – FA	6,111	24,752	277,763	308,626
Pakistan	Drought Response in Umerkot (CWSA) – FA	21,446		715,527	736,973
<b>Asia Sub-total</b>		<b>27,557</b>	<b>24,752</b>	<b>993,290</b>	<b>1,045,599</b>
<b>Americas</b>					
Haiti	Child Nutrition (PIH) – NU	85,018		474,677	559,694
Nicaragua	Food/Environmental Security (CEPAD) – AL	1,443		4,364	5,807
Guatemala	Comiteca Food Security (AMMID) – AL	518	21,047	64,694	86,258
<b>Americas Sub-total</b>		<b>86,978</b>	<b>21,047</b>	<b>543,735</b>	<b>651,760</b>
<b>Others</b>	PWS&D Program Support **	22,676			22,676
<b>Total</b>		<b>286,108</b>	<b>45,799</b>	<b>2,181,357</b>	<b>2,513,264</b>

Matches calculated by using commitment form percentages. These percentages are then applied to the program actual expenditure. In cases where there are two years of programing, the later year is used to calculate expenditure.

AL: Agriculture and Livelihoods; FA: Food Assistance; NU: Nutrition

\* Funds for the initial Cyclone Idai food assistance project were matched with funds from the Humanitarian Coalition.

\*\* 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. In 2019, \$22,676 was provided to PWS&D by CFGB to offset some of its salary costs.

### PWS&D Contributions to Other CFGB Members' Projects

In 2019, PWS&D committed funds, providing equity from its account to support other CFGB members with food assistance and food security projects in the following countries: Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Haiti, Bangladesh and Cambodia. This provided a unique opportunity to

contribute resources to places where PWS&D does not have direct partnerships and to get those resources multiplied in the process:

Country	Partner/Project	PWS&D Funds \$	CFGB Match \$	Total Value of PWS&D Funds \$
<b>Africa</b>				
Burundi	MCCC – Food Security – AL	25,000	75,000	100,000
DR Congo	MCCC – Food Security – DR of Congo – AL	12,306	36,918	49,224
Malawi	MCCC – Conservation Agriculture Capacity Bldg – AL	3,600	3,600	7,200
Kenya	World Renew – Scaling Up Conservation Agriculture – AL	250	750	1,000
Somalia	D&P – Somalia Nutrition Response – NU	20,000	80,000	100,000
South	Sudan Tearfund – Food Assistance Aweil East County *	15,000	45,000	60,000
Zimbabwe	MCCC – Food Assistance – El Niño Drought Binga – FA*	21,000	63,000	84,000
<b>Africa Sub-total</b>		<b>97,156</b>	<b>304,268</b>	<b>401,424</b>
<b>Middle East</b>				
Syria	World Renew – Assistance Internally Displaced – FA	50,000	200,000	250,000
<b>Middle East Sub-Total</b>		<b>50,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>
<b>Asia</b>				
Bangladesh	World Renew – Rohingya Refugee in Cox's Bazar – FA	50,000	200,000	250,000
Yemen	ADRA – Food Assistance Project –	30,000	120,000	150,000
<b>Asia Sub-total</b>		<b>80,000</b>	<b>320,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>Latin America</b>				
Haiti	MCCC – Food Security – Agroecology & Coop AL	21,985	65,625	87,500
Haiti	MCCC – Konbit Peyizan – Integrated Agroforestry – AL	25,000	25,000	50,000
<b>Latin America Sub-total</b>		<b>46,875</b>	<b>90,625</b>	<b>137,500</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>274,031</b>	<b>914,893</b>	<b>1,188,924</b>

\* These amounts were initially allocated to South Sudan Project #2900–21. In January 2020, the commitment was revised upon request by the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund who had already stated their intention to cover the full equity amount to this project with the Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

AL: Agriculture and Livelihoods; FA: Food Assistance; NU: Nutrition

## GOVERNANCE AND PWS&D COMMITTEE

### Code of Conduct on Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

In the fall of 2019, the PWS&D Committee adopted the *Code of Conduct for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*, which provides a framework to protect populations with which PWS&D and its partners work from all forms of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual harassment. It is the policy of PWS&D that sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment of any kind by committee members, staff, volunteers, interns, consultants or partners will not be tolerated. Because of the serious consequences of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual harassment, PWS&D will make every effort to ensure that they do not occur within its jurisdiction. When complaints of sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or sexual harassment arise, PWS&D will respond with seriousness, sensitivity and concern for all involved and, in line with this policy, will recognize the necessity of dealing with both complainant and complaine in a fair and just manner. The policy explicitly invokes The Presbyterian Church in Canada's *Policy dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment and Leading with Care: A Policy for Ensuring a Climate of Safety for Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults in The Presbyterian Church in Canada*, as they apply to all PWS&D Committee members, employees (as employees of The Presbyterian Church in Canada), consultants, volunteers and interns. The policy also requires all PWS&D partners to have similar policies in place or to abide by PWS&D's policy.

## **PWS&D Committee**

PWS&D is governed by a standing committee of the Life and Mission Agency that approves the annual budget, develops policies and priorities and ensures the proper functioning of PWS&D in the pursuit of its mission and vision. Members of the committee 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 six members. The Executive Committee 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 committee bid farewell to Mr. Steve McInnis (Woodstock, Ontario) and Ms. Erin Whittaker (Winnipeg, Manitoba), with gratitude for their years of service on the committee. They were replaced by the Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee (Goderich, Ontario) and the Rev. Laura Hargrove (Brandon, Manitoba) who were welcomed to the committee.

## **Current Canadian members of the PWS&D Committee**

(\*member of the Executive): the Rev. John Bannerman (London, Ontario), the Rev. Amanda Henderson-Bolton\* (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island), the Rev. Ian Fraser\* (Pointe-Claire, Quebec), the Rev. Laura Hargrove (Brandon, Manitoba), the Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee (Goderich, Ontario), Ms. Andrea Perrett\* (Vancouver, British Columbia), Mr. Rob Robertson\* (convener – Ottawa, Ontario), Ms. Susan Viegas (Toronto, Ontario), Ms. Donna Wilkinson (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan), Mr. Geoff Zakaib\* (Calgary, Alberta).

## **Southern partners**

Mr. Arthur Lichenya (Churches Action in Relief and Development, Malawi); Ms. Nirmala Kumari (International Nepal Fellowship, Nepal).

## **Ex-officio Members**

Moderator of the 145th General Assembly, the Rev. Amanda Currie; Associate Secretary of Justice Ministries, Dr. Allyson Carr; General Secretary of the Life and Mission Agency, the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald; the Associate Secretary for Stewardship and Planned Giving, Ms. Karen Plater; Women's Missionary Society, Ms. Debbie Kallender; Atlantic Mission Society, Ms. Jean Williams; Associate Secretary for International Ministries, the Rev. Dr. Glynis Williams\*; Chief Financial Officer and PWS&D Treasurer, Mr. Oliver Ng.

**Recommendation No. 23** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 24** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 25** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 26** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 27** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 28** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

## **STEWARDSHIP AND PLANNED GIVING**

Staff	Associate Secretary:	Ms. Karen Plater
	Gifts & Database Administrator:	Ms. Maggie Leung
	Development Manager:	Mr. Jim MacDonald
	Program Coordinator, Education:	Ms. Heather Chappell

## **INTRODUCTION**

Fundraising is a very rich and beautiful activity. It is a confident, joyful and hope-filled expression of ministry. In ministering to each other, each from the riches that he or she possesses, we work together for the full coming of God's Kingdom. (Henri J.M. Nouwen)

God calls us to steward the resources we've been given and generously live our lives for others. Much of the joy of Christian life comes from discovering that through our generosity we can connect with God, creation and the broader world.

Knowing that it is more pleasing to give than receive, each of us has been given gifts from God to share with others: time, talent and/or treasure. Helping congregations try new approaches to stewardship and planned giving is a shared journey – and the Stewardship and Planned Giving staff are happy to act as guides.

We continue to help congregations find ways to nurture a culture of generosity using a variety of tools and resources. Some of the strategies we encourage include:

- Shifting language to include talking about gratitude, generosity and stewardship.
- Recognizing the importance of saying thank you.
- Sharing goals, dreams and a vision for what can be accomplished through gifts.
- Finding ways to make it easy for people to give.
- Helping people discover the benefits and joy of planned gifts.

Learn how this is being done in the following sections of this report:

- Section 1: Cultivating visionary leadership
- Section 2: Providing empowering resources
- Section 3: Developing relational connections
- Section 4: Encouraging generosity
- Section 5: Leaving a legacy through planned gifts
- Section 6: Advisory Committee

## **CULTIVATING VISIONARY LEADERSHIP**

### **Coaching and Mentoring**

A wide variety of coaching, mentoring and supportive opportunities were provided to help inspire and equip church leaders within congregations, presbyteries, specialized ministries, committees and departments across the denomination to lead with vision.

- We facilitated five one-hour long stewardship webinars ([presbyterian.ca/webinars](http://presbyterian.ca/webinars)) which focused on setting up legacy funds and endowments, digital giving, how to grow a culture of generosity, stewardship materials for congregations and wills. More webinars are in the works and previous webinars can be watched online. ([presbyterian.ca/webinars/previous-webinars](http://presbyterian.ca/webinars/previous-webinars))
- After more than 20 years, we held our final Stewards by Design conference. It was another successful conference with 86 participants from 19 congregations and 14 leaders and mentors. In the future, the important work of Stewards by Design will be carried on by the Transform conference. The conference has had a lasting impact on congregations who have attended over the years. The Rev. Dr. Karen Dimock, who attended Stewards by Design with a team from St. Andrew's, Ottawa, in 2016, shared, "Over the last three years we have improved our reporting, our thanking, our grassroots involvement and our opportunities to give. Our offering has increased yearly and I am looking very forward to beginning to dream now in a way that we found difficult with a large and ongoing deficit. Inspired by Dr. Callahan and other mentors we met through Stewards by Design we realize how important the link between generosity and mission is. We know we are still on a journey but we are so encouraged by the support we have received." Lessons from Stewards by Design are being incorporated into the next Transform conference (November 2020) which is hosted jointly with Canadian Ministries. This conference is designed to help congregations re-envision the way they do ministry and learn about supportive resources as we continue to find ways to share the gospel message in our communities in practical and real ways.
- Congregational and presbytery presentations, consultations and workshops were conducted by staff in the areas of annual, major and legacy giving.

## **PROVIDING EMPOWERING RESOURCES**

Generous congregations don't just look at stewardship once a year – they integrate it into worship all year long. The following resources help congregations develop strong wholistic stewardship programs.

## **Generosity365**

Free access to the Ecumenical Stewardship Centre's (ESC) comprehensive stewardship resource *Generosity365* was provided for congregations. This digital toolkit helps congregations dive deeper into stewardship and generosity. It includes:

- electronic issues of the Giving magazine,
- a stewardship program with resources for preaching, worship, small groups and children as well as stewardship campaign materials – including a calendar and sample letters,
- previous ESC stewardship program materials and videos,
- discounts to ESC events.

## **Stewardship Moments**

Stewardship Moments are available online at [presbyterian.ca/resources/mission-moments](http://presbyterian.ca/resources/mission-moments) in text and jpg formats. They are posted weekly on The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Facebook page.

## **Digital Giving**

With the digitization of financial transactions, cashless living is becoming a reality for more and more Canadians. There are a number of ways congregations can explore digital giving.

## **Online and Terminals**

We offered the costs, features and benefits of fundraising services that make online donation easy: Tithe.ly, CanadaHelps and iATSPayments; explored church marketing and management services: Micharity, PushPay and PlanningCenter; and looked at in-church giving with Square Reader and other payment companies that offer point-of-sale terminals. We are working with congregations one-on-one to help them determine which solution might work best for their needs.

## **Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR)**

It is an economical way for congregations to receive gifts. It only costs \$0.50/donor/month, with a monthly cap of \$45 for a congregation. Congregations and givers using PAR have been growing each year. There are currently 386 congregations with 6,985 households participating.

## **Presbyterians Sharing Resources**

Presbyterians Sharing Resources help congregations connect their members to the mission and ministry they support through their gifts to Presbyterians Sharing ([presbyterian.ca/sharing](http://presbyterian.ca/sharing)).

- To show the impact gifts to Presbyterians Sharing are having, congregations can use the brochure, general bulletin insert (available in English, Korean and French), poster, thermometer chart and annual report cover.
- Stories of Mission includes eight stories and biblical reflections on ministries supported by Presbyterians Sharing and two on PWS&D projects. This resource can be the basis for a sermon illustration series or can be used for more in-depth moments for mission. It can also provide material for Bible studies or WMS/AMS groups.
- Every week Mission Moments includes a reflection on a ministry supported by Presbyterians Sharing or PWS&D. These brief stories can be printed in bulletins, projected on a screen or used as a moment for mission. A printed booklet is sent to congregations through the PCPak and photos, text and PowerPoint versions are available for download.
- The Presbyterians Sharing Sunday worship resource was written by the Rev. Amanda Henderson-Bolton of St. James Church in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. It includes all elements for leading a service – sermon, prayers, children's story – so it can be led by clergy and lay leaders alike.
- Two Presbyterians Sharing videos were prepared, one for General Assembly and one as a year-end thank you.
- The *Presbyterian Connection* newspaper includes ads and articles highlighting the impact of Presbyterians Sharing.

### **Legacy/Planned Giving Resources**

Planned gifts are an excellent way for people to leave a legacy for the church. While many choose to leave a legacy through their estate, more and more are discovering ways to use planned gifts while they are living. The department provides resources to congregations to help them encourage legacy and planned gifts.

- Legacy Sunday is an excellent time to explore ways of leaving a legacy gift to the church. The Legacy Sunday worship resource was written by the Rev. Joan Masterton of St. James Church in Stouffville, Ontario. It includes all elements for leading a service – sermon, prayers, children's story – so it can be led by clergy and lay leaders alike.
- Five bulletin inserts and information sheets outline the most common ways of giving a planned gift: publicly traded securities, gift annuities, charitable bequests, life insurance and life beneficiary gifts.
- Setting up Legacy Funds and Endowments is a downloadable workbook designed to help congregations develop and/or review endowment and legacy giving policies. With model policies from real congregations, the workbook is a step-by-step guide that can be adapted and tailored for a congregation's context.
- The Will booklet helps individuals to think about, plan, make decisions and take action to ensure that their wishes are realized after they die. The booklet guides users through the process of collecting information needed by their lawyer and executor.

### **DEVELOPING RELATIONAL CONNECTIONS**

We continued to provide opportunities for people to engage with our mission partners in Canada and around the world. Mission trips are designed to build upon the ongoing mission work supported through Presbyterians Sharing and Presbyterian World Service & Development. Both the participants and the partners grow in mission together.

- In May 2019 a Youth in Mission group witnessed the comprehensive work our partners are doing to build better lives for communities in Guatemala through PWS&D and Presbyterians Sharing. Participant Theresa Nettleton of Armour Heights Church in Toronto, shared, "The fact that people in Guatemala have gone through such turmoil but still have hope for a brighter future really helped me appreciate life a lot more."
- The Rev. Dr. Dorcas Gordon and the Rev. Noel Gordon led a trip to Israel and Palestine in May 2019, visiting our mission partners, witnessing the impact of the current situation on Christians in the region and exploring initiatives to build peace in the region. Participant Jim Evans of St. Giles Church in Calgary, shared, "I saw God at work in the people. Despite all they've been through and go through every day, they maintain their faith, their hope and their commitment to non-violence."
- Mr. David Phillips led a successful Healing and Reconciliation mission trip in June 2019. The Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie was the theological reflector and co-leader. The Rev. Joan Masterton, a trip participant, shared, "The Healing and Reconciliation mission trip reaffirmed my faith every day; I hope to be a better minister because of it. Living the reality is so much better than simply talking about it."
- A group of women visited The Presbyterian Church in Canada-supported work in Taiwan in November 2019. The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan is one of our oldest partners, dating back to 1872. The participants met Indigenous church leaders and Bible translators accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Paul McLean, visited Yu-Shan Theological College and Seminary and learned about the medical and educational legacies of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

### **ENCOURAGING GENEROSITY**

The Stewardship & Planned Giving department works to encourage generosity in all areas of the church, including national ministry, congregations and specialized ministries. One-on-one consultations help donors express their hope as they help shape the future for their congregations and church.

### **Presbyterians Sharing**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is grateful for the \$8,389,514 which came from congregations, individuals, Women's Missionary Society, Atlantic Mission Society, foundations and others for Presbyterians Sharing in 2019. These gifts are equipping congregations, beginning new faith communities, supporting international partners, empowering youth, encouraging new ministers and theological students, supporting Indigenous ministries, speaking on issues of justice – and so much more.



For 2020 Presbyterians Sharing the planned budget is \$9,078,093 (additional funds from rent, other income, etc.). Note, this does not include gifts to the Presbyterian World Service & Development. The distribution of the funds is as follows.

- Empowering resources: 40% helps equip and support congregations. Grants, conferences, webinars, printed and digital resources, coaching and mentoring support innovative mission and ministry and regional initiatives across Canada. Hosting is provided for over 330 websites for congregations, camps, presbyteries, synods and specialized ministries. Congregations are equipped in evangelism, Christian education, worship, stewardship, communications, youth ministry, justice work and more.
- Leadership development: 16% supports leadership development. Events like Canada Youth and the Transform conference bring people together to reflect, learn and build their skills. Three theological colleges equip ministers to serve our congregations. Together we discern, prepare and support leaders – lay, youth, young adults and clergy – for faithful and vibrant ministry and identify tools for effective ministry through research and grassroots consultation. Guidance and support are provided to presbyteries as they help candidates discern their call to ministry.
- International Ministries: 14% supports our witness in the world through mission staff, short-term volunteers and grants. We support and accompany partners in leadership development, Bible translation, Christian education, theological education and evangelism. Working through mission partners ensures that our programs are culturally relevant.
- Indigenous ministries: 10% supports The Presbyterian Church in Canada's efforts of confession, truth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities. Nine ministries operate in, by and for Indigenous communities in Canada. Ministers, leaders and representatives from the National Indigenous Ministry Council, providing mutual support, education, renewal and sharing.
- Inner-city and refugee ministries: 2% of Presbyterians Sharing supports ministries in Canada which bring hope and transformation to vulnerable individuals and communities, including sex workers, refugees and marginalized people.
- Finance and Administration: 9% goes towards finance and program support and 1% supports promotion and fundraising. Communication is key to helping people see the impact of their gifts to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Costs that congregations might otherwise have to bear are included in this percentage.
- Church Governance: 6% supports General Assembly and the governance structures of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- Justice Ministry: 2% supports the biblical call to seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God. Collaborating with ecumenical and interfaith partners, we advocate for environmental care, peace and human rights. We help people access basic needs and restore dignity. We walk with Indigenous peoples on a journey toward healing and reconciliation.



### Support from Congregations

The largest portion of Presbyterians Sharing comes from congregations. The General Assembly recommends that congregations support Presbyterians Sharing at or above 10% of their dollar base and they report an accepted allocation each year. In 2019 congregations gave \$6,131,802.

### **Comparing 2019 gifts to 2018**

Presbyterians Sharing has seen a decline in income from congregations over the years. There are several reasons for this, including declining number of congregations, smaller congregations and increasing local expenses. The commitment of Presbyterians to doing mission and ministry together, expressed through their gifts, is impressive. In 2019 58% of congregations were able to maintain or increase their gifts to Presbyterians Sharing while 42% saw declines in their gifts.

Out of 825 active congregations:

- 281 congregations (34%) gave MORE (\$322,353 more)
- 197 congregations (24%) gave the SAME
- 347 congregations (42%) gave LESS (\$546,137 less)

Note: Eight congregations which were inactive at the end of 2019 gave \$35,441.69.

### **Gifts of Change**

The 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. There is a wide variety of projects, including food security, maternal health, new worshipping communities in Canada, ministry with Indigenous peoples, Bible translation in Taiwan and prison ministry in Malawi. The catalogue can be ordered free-of-charge to distribute to congregational members. Additional projects can be found at [presbyterian.ca/donate](http://presbyterian.ca/donate).

### **Giving Tree Advent Project**

This year the Giving Tree Advent Project was launched as a tangible way to celebrate the gifts that congregations are sharing at Christmas. Congregations were encouraged to hang ornaments on a tree which reflect gifts to Gifts of Change, PWS&D and Presbyterians Sharing. The response was overwhelming and it was encouraging to see some of the creative ideas implemented by congregations across Canada. We are planning to promote the program again in 2020.

### **Planned Gifts**

Planned gifts usually come from a person's accumulated assets and take advantage of tax benefits that accompany them. The Presbyterian Church in Canada facilitates planned gifts to its ministries and congregations. Find out more at [presbyterian.ca/plannedgiving/ways-to-give](http://presbyterian.ca/plannedgiving/ways-to-give).

### **Publicly Traded Securities**

When individuals sell a stock privately, they owe tax on 50% of the capital gains. However, when the securities are gifted to a charity, the donor receives a tax receipt for the full market value of the securities on the day they are received by the charity which can be used to eliminate the capital gains tax on the gift. The Presbyterian Church in Canada facilitates gifts of securities to any Presbyterian congregation or ministry. In 2019, 83 Presbyterians donated gifts of securities totaling \$1,161,763. 89% (\$1,035,302) was designated to congregations and the rest to specialized ministries, PWS&D, Presbyterians Sharing and other Gifts of Change projects.

### **Charitable Bequests**

In 2019, The Presbyterian Church in Canada received \$1,569,466.19 in charitable bequests. We received gifts from or notifications of bequests from the estates of the following people: Mr. William Alexander, Ms. Alexandra Barker, Ms. George Breckenridge, Mr. George Morris Calder, Ms. Tamiko Corbett, Mr. Gerald Dikkeboom, Ms. Lambertha Christine Dooce, Ms. Lillian Dunbar, Ms. Joanne Sylvia Dunlop, Mr. James Johnston Edmiston, Ms. Gladys Jean Elliott, Mr. John Charles Ferrier, Ms. Jean Paterson Greig, Ms. Phyllis Patricia Jennings, Ms. Nina Marguerite Lymburner, Mr. Charles MacKay, Ms. Mary Isabella McCaffrey, Mr. George McCloy, Mr. John Alexander McPhail, Ms. Marjorie Elaine Mahood, Ms. Marjorie Middleton, Ms. Beverley Joan Moorhead, Ms. Elspeth Newall, Mr. Robert Pollock, Ms. Shirley Carol Stephen, Ms. Catherine Campbell Thomson, Mr. Edward W. J. Thornton, Ms. Donna Margaret Wells and Ms. Eileen Wiegand.

We thank God for the generosity and foresight of these people and are grateful for the legacy of faith and hope they have share with the church.

## **Gift Annuities**

Gift annuities are a way that Canadians 60 years of age and older can make a gift to fund the ministries of the church and in return receive a guaranteed annual income for life, the majority or all of that income tax-free. There are presently 93 annuitants (including single annuities and couples with joint annuities) who have acquired 121 gift annuities with contributions of more than \$2.6 million designated for various ministries within The Presbyterian Church in Canada including congregations, specialized ministries, PWS&D, Presbyterians Sharing, the theological colleges, the Mission Priority Funds and camps.

## **Life Insurance**

There are three ways gifts of life insurance can benefit the church and provide tax relief for the donor. The gift of a current life insurance policy can provide the church with a substantial gift upon the death of the donor, while the heirs benefit from a substantial tax credit. Or 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. There are 22 life insurance policies for various ministries within The Presbyterian Church in Canada including PWS&D, Presbyterians Sharing and the Mission Priority Funds.

## **The Presbyterian Church in Canada Legacy Funds**

There are over 30 different funds designed to support designated areas of ministry and mission in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. More information is available at [presbyterian.ca/mission-priority-funds](http://presbyterian.ca/mission-priority-funds) and [presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/funds](http://presbyterian.ca/canadian-ministries/funds). Below is a selection of the legacy funds.

- Presbyterians Sharing Legacy Fund supports the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for generations to come.
- PWS&D Loaves & Fishes Fund improves the lives of people living in poverty around the world by providing PWS&D's long-term, sustainable programs with consistent, dedicated support over a seven-year period.
- Priorities for Mission Fund allocates 10% of its total value each year into one or more of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Mission Priority Funds (MPF).
- 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. (MPF)
- 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. (MPF)
- 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. (MPF)
- Living Links Missionary Endowment Fund ensures ongoing support for long-term international mission staff living and working with our partner churches and agencies around the world. (MPF)
- Mission Connections Fund facilitates short-term exposure tours and volunteer mission experiences with our international mission partners. (MPF)
- Healing & Reconciliation – The Journey Continues Fund supports local initiatives for Presbyterians to build stronger relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada so that the journey of healing and reconciliation continues. (MPF)
- Indigenous Ministries Fund supports The Presbyterian Church in Canada's ongoing, long-term ministries with and for Indigenous people.
- Avondbloem Experimental Fund provides grants to support experimental projects which will help to spread the message of Jesus Christ and further the Kingdom of God. (MPF)
- Bursary for Lay Training provides financial assistance for lay people of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to receive short-term training, instruction and enrichment for Christian service.
- Worship and Liturgy Fund encourages and assists people committed to improving their knowledge and skills as leaders in worship within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.
- Rural and Remote Ministry Grant encourages students to consider rural and remote areas for ministry upon graduation and helps congregations access consistent leadership.
- Fund for Ministerial Assistance provides financial support for ministers and diaconal workers of The Presbyterian Church in Canada who are at or near minimum stipend, as set by the General Assembly.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Stewards by Design Advisory Committee**

The Rev. Sean Astop (St. Andrew's-Chalmers, Uxbridge, Ontario), the Rev. Dr. Karen Dimock (St. Andrew's, Ottawa, Ontario), Mrs. Doris Eaglesham (Chippawa, Niagara Falls, Ontario), the Rev. Ken MacQuarrie (convener, St. Andrew's, Thorold, Ontario), the Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie (St. Mark's Orillia, Ontario), Mr. John Scace (Knox, Waterloo, Ontario), the Rev. Jennifer Sokolowsky (Erindale, Mississauga, Ontario).

## **OVERTURE RESPONSES**

### **OVERTURE NO. 9, 2019 (A&P 2019, p. 514–15)**

#### **Re: Ordination to and funding for non-traditional ministries**

### **OVERTURE NO. 7, 2020 (see Referred Overtures, p. 3)**

#### **Re: Ordination guidelines for part-time and tentmaking ministries**

An overture from the Presbytery of Niagara was referred to the Life and Mission Agency in consultation with the Committee on Church Doctrine. A second overture from the Presbytery of Huron-Perth was also referred to the Life and Mission Agency. This response will consider them together as both overtures raise similar matters.

The prayer of the overture from the Presbytery of Niagara asks for two things: first, to explore an alternative path to ordination for those seeking a call to non-traditional ministries; and second, to explore different ways of funding non-traditional ministries. The response will consider each part in turn.

### **Our Understanding of Ordination and its Implications for Non-Traditional Ministry Contexts**

The question of whether presbyteries can ordain certified candidates to non-traditional ministries has been considered by Assembly before. In 2008 the General Assembly approved a major document, “The Meaning of Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacraments” (A&P 2008, p. 353–65), setting out a theology of ordination to ministry of Word and Sacraments and appropriate contexts for ordination including ordination to specialized ministries such as institutional chaplaincies or synod camp directors. A ministry position would have to meet the following criteria for it to be a valid context for ordination:

- The ministry position would require the full exercise of the ministry of Word and Sacraments involving duties and responsibilities only an ordained minister of Word and Sacraments could perform for example, regular preaching, teaching, administration of the sacraments and pastoral care. If the duties and responsibilities of the position could be carried out by trained lay people, there would be no basis for ordination.
- The ministry position, which must be at least half-time (Book of Forms 176.1), could be recognized by the presbytery as a valid context for service such that once ordained, the minister's name could appear on the constituent roll of the presbytery. If the ministry position could not be regarded as part of the presbytery's ministry, there would be no basis for ordination.
- The ministry position would be recognized by the presbytery as a genuine call of the wider church to a specific ministry. If the ministry position could not be recognized as such through our call process as either a congregational call or a Life and Mission Agency appointment, there would be no basis for ordination.
- The ministry position would be recognized by the presbytery as a gospel call to the candidate, without which there would be no basis for ordination.
- The ministry position would allow the presbytery to exercise fully its responsibility for the care and oversight of the candidate, who, if ordained, would be accountable to the presbytery in the exercise of their ministry while serving or living within its bounds. If there were no clear lines of presbytery oversight for the candidate and the ministry and no clear lines of accountability to presbytery for the candidate and the ministry, there would be no basis for ordination.
- Another factor would be the financial requirement that any ministry position must meet the minimum stipend and allowances as set by the General Assembly. Any ministry lacking these key components would not qualify as a proper context for ordination.

The 2008 General Assembly also set out a two-step process by which specialized ministries would be evaluated to determine if they were valid contexts for ordination. In the first step, the presbytery and the Committee on Education and Reception “shall inquire diligently” as to whether the ministry position to which a certified candidate seeks ordination “involves full exercise of the ministry of Word and Sacraments”. The second step mandated “that the presbytery, to which as corporate bishop pertains the power to ordain, be urged to act responsibly in this matter of

ordination, ensuring that all criteria for ordination have been met. While presbytery decisions are normally approved by a simple majority vote, they are encouraged to strive for a high degree of consensus in these cases.” (A&P 2008, p. 360, 362) It should be noted the two-step process as approved by the 2008 General Assembly was limited to two specific ministry positions, institutional chaplaincy and synod camp director. So while in theory our current understanding of ordination provides a sturdy framework for envisioning and creating new, cutting-edge, non-traditional ministries which would be valid ordination contexts, in practice our process is applicable to only two specialized ministry positions.

Overture No. 9, 2019 from the Presbytery of Niagara, requests the development of an alternative path to ordination for those seeking calls to non-traditional ministries. Currently, certified candidates for ministry can be ordained only if they receive a call to a congregation or a Life and Mission Agency appointment or to an institutional chaplaincy or synod camp director position which meets the criteria for ordination. Our existing polity makes no provision for presbyteries to appoint candidates directly to non-traditional ministry positions within their bounds to which candidates could then be ordained. One possible option would be for presbyteries to be given authority to make such direct appointments. Another route would be to develop a process by which presbyteries could request the Life and Mission Agency to make appointments to non-traditional ministries within their bounds to which candidates could be ordained. Yet another possibility would be to use the two-step process approved by the 2008 General Assembly as the basis for developing a general process for ordaining certified candidates to non-traditional ministry positions. There may be other options but the matter would require study by the Life and Mission Agency and the Clerks of Assembly, possibly leading to the development of enabling legislation which would need approval under the Barrier Act.

Our polity also requires a ministry position to be at least half-time to qualify as a valid context for ordination. The overture from the Presbytery of Huron-Perth (Overture No. 7, 2020) suggests the percentage requirement for ministry is inconsistent with our theology of call and ordination and an impediment to developing “tent-maker” ministries (Acts 18:1–3) that would permit an ordained minister to serve part-time while receiving income from other employment.

Ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments in The Presbyterian Church in Canada confers significant rights, privileges and responsibilities upon a certified candidate. In our polity an ordained minister becomes a member of presbytery with an expectation of full participation in the courts of the church. This includes the right to make and second motions, to vote, to dissent, to attend General Assembly as a commissioner, to have a part in administering discipline and to participate in the ordination of other certified candidates with the laying on of hands. Ordination also opens the door to seek a subsequent call or appointment to any ministry position within the denomination for a minister of Word and Sacraments. These rights, privileges and responsibilities are properly accorded where there is a significant time commitment to a call, which the church has understood to be at least half-time. Additionally, eligibility for some provisions in stipend and allowances provided to ordained ministers is based on a minimum half-time position. For example ordained ministers must work at least 20 hours a week in order to receive coverage under the Health and Dental Insurance Plan. For these reasons the “percentage of ministry and required remuneration” for ordination to a ministry position requested in the prayer of the overture should continue to be a minimum 50% as previously established by General Assembly.

### **Funding for Non-traditional Ministries**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has a long tradition of helping to support non-traditional ministries. In an effort to meet the funding needs of non-traditional ministries several grants and funds are made available to the church:

- Supporting Ministries Grants (Specialized Ministries Stream and New Congregational Development Stream)
- The New and Renewed Ministry Fund – New Ministries Stream
- Avondbloem Experimental Fund

While there is wisdom in ensuring a multitude of funding opportunities for non-traditional ministries, it is also important that non-traditional ministries do not underestimate their ability to raise funds from the gathered community and from supportive individuals and congregations that feel connected to their mission. It is not recommended that a non-traditional ministry rely solely on denominational grants for their financial sustainability. Healthy and sustainable ministries establish a variety of funding streams.

It is recommended that non-traditional ministries seeking financial support through denominational grants and their presbyteries enter into conversation with Canadian Ministries well before the grant application deadlines to institute a financial plan and to identify multiple sources of funding.

The above is offered as an interim response to the overtures on the understanding that the Life and Mission Agency, in consultation with the Clerks of Assembly, will explore options by which certified candidates for ministry might be appointed to non-traditional ministry positions which would qualify as valid contexts for ordination and recommend any changes to the 2021 General Assembly.

**Recommendation No. 29** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**OVERTURE NO. 15, 2019** (A&P, 2019, p. 517)

**Re: Review Committee on Education and Reception Guidelines**

This overture from the Presbytery of Temiskaming was referred to the Life and Mission Agency for response. It requests a review of the Committee on Education and Reception's guidelines for receiving ministers and candidates for ordination from other Christian denominations so that the guidelines are more in harmony with the current needs of our denomination.

The role of the Committee on Education and Reception is to equip the General Assembly for its decisions concerning the applications of individuals seeking to enter the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada by non-standard pathways.

The standard pathway requires completion of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's candidacy process of preparation and discernment. Through this process, Presbyterian Church in Canada members engage with the church at different levels in vocational discernment, completing a university undergraduate degree followed by an M.Div. degree with diploma from a Presbyterian Church in Canada theological college and eventually accepting a called ministry position and being ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacraments or designated to the Order of Diaconal Ministries by a Presbyterian Church in Canada presbytery.

One non-standard pathway into ministry in The Presbyterian Church in Canada is pursued by ordained ministers or candidates certified for ordination of other Christian denominations seeking eligibility for reception as ministers or certified candidates for ordination. Other non-standard pathways are pursued by The Presbyterian Church in Canada certified candidates for ministry: individuals aged 35–59 years who lack a university undergraduate degree; M.Div. graduates of non-Presbyterian Church in Canada theological colleges; Presbyterian Church in Canada diaconal ministers seeking ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments.

While presbyteries retain the right to receive ministers, they require permission from the General Assembly before exercising this right with respect to individuals following non-standard pathways (Book of Forms 248.1). On recommendation of the Committee on Education and Reception, the General Assembly determines whether an application is approved and if approved, what additional educational requirements must be completed by the individual.

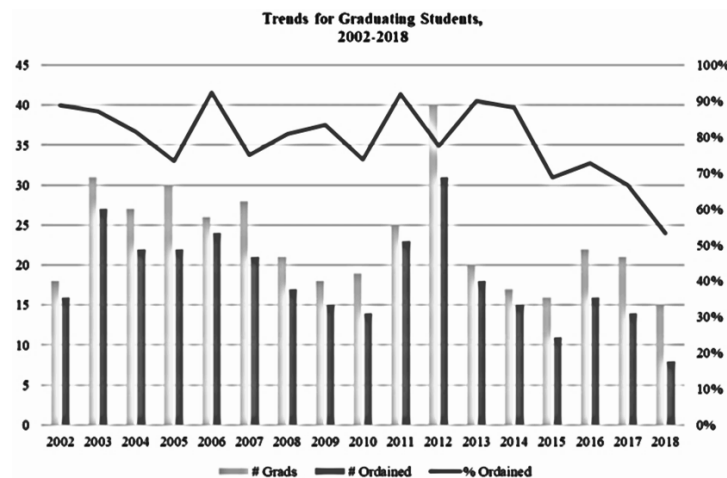
The Committee on Education and Reception carries out its work under guidelines adopted by the General Assembly and last revised in 2011 (A&P 2011, p. 392–94). In doing so it seeks a broad range of background information when considering each application. For instance, applicants from other denominations must submit academic transcripts of all post-secondary degrees to demonstrate they have the requisite educational background to serve as ministers in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. They must be able to articulate in a written statement an understanding of their personal Christian faith, their vocation to ministry and why they want to serve in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Applicants are asked to provide comments from three confidential personal references who will attest to their gifts and fitness for ministry. Most significantly, applicants residing in Canada must receive endorsement from a Presbyterian Church in Canada presbytery. Ordained applicants are required to submit a letter from their ordaining denomination attesting they are currently ministers in good standing. The committee reviews all this material before conducting a personal interview with each applicant. It then meets to make its recommendation taking into consideration everything it has learned about the applicant and particularly the length and depth of the applicant's church involvement and leadership experience, especially within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The prayer of the overture asks for the Committee on Education and Reception's guidelines to be reviewed and updated "to reflect current needs and realities" of our denomination. The preamble suggests there may be a

disconnect between the number of ministry candidates graduating from our theological colleges, the number of ministers and ministry candidates admitted through the Education and Reception process and the comparatively smaller number of ministry positions available to both groups. If this is true, it raises difficult questions. If graduating students from The Presbyterian Church in Canada's own theological colleges cannot find calls because there are so few pulpit vacancies or other ministry positions available for them upon graduation, is it wise for the denomination to be accepting Education and Reception applicants from outside The Presbyterian Church in Canada in unlimited numbers? If there are a limited number of ministry positions to be filled and a surplus of eligible candidates to fill them, should preference not be given to students in whom The Presbyterian Church in Canada has invested significant human and financial resources to prepare and train for ordained ministry?

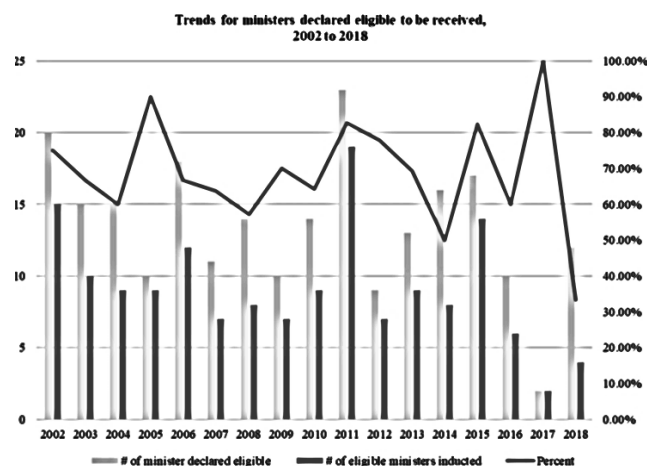
In developing its response to the overture, Ministry and Church Vocations did some preliminary statistical research on graduating students, Education and Reception applicants accepted into The Presbyterian Church in Canada and available ministry positions. What do the numbers tell us?

### Graduating Students



The above chart tracks graduating students from 2002–2018. Of particular note is the declining percentage over the last five years of graduating students who have not been ordained. Graduating students may not be ordained for many reasons. Some may choose to postpone ordination to pursue further studies or to tend to personal matters. But the most troubling possibility is they were not ordained because they were unable to find a call or appointment to a ministry position within The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

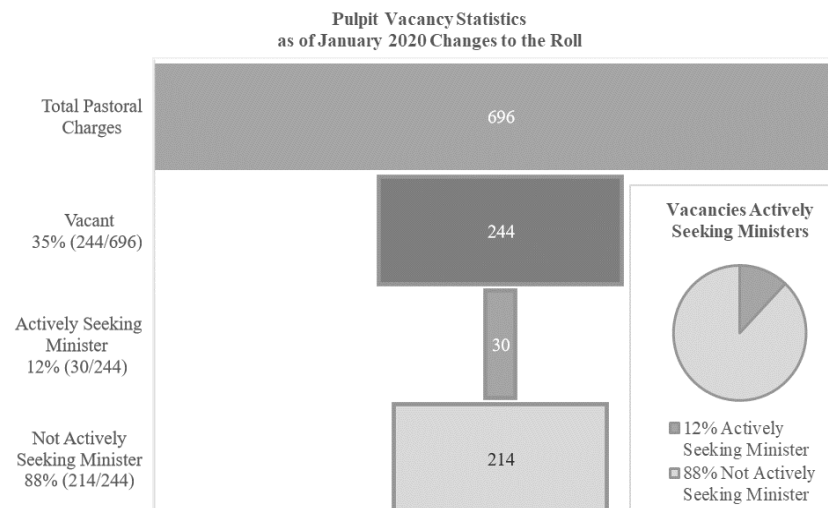
### Education and Reception Applicants from Other Denominations



The above chart tracks accepted Education and Reception applicants from other denominations over the same period from 2002–2018. With the exception of one anomalous year (2017), it displays a similar trend over recent years in the declining percentage of accepted applicants who have gone on to find a call or ministry position. As in the case

of graduating students there may be other explanations for the trend. However, a lack of available ministry positions within The Presbyterian Church in Canada remains one possible explanation.

### Available Ministry Positions



As of January 27, 2020, the *Pulpit Vacancies* page of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's national church website listed 30 pastoral charges actively looking to call a minister. Of these, 26 were seeking a full-time minister and four were seeking a part-time minister. However, according to the presbytery and congregational information maintained by the General Assembly Office, there are currently 244 vacant pastoral charges. A handful (seven in total) have an intentional interim minister. While further inquiry with presbyteries would be needed to learn more about the length and reasons for the vacancies, many would at first glance appear to be small, financially struggling congregations which cannot afford even a half-time minister and have given up searching through the regular call process. Some of them (39 in total) are receiving pulpit supply, many from lay missionaries (10 in total) or retired ministers on stated supply contracts (23 in total).

Clearly more research and analysis needs to be done. Nevertheless, these figures would initially appear to support the claim that the current supply of ministers seeking calls to full-time positions exceeds the current demand in the form of vacant congregations financially able to call full-time ministers. If this is the case and should the trend continue, we will have a situation where M.Div. graduates from Presbyterian Church in Canada theological colleges will be competing with Education and Reception applicants for an increasingly limited number of full-time ministry positions (bearing in mind these positions will also be of interest to many Presbyterian Church in Canada ministers already serving in full-time positions who are sensing a call to go elsewhere).

The data are sufficient to warrant a review of the Guidelines for the Committee on Education and Reception. As the last revision of the guidelines took place in 2011, the Life and Mission Agency will review the current guidelines for the Committee on Education and Reception and, if it is felt that changes are necessary, will bring recommendations to a future General Assembly.

**Recommendation No. 30** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**OVERTURE NO. 7, 2019** (A&P 2019, p. 513, 398–400, 53)

**Re: Requirements for ordination to chaplaincy**

Overture No. 7, 2019 from the Presbytery of Oak Ridges was referred at its request to the Life and Mission Agency. A response was prepared and submitted to the 2019 General Assembly but was withdrawn due to time constraints (A&P 2019, p. 398–400, 53). The response is being resubmitted to this year's General Assembly. The overture focuses on the church's regulations pertaining to ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments based on a position in institutional chaplaincy and seeks changes to those regulations to remove what it regards as an obstacle to such ordination.



### Current Church Regulations

The church's theology has shaped its practice of ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments. Foundational is the belief that Christ continually provides the church with pastors and teachers and requires and enables the church to discern and to confirm by ordination those whom he calls to his pastoral and teaching office (Book of Forms, 447). In the church's candidacy process, the General Assembly has established a framework for the vocational discernment in which a member of The Presbyterian Church in Canada engages with others – session, presbytery, theological college, theological field education placement – in listening for God's call. While it is true that presbyteries hold the exclusive authority to ordain to the ministry of Word and Sacraments (Book of Forms, 233), they are not permitted to exercise this authority until the individual has fulfilled the requirements of the candidacy process.

The significant and integral role of the ministry of Word and Sacraments in the life of the church has necessitated deciding which ministry contexts are suitable for ordination. While ordination most often follows a candidate accepting a call from a congregation, with the approval of the presbytery, questions have arisen whether ordination is appropriate in other specialized ministry contexts. Of particular interest are positions as chaplain in non-Presbyterian Church in Canada institutions such as hospitals, prisons and continuing care homes.

To address these questions, the General Assembly in 2006 authorized a joint task group of the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency to articulate a theology of ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments and on that basis, to propose answers to the question of ordination in specialized ministry contexts. In 2008 the General Assembly accepted the theology of ordination for use in the church and set the terms under which presbyteries are permitted to ordain candidates (A&P 2008, p. 353–65).

The criteria for ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments identify characteristics of the candidate, the ministry position and the presbytery, that must be present, as summarized below.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada requires the following evidence that Christ's call of an individual to the ministry of Word and Sacraments has been confirmed and therefore, that ordination is appropriate:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Candidate            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certified for ordination by the presbytery</li> <li>- Diploma of college indicates readiness for ministry in The Presbyterian Church in Canada</li> <li>- Wishes to accept ministry position</li> </ul>  |
| Ministry<br>Position | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full exercise of the ministry of Word and Sacraments</li> <li>- Minister's name on the presbytery constituent (active) roll after ordination</li> <li>- Call of this church:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call of congregation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada</li> <li>- Appointment by the Life and Mission Agency</li> <li>- For chaplains, permission of the Committee on Education and Reception</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Congregational positions require the call of congregation or appointment by the Life and Mission Agency</li> </ul> |
| Presbytery           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Satisfied with guarantee of stipend</li> <li>- Views ministry position as gospel call to candidate</li> <li>- Ready to enter into relationship of care for minister</li> </ul>   |

All of these criteria for ordination are deemed to be important. Together, they serve as evidence that Christ's call of the individual to the ministry of Word and Sacraments has been confirmed. The church's expectation is that all criteria will be in place before a presbytery moves forward with ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments.

Of the criteria for ordination, one in particular merits further explanation. Ordination is possible when the presbytery is permitted to place the name of the newly ordained minister on its constituent (active) roll. At ordination and induction and at the minister's subsequent inductions, the presbytery declares the minister to be "admitted to all the rights and privileges thereto pertaining" (Book of Forms, 235, 241). The church never ordains ministers without granting them the rights and privileges associated with presbytery membership, including exercising voice and vote in the presbytery and serving as minister commissioners to the General Assembly when so appointed.

This church practice means that the rules setting out the membership of the presbytery become a factor in decisions about ordination. As outlined in the Book of Forms, whether ordained ministers are constituent members depends on the particular ministry in which they serve. For all ministers, whether serving in congregations or other contexts, the ministry position must be a minimum of half-time (Book of Forms, 176.1). This flows naturally from the stipulation that ordination, call and induction to Presbyterian Church in Canada congregations requires at least half-time ministry (Book of Forms, 201.1). For chaplains, an additional requirement of their ministry position is that their appointment as chaplain is for not less than one year (Book of Forms, 176.1.7). Hence, for chaplains to be constituent members of the presbytery within which bounds they serve, their chaplaincy employment contract must require at least half-time service over a period of at least one year. When seeking permission to ordain a chaplain, presbyteries are required to submit to the Committee on Education and Reception documents demonstrating that all the criteria for ordination established by the General Assembly have been met. For its part, the committee reviews the documentation to assess whether the three elements of the situation – the candidate, the ministry position and the presbytery – possess the characteristics mandated by the General Assembly.

### **Concern Raised by the Overture**

The overture argues that the requirement for chaplaincy positions to entail half-time service for at least one year presents an obstacle to Presbyterian candidates serving as chaplains who seek ordination based on their chaplaincy position. Some chaplains are employed on a casual part-time basis, where the employment contract offers perhaps six or eight hours of work each week regularly, with additional time on occasion to cover for vacation leaves of the institution's full-time chaplains. Because the employment of these chaplains does not qualify them for presbytery membership, these individuals may not be ordained based on their chaplaincy position.

It must be noted that some chaplains have been fortunate to find employment that permits presbytery membership. The constituent rolls of presbyteries in the 2018 Acts and Proceedings list 12 chaplains serving in institutional chaplaincies (as provided for under Book of Forms, 176.1.7), all of whose employment contracts must meet the "minimum half-time/one year" requirement for presbytery membership. Moreover, some of these chaplains were ordained on the basis of a chaplaincy position. This has been the case for two chaplains in the last three years.

### **The Overture Request**

The overture makes specific reference to the regulations about presbytery membership for chaplains (Book of Forms, 176.1, 176.1.7) when it asks for reconsideration of the procedures by which candidates may be ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacraments based on chaplaincy positions. The overture is correct in identifying the rules for presbytery membership for chaplains as central to the concern it raises.

Considering revision to the rules for presbytery membership for chaplains may belong in a larger discussion of presbytery membership. How does the church want presbyteries to be constituted? Does it serve the church well to continue to require ministers to serve a minimum of half-time to become active members of the presbytery? For instance, what benefits, if any, would be derived from permitting ministers serving eight hours per week (18% part-time) to become active presbytery members? In a similar way, the length of time that minister members of presbytery are anticipated to serve in their positions is most often open-ended or in the case of stated supply or interim ministry appointments, set in terms of one or two years. What benefits, if any, would be derived from permitting ministers serving half-time for only one or two months to become active presbytery members? A piecemeal approach to revising the rules for presbytery membership for a single category of minister – institutional chaplains – might not be the best way to approach this question.

Reconsidering the rules for presbytery membership as a whole would require initial study by a task group, followed by circulation of a document to the courts of the church for study and response and culminating possibly in changes to the Book of Forms under the Barrier Act, which involves two successive General Assemblies. All this church-wide consultation and decision-making is not only possible but even necessary and appropriate if the church identifies the need for it. However, normally the church embarks on such journeys when requested by voices in the church, through overture to the General Assembly and as it pertains to this case, seeking a review of the set of regulations governing presbytery membership.

For these reasons, the following recommendation is presented.

**Recommendation No. 31** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

## **Next Steps**

During consultations on this report with the Clerks of Assembly, they pointed out that the Book of Forms currently does not have a section that clearly defines the conditions to be met for ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments. The criteria established in the 2008 joint report of the Committee on Church Doctrine and the Life and Mission Agency and adopted by the General Assembly that same year were not followed up with relevant legislation. The Clerks of Assembly believe that the criteria could be consolidated into legislation for the Book of Forms at section 233 and have offered to prepare proposed legislation for presentation to a future General Assembly.

## **OVERTURE NO. 2, 2019 (A&P, 2019, p. 511, 397–98, 53)**

### **Re: Mandating interim ministry during vacancy**

This overture from the Presbytery of Kamloops was referred to the Life and Mission Agency. A response was presented to the 2019 General Assembly but was withdrawn due to time constraints (A&P 2019, p. 397–98, 53). The response is being resubmitted to this year's General Assembly. The overture focuses on the needs of congregations during pulpit vacancies after the departure of their previous called and inducted minister. It asserts that congregations experience a sense of urgency to fill the vacant pulpit as quickly as possible and furthermore, that this pressure to rush the call process can lead to a "bad fit" between the congregation and the minister who is called, resulting in unresolved tensions and conflict.

To prevent such unfortunate developments, the overture advocates the use of interim ministry, which is the appointment by the presbytery of a minister to guide the congregation in achieving readiness to call its next minister. During an interim ministry, congregations typically work on coming to terms with the congregation's history, including healthy grieving for the previous minister; evaluating and revising the congregation's goals, programs and practices; and selecting and equipping new lay leaders. Interim ministry appointments are for a specified term of up to two years. The overture requests the implementation of a policy that would make interim ministry appointments mandatory for all congregations seeking a new minister.

The General Assembly in 2020 is not the first one to see this overture. The Presbytery of Kamloops submitted this same overture to the General Assembly in 2018, which agreed not to receive it on recommendation of the Bills and Overtures Committee. The committee did not present a rationale for this recommendation in its report to the General Assembly, however the committee included the following comments in the shorter report synopsis document prepared for commissioners:

#### **Mandatory Interim Ministry during Vacancy**

The committee is of the opinion that the matter raised in this overture is appropriately dealt with by the authority of each presbytery. The presbytery's knowledge of the needs of the congregations within its bounds is central to the appointment of interim ministers. The committee anticipates there could be an insurmountable challenge of finding an interim minister for every vacancy. The committee believes the current process of appointing interim ministers is sufficient and that church should not invest resources studying this matter. Therefore, the committee recommends... "that the overture not be received."

## **Interim Ministry Appointment – a Presbytery Decision**

Sound argument can be made that presbyteries are in the best position to decide the needs of their congregations. If an individual presbytery wanted all its congregations to give serious consideration to interim ministry before initiating search and selection procedures for a called minister, the presbytery could insert such a requirement into its standing orders. Notwithstanding the tremendous value that congregations can derive from an effective interim ministry, these decisions are best made locally. Hence there is no reason to assume that mandating the imposition of interim ministry on all seeking congregations is in the best interest of the church. Moreover, there is no indication that such a policy, if established by the General Assembly, would be accepted with a willing spirit by presbyteries, much less by their congregations.

The General Assembly has established policy and procedures for the church's implementation of interim ministry. Currently, interim ministry is one option for congregations at transitions from a called and inducted ministry and presbyteries use their discretion in choosing when to appoint interim ministers. Since these provisions appear best suited to the needs of the church at the present time, the following recommendation is presented.

**Recommendation No. 32** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**OVERTURE NO. 17, 2018** (A&P 2018, p. 497, 231, 15)**Re: Ministry and Mental Health**

Overture No. 17, 2018 from the Presbytery of Montreal focuses on ministry and mental health. It was referred to the Life and Mission Agency on recommendation of the Committee on Bills and Overtures. The overture draws attention to the challenge of balancing individual rights with congregational well-being when persons affected by mental disorders seek church employment or certification in the candidacy process. On the one hand, all individuals are entitled to privacy and freedom from discrimination when they seek church employment; on the other hand, the welfare of the employing congregation and the ongoing mental health of the ordained minister or candidate for ministry is also important. The overture requests study about mental health disorders and ministry to develop three resources:

- a clear position statement
- guidelines for the use of references in search and call procedures
- guidelines pertaining to certified candidates for ministry who experience mental health disorders

This response to Overture No. 17, 2018 was prepared by Ministry and Church Vocations in consultation with its advisory group. The Clerks of Assembly and legal counsel were consulted as well, to ensure that the proposed policy and procedures will function well within The Presbyterian Church in Canada and in the broader Canadian context.

This report addresses these questions:

- Q1. What has The Presbyterian Church in Canada said about mental health issues?
- A. In 2011, the General Assembly adopted *Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues*. An overview of the guidelines is presented in the report's first section.
- Q2. How should the church respond to information about mental health issues in employment procedures and in the candidacy process?
- A. Guidelines are proposed in the second section.
- Q3. How can the foregoing information be developed to create a clear position statement?
- A. Proposed revisions to *Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues* (2011) are offered in the final section.

The sole recommendation of the report is a request for study and response, with the goal of presenting a final report to the General Assembly in 2021.

**1. Overview of Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues (2011)****The Church's Role**

The essence of the church as the body of Christ in the world provides the foundation for the church's life in it. The church seeks to follow the Holy Spirit's leading, so that all whom the church touches may experience the transforming grace and love of God. When it comes to mental health, the church longs for people to be whole, to get the treatment they need, to experience healing and to recover their place in society and in the community of faith as fully as possible.

The church's role in responding to mental health issues is to offer pastoral care, guidance and support. To fulfill this role, the church strives to promote good mental health and intervenes pastorally in particular cases. The church never attempts to offer a diagnosis, a task that remains the purview of qualified health care professionals.

**Promoting Good Mental Health**

The church strives to promote good mental health. To this end, the church:

- prays
- develops communities of worship, learning and service where spiritual growth can be nurtured
- fosters community where mental health issues can be disclosed openly
- partners with institutions in education about mental health, in advocacy and in justice ministries
- nurtures healthy church courts
- provides colleague covenant groups, Employee Assistance Program, health and dental plan (for ministers)

## **Pastoral Intervention**

The church intervenes pastorally by offering pastoral care, guidance and support, which at times may include referral to others.

The procedures for pastoral intervention are based on sound guiding principles:

- Timely self-referral is a central goal of the church's response to mental health issues.
- A good understanding of mental health is essential to create a climate for open disclosure of mental health issues.
- The courts of the church have responsibility to care for the well-being of the individuals, congregations and other groups under their jurisdiction and to maintain the integrity of the church's witness.
- The safety of all persons is a priority. Circumstances may in some instances warrant police intervention or legal remedies such as a restraining order. Where the safety of minors is a concern there is a duty to report to the appropriate child protection agency.
- Confidentiality is respected as much as possible within the limits of the law.
- The basis for pastoral intervention is either a request for help from the person of concern or observed behaviour of that person that raises reasonable concern about the possible existence of a mental health issue.
- Pastoral intervention may be appropriate even when the person of concern does not acknowledge experiencing any difficulty.
- Before formal action affecting the reputation or employment of a church leader is taken, the due process of the church court is followed.
- The church is called to implement this policy in the spirit of prayerfulness, love, affection and humility, under the continual illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Two types of situations provide the context for a pastoral intervention:

- A – the person of concern asks for help
- B – the observed behaviour of the person causes concern

A – Pastoral intervention when the person of concern asks for help

- The church offers support by such means as:
  - prayers for healing, strength and confidence in the abiding presence of God
  - caring, compassionate company on the journey
  - respect for confidentiality
- referral as necessary to appropriate professionals, who are provincially credentialed or licensed medical or mental health professionals
- for ministerial leaders, ensuring that the church's benefit plans are known and understood, including financial assistance with the costs of pulpit supply for congregations whose minister is on a health leave
- practical assistance (which may include financial) with accessing health care, travelling to appointments and managing financial and other affairs
- pastoral care for the family of the person, including assistance with the relationships between the family members and the person, as requested and as appropriate
- relief from church roles and responsibilities as necessary for recovery
- pastoral care and appropriate temporary leadership for the congregation, as necessary
- education of the church community about mental health issues to foster acceptance and welcome rather than criticism and ostracism

B – Pastoral intervention when the observed behaviour of the person causes concern

Pastoral intervention begins when a person in the church becomes concerned that the observed behaviour of another indicates the possible existence of a mental health issue. The observer may be a family member, a member of the congregation or a ministry colleague. In a setting that protects the privacy of the other, the observer gently asks the person of concern about what they are experiencing. In some cases, the observer chooses to have a companion present for this conversation. The person of concern should be encouraged to have a companion present for any consultations.

The circle of individuals engaging in conversations with and about the person of concern widens to include the responsible church court. The involvement of the church court may lead eventually to a non-disciplinary case (Book of Forms, 324-44) with the following goals:

- to enable the responsible church court to ascertain for itself whether the person's observed behaviour merits further concern
- on deciding that the person's observed behaviour merits further concern, to facilitate the court using its influence appropriately to help the person of concern to obtain professional assistance as needed
- to follow the church's established procedures fairly – a standard that will serve also to inspire confidence in the results
- to safeguard the integrity of the church's witness

The court recognizes that experiencing mental health issues is not a sign of moral weakness and that denial – often an integral part of mental health issues – is not wrongdoing that requires discipline.

## **Conclusion**

The church's essence as the body of Christ in the world shapes its approach to mental health issues. Responding to the gospel mandate to love, the church strives to promote good mental health and intervenes pastorally in particular cases.

This overview of the *Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues* demonstrates that the church already has a substantial basis for a statement about mental health disorders and ministry. Nevertheless, the guidelines do not address questions of references in employment procedures or implications of mental health disorders for candidates for ministry who are affected by them. These topics form the subject of the next section of this report.

## **2. Disclosure of Mental Health Issues in Employment and Candidacy Procedures**

The goal of treating people with love and respect is anything but new to the church. The gospel mandate to love as a free and grateful response to the love of God in Christ informs the church's understanding of its place in the world. The church tries to live in ways that enable others to experience God's love in all its gracious, transforming fullness.

While the church in every age has affirmed the goal of treating others with love and respect, it must be acknowledged that the church's concept of loving, respectful behaviour has changed over time. Perhaps the most striking examples are the New Testament admonitions exhorting slaves to obedience and masters to fairness (Ephesians 5:22–6:9, Colossians 3:18–4:1). Such instructions for life in community would find no acceptance today. Time and place are key elements of the context that shapes people's expectations of behaviour.

In Canada in recent years, concern to safeguard the interests of individuals has led to rules prohibiting discrimination in a number of social areas, including employment. Each of the human rights codes (provincial, territorial and federal) identify the grounds that are protected against discrimination. Disability is one of the protected grounds common to all codes. Significant for this discussion is the fact that, in every case, disability is understood to include mental disorders. As a result, discrimination based on mental disorders is prohibited in the protected areas.

### **Employment Search and Selection**

The legislated protections against discrimination hold implications for employment search and selection procedures. Employers are expected to evaluate the suitability of the different candidates based on the position's essential duties and bona fide requirements. Therefore, seeking information that falls outside this scope is not appropriate. Employers are not permitted to ask questions, either directly or indirectly, about the applicant's race, colour, sex, age, marital status, disability or any other prohibited ground.

The same limitations apply to employer communication with the confidential references named by the applicant. References may be asked for information pertinent to job performance. However, it is unlawful to ask references a question that would reveal characteristics about the applicant that are protected against discrimination.

So, what importance does Canadian human rights legislation have for the church? The church seeks to offer the world Christ's gifts of grace, truth, wisdom, justice and compassion. Living as a good citizen, respecting and upholding the law and being seen to be doing so – these actions strengthen the church's witness. Conversely, the world refuses to listen whenever it observes the church contravening the law. At the same time, the church wastes

resources intended for mission and ministry in judicial process, whether inside the church or in the secular courts. These dynamics motivate the church to strive to uphold Canadian human rights legislation in all its activities.

With respect to communication with confidential references in search and call procedures, what can a church ask about the minister's health? The answer is simple: nothing. The employer is required by law to protect the applicant's human rights and to focus exclusively on the requirements of the position. These stipulations prohibit discussion of any aspect of the applicant's health. Employers should not ask for such information and for their part, references should not offer it. The implications of human rights legislation for the use of references are simple and straightforward.

### **Other Employment Matters**

Canadian human rights legislation requires employers to adjust rules, policies or practices to permit employment of individuals with needs related to the grounds of discrimination. Employers have a "duty to accommodate", which means treating an individual differently to prevent or reduce discrimination.

Sometimes employees choose to disclose mental health issues to their employer (after hiring) and request accommodation in handling their condition. For instance, an employee could request a different work schedule, when changing the timing of the tasks enhances the employee's success in completing them. Typically, requests for accommodation of disability would be supported by correspondence from the employee's doctor. While there may be differences in these expectations across Canada, since some provinces and territories have enacted legislation in addition to federal laws, what should be noted is that Canadian employers have a duty to provide reasonable accommodation of disability to a significant extent.

### **Candidacy Process**

The candidacy process provides the framework for the vocational preparation and shared discernment by which lay members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada become ordained ministers of Word and Sacraments or designated members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries. Over several years, the individual listens for God's voice – the inner dimension of the call – while the church listens as well, testing the call's outer dimension. Unique roles are assigned to different groups in the church – the session of the candidate's congregation, the certifying presbytery, the theological college and the congregation selected for supervised theological field education. Each one plays its part in engaging the individuals in discernment of their calling and in guiding their preparation for it. What begins with an individual nurtured in Christian faith within a home congregation may culminate in a presbytery confirming Christ's call through ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments or designation to the Order of Diaconal Ministries.

The church has been asked to give guidance to those engaged in the candidacy process when a candidate experiences a mental health issue. What are the implications for the candidate and how should those with roles in the shared vocational discernment respond?

The principle to be affirmed, first and foremost, is that having a mental health issue should not be viewed as a problem. Many ministers manage health issues and various kinds of disabilities, including mental health disorders, while continuing to provide vibrant, fruitful ministry. Some with mental health issues have chosen to disclose these to their congregations and presbyteries, thereby allowing those around the minister to provide care and support. Self-disclosure of this nature has also been a gift to those communities, since it holds the potential to combat the stigma surrounding mental health. Breaking the silence is a critical step to promoting good mental health.

When a candidate discloses a mental health issue, the church entity receiving the information should invite the candidate to indicate what accommodation, if any, is needed for the candidate to continue in the process. In some cases, the candidate might not need any assistance – with their current treatment and wellness strategies, they are enjoying good health and strength. In other cases, the candidate might need time to pursue medical treatment and for this purpose, might ask the presbytery for an extension of time before the next recertification interviews. In a similar way, the candidate might ask the college for an extension of time to complete coursework.

The situation is more challenging when a candidate does not disclose a mental health issue but others who have been observing the candidate's behaviour are concerned that one might exist. The church entity that is notified of such concerns (or that is, itself, the observer) would follow the pastoral intervention guidelines.

In all cases, the church entity receiving information about a candidate's mental health issues should respect the candidate's privacy within the limits of the law. Care should be taken to comply with the candidate's wishes when deciding what details can be released and in what context.

Within the limits of agreed-upon accommodation of disability, the church entity receiving the candidate's disclosure of a mental health issue should continue its role in assessing the candidate's suitability for ministry in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. While special provisions by way of accommodation might be in place, the church's responsibility to assess the outer dimension of the candidate's call to ministry remains unchanged. The same gifts and graces for ministry must be demonstrated by all candidates seeking to complete the church's candidacy process.

### **3. Proposed Revisions to *Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues***

The foregoing discussions of this report suggest revisions to *Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues* so that it can present a clear position statement on ministry and mental health issues, as follows:

- The guidelines should open with a short overview.
- The guiding principles should include a new clause about the protection of human rights.
- Guidelines about employment matters (including the use of references) and the candidacy process should be added as appendices.

The proposed revised *Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues* follows. Sections with significant edits (other than minor smoothing of the text) are presented in italics.

## **GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES (2011)**

(with revisions indicated in italics)

### **OVERVIEW OF GUIDELINES**

*The church's essence as the body of Christ in the world shapes its approach to mental health issues. Responding to the gospel mandate to love, the church strives to promote good mental health and intervenes pastorally in particular cases.*

#### ***Promoting Mental Health***

*The church promotes good mental health in ways appropriate to its nature and role. The church:*

- *prays*
- *develops communities of worship, learning and service to nurture spiritual growth*
- *fosters community where mental health issues can be disclosed openly*
- *partners with institutions in education about mental health, in advocacy and in justice ministries*
- *nurtures healthy church courts*
- *provides benefits plans (for ministers)*

#### ***Pastoral Intervention***

*The church intervenes pastorally by offering pastoral care, guidance and support, sometimes including referral to others.*

*The procedures for pastoral intervention are based on sound guiding principles:*

- *priority is given to the safety of all persons, respect for confidentiality and human rights and timely self-referral*
- *open disclosure of mental health issues requires good understanding of mental health*
- *pastoral intervention is based on a request for help from the person of concern or observed behaviour of that person that raises concern*
- *pastoral intervention may be appropriate even when the person of concern does not acknowledge any difficulty*
- *the church courts have responsibility to care for individuals and groups under their jurisdiction and to maintain the integrity of the church's witness*
- *due process precedes formal church court action affecting a person's reputation or employment*
- *the church is to use these guidelines with prayer, love, humility and reliance on the Holy Spirit*



*Two types of situations provide the context for pastoral intervention:*

- A – the person of concern asks for help*
- B – the observed behaviour of the person causes concern*

*A – When the person of concern asks for help, the church offers support:*

- *prayers*
- *caring, compassionate company*
- *respect for confidentiality*
- *referral as necessary to appropriate medical professionals*
- *for ministerial leaders, ensuring that the church's benefit plans are known and understood*
- *practical assistance*
- *pastoral care for the family of the person*
- *relief from church roles and responsibilities as necessary for recovery*
- *pastoral care and appropriate replacement leadership for the congregation, as necessary*
- *education of the church community about mental health issues*

*B – When the observed behaviour of the person causes concern, conversations begin:*

- *In a setting that protects the person's privacy, the observer asks the person about what they are experiencing. Both persons may choose to have a companion present.*
- *The circle of individuals engaging in conversations with and about the person of concern widens to include the responsible church court.*
- *The involvement of the church court may lead eventually to a non-disciplinary case (Book of Forms, 324–44).*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Good health is a gift that enhances life and makes even the steepest obstacles appear surmountable. Its absence yields the opposite effect and is keenly felt. Whenever poor health extends to the mental and psychological aspects of a person's being, the challenges are compounded by the stigma society frequently attaches to mental illness.

The church is no stranger to these realities. Because its members are human, they experience the whole spectrum of health. They bring to the church's life all of who they are – body, mind and spirit.

While the church is a community of human persons, its true nature is something quite different. In the words of Living Faith, "The church is Christ together with his people called both to worship and serve him in all of life."<sup>1</sup> The apostle Paul called the church the body of Christ, "the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:22–23).

One of the hallmarks of this divine-human community is love. Jesus commanded his disciples to love one another as he had loved them (John 13:34). The New Testament anticipates Christian love finding expression within Christ's body in a variety of "one another" ministries. We are to pray for one another, to carry one another's burdens and to admonish one another. In Christ we are as inter-dependent as the different parts of our human bodies: all rejoice when one rejoices and all suffer when one suffers. (1 Corinthians 12:26)

The gospel mandate to love one another has clear implications for the church whenever one of its people is experiencing mental health issues. We are to provide appropriate care for all who are involved – the individual, the individual's family, the individual's congregation – while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the church's witness to the wider community.

However, while the mandate to love is clear, the way forward is less so. What constitutes appropriate care? If the individual refuses professional help or rejects diagnosis or treatment, what can and should the church do? Mental health issues, if untreated, may become disabling for the individual. If untreated, they are also almost always highly problematic for the individual's family and congregation and for the wider church. Moreover, many of these conditions cause problems for the individual and for the family and congregation, before the individual is willing and able to acknowledge experiencing a mental health issue. What can the church do to foster positive outcomes? The courts of the church have an obligation to act for the good of the body of Christ, while holding it accountable for its responsibilities, even as the courts have an obligation to act for the good of individual members and hold them appropriately accountable. How does the church honour these obligations faithfully?

The *Guidelines for Dealing with Mental Health Issues* have been developed to give guidance to the church in addressing these questions. From the foundational understanding of the church as the body of Christ in the world, the policy discusses guiding principles and measures to promote good mental health. It then outlines procedures for church responses when a person asks for help with mental health issues they are experiencing or when the observable behaviour of the person indicates possible mental health issues. In cases when the person refuses the pastoral intervention of the appropriate church court, possible next steps are outlined.

## **NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE GUIDELINES**

The guidelines are intended to provide guidance to the church as a caring community in relationship with individuals who may be dealing with mental health issues. They also strive to stimulate discussion and education within the church that will help foster healthy, affirming environments.

The term “mental health issues” is used to refer to a broad constellation of problems affecting mental, emotional and psychological health. These include but are not limited to mental disorders due to general medical conditions (e.g., certain types of dementia, stroke), personality disorders, psychotic disorders, mood disorders (e.g., anxiety, depression, bipolar), alcohol and other drug abuse or dependence, stress and burnout and major anxiety disorders like posttraumatic stress disorder.

It is imperative to note that the church’s role is never to offer a diagnosis. That task remains the purview of qualified health care professionals. For this reason, the church avoids all use of diagnostic language. In a similar way, the church does not attempt to offer professional support itself but rather directs the person to a health care professional when needed. The church understands that its proper role is to offer pastoral care, guidance and support.

The guidelines describe some of the forms that pastoral intervention by an individual, group or court within the church might take. Such intervention is initiated in two different ways. An individual, referred to as the “person of concern,” asks for help with problems they are experiencing. Alternatively, the person’s behaviour is observed by others who become concerned that the person may be experiencing a mental health issue. While the impetus for the development of these guidelines was a concern for the leaders of the church, both clergy and lay, they could be used in dealing with any member of The Presbyterian Church in Canada who might be experiencing a mental health issue.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Timely self-referral is a central goal of the church’s initiatives concerning mental health issues. As with other health matters, early assessment and intervention are more likely to lead to optimum outcomes.

A good understanding of mental health is essential to creating a climate where mental health issues can be disclosed without fear of criticism or ostracism.

*Human rights of individuals are respected and discrimination of any kind is resisted. In relationships where the church is an employer, it takes care to protect employees and prospective employees from discrimination based on disability, including mental disorders.*

The safety of all persons is a priority. *Circumstances may in some instances warrant police intervention or legal remedies such as a restraining order. Where the safety of minors is a concern there is a duty to report to the appropriate child protection agency.*

Confidentiality is respected as much as possible within the limits of the law.

The basis for pastoral intervention is either a request for help from the person of concern or observed behaviour of that person that raises reasonable concern about the possible existence of a mental health issue.

Pastoral intervention may be appropriate even when the person of concern does not acknowledge experiencing any difficulty.

The courts of the church have responsibility to care for the well-being of the individuals, congregations and other groups under their jurisdiction and to maintain the integrity of the church’s witness.

Before formal action affecting the reputation or employment of a church leader is taken, the due process of the church court is followed.

The church is called to implement this policy in the spirit of prayerfulness, love, affection and humility, under the continual illumination of the Holy Spirit.

## **PROMOTING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH**

The church's primary task is to be who Christ has called it to be – the embodiment of Christ's presence in the world by the power of God's Holy Spirit. This means living in ways so that all who are touched by the church may experience the transforming grace and love of God.

When it comes to mental health, the church longs for people to be whole, to get the treatment they need, to experience healing and to recover their place in society and in the community of faith as fully as possible. The church's desire is to offer appropriate support.

The church offers support through intercessory prayer for others. The church also prays for itself, recognizing that it needs the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit to be conformed to the mind of Christ and to see others as he does, longing for them to know the healing, restorative power of the love of God.

The church offers support by offering a worshipping, learning, serving community where spiritual growth can be nurtured. Spiritual life is an essential and necessary part of good mental health.

The church offers support by fostering a community where mental health issues can be disclosed in a spirit of openness. In doing so, the church resists the prevalent stigma against mental illness. Instead, it allows its beliefs and behaviour to be formed by biblical principles, such as the gospel mandate to love and to be informed by the best available scientific research. The Canadian Mental Health Association teaches that recovery from mental illness is possible.<sup>2</sup> With treatment, in many instances, individuals can resume a good quality of life. People living with mental illness on a daily basis can achieve good mental health – striking a balance in the spiritual, social, physical, economic and mental aspects of their lives.

The church offers support by partnering with other institutions whose primary task is education about mental health; or advocacy; or justice ministries addressing the needs of individuals or related underlying issues (such as poverty). For instance, in its desire to educate its people about mental health issues, the church invites qualified people to lead seminars and retreats for the congregation, session or presbytery. One important educational goal is equipping church courts and leaders to make good referrals.

The church offers support by nurturing healthy church courts. Sessions, presbyteries and synods that understand and accept their roles and whose members know and care about one another and share a commitment to their work – these are least likely to contribute to a leader's burnout track and most likely to recognize early the mental health issues of one of their number. They are also best equipped to guide the individuals, congregations and other groups under their care when mental health issues require difficult decisions.

The church encourages covenant groups that may help ministers seeking such support.<sup>3</sup>

## **PROCEDURES FOR PASTORAL INTERVENTION**

Pastoral intervention by the church takes the form of pastoral care, guidance and support, which at times may include referral to others.

Two types of situations provide the context for a pastoral intervention:

- A – the person of concern asks for help.
- B – the observed behaviour of the person causes concern.

### **A – The Person of Concern Asks for Help**

A person in the church acknowledges to an individual, group or court within the church that he or she is experiencing a mental health issue. The church responds by providing support in ways that might include the following:

- Prayers for healing, strength and confidence in the abiding presence of God.
- Caring, compassionate company on the journey.
- Respect for confidentiality.

- Referral as necessary to appropriate professionals, who are provincially credentialed or licensed medical or mental health professionals.
- For professional church leaders, ensuring that the church's benefit plans are known and understood, including financial assistance with the costs of pulpit supply for congregations whose minister is on a health leave.
- Practical assistance (which may include financial) with accessing health care, travelling to appointments and managing financial and other affairs.
- Pastoral care for the family of the person, including assistance with the relationships between the family members and the person, as requested and as appropriate.
- Relief from church roles and responsibilities as necessary for recovery.
- Pastoral care and appropriate temporary leadership for the congregation, as necessary.
- Education of the church community about mental health issues to foster acceptance and welcome rather than criticism and ostracism.

## **B – The Observed Behaviour of the Person Causes Concern**

1. A person in the church becomes concerned that the observed behaviour of another indicates the possible existence of a mental health issue. The observer may be a family member, a member of the congregation or a ministry colleague. In a setting that protects the privacy of the other, the observer gently asks the person of concern about what they are experiencing. In some cases, the observer chooses to have a companion present for this conversation. The person of concern should be encouraged to have a companion present for any consultations.

A word about meeting privately:

The Presbyterian Church in Canada takes seriously the process for reconciliation that Jesus teaches (Matthew 18:15–18). This process involves first dealing directly and privately with the other person, one-to-one and then as the process continues, keeping the circle of involvement as small as possible until enlarging it at the next step becomes necessary. Following these instructions, the Book of Forms requires members to attempt to resolve their differences before they ask the church courts to help through judicial process (sections 314, 314.1, 325, 328.1, 350).

Jesus' teaching provides the framework for healthy communication within the church generally across a broad range of contexts and not just when reconciliation is needed. For this reason, it might be helpful when confronting suspected mental health issues. Nevertheless, exceptions to the "meet privately first" rule may be warranted when dealing with possible mental health issues. At times, the wisest course is for the observer to have a companion present when approaching the person of concern.

2. If the person of concern does not acknowledge experiencing a mental health issue and the observers remain concerned that there are problems, the observers consult with the moderator and clerk of the church court responsible for the person of concern.

References to the "responsible church court" in this document denote the church body that is responsible pastorally for the person of concern and to which the person of concern is accountable. Except for certain employment contexts as noted below, the "responsible church court" is the session, for lay employees, members or adherents of the congregation; and the presbytery, for ordained or diaconal ministers or certified candidates for ministry or ordination.

The church employment contexts that give rise to exceptions to this general rule are as follows:

- Employees of the synod are accountable for their employment to the synod.
  - Employees of the colleges or other institutions of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are accountable for their employment to the governing board of the college or institution.
  - Employees of the national Presbyterian church offices are accountable for their employment to the Assembly Council.
3. This initial inquiry and consultation will lead to one of the following courses of action:
    - No further action is taken.
    - There is another meeting with the person of concern.
    - The observers consult with an appropriate medical or mental health professional for educational purposes.

In these consultations, it is important not to libel, nor to appear to libel, the person of concern, for example by using diagnostic labels. Instead, the focus is on the observed behavior, the possible issues

of mental health that such behaviour might indicate and the need to have a professional assessment to determine the cause.

In consultations with a health professional, the name of the person of concern is not made known. The observers seek enough appropriate information to help clarify which option to choose.

Persons who take the role of observers in these situations are enjoined to do so prayerfully, pastorally and with humility – and in a way that ensures that they are not acting out of personal bias.

4. These consultations may yield one of the following outcomes:
  - No further action is taken by the observers.
  - The person of concern seeks professional assessment and, if indicated, treatment and communicates this fact to the responsible church court or gives others permission to do so. The court ensures that the church provides appropriate support, by such means as are listed above.

The behaviour is observed to continue and the person of concern does not seek professional assessment and, if indicated, treatment. The observers have the following options open to them:

- If there is immediate danger to the person of concern or to others, the police service is called so that the person of concern might be conveyed to an appropriate facility for assessment and treatment.
  - The observers communicate their concern in writing to the responsible church court.
5. Responsibility for pastoral intervention rests with the responsible church court, once the matter has been referred to it in writing. Courts are reminded that they can call special meetings (sooner than their next regular meeting) to facilitate an expeditious response. The responsible church court has the following options:
    - The court, perhaps inviting further involvement of the observers, names individuals to meet with the person of concern, with a view to encouraging the person of concern to seek professional assessment and, if indicated, treatment.
    - If the person of concern seeks professional assessment and, if indicated, treatment and communicates this fact to the responsible church court or gives others permission to do so, the court ensures that the church provides appropriate support, by such means as are listed above.
    - If the person of concern does not seek professional assessment and if indicated, treatment or when further encouragement to do so is not expected to be effective, the court begins judicial process, using the appropriate established procedures of the church to initiate a non-disciplinary case (Book of Forms 324–44). In engaging in judicial process, the court must adhere to the principle that due process precedes any decision of a court affecting the employment of a church leader.
  6. A decision to begin judicial process is directed towards the following goals:
    - To enable the responsible church court to ascertain for itself whether the person's observed behaviour merits further concern.
    - On deciding that the person's observed behaviour merits further concern, to facilitate the court using its influence appropriately to help the person of concern to obtain the professional assistance needed.
    - To follow the church's established procedures fairly – a standard that will serve also to inspire confidence in the results.
    - To safeguard the integrity of the church's witness.

In engaging in judicial process, the court recognizes that experiencing mental health issues is not a sign of moral weakness. Moreover, denial is often an integral part of mental health issues, rather than a wrong-doing for which discipline is required.

7. When the decision has been made to begin judicial process, the responsible court follows the procedures for non-disciplinary cases that apply to the particular person of concern. This commences with the laying of a complaint – Book of Forms section 325, in the case of those accountable to the session and section 329 for those accountable to a presbytery. The church's procedures for judicial process might serve as a helpful resource for other church bodies (e.g., synods, college governing boards, Assembly Council) as they seek to fulfill their responsibility as employer to act appropriately.

The laying of a complaint in this situation must be carefully undertaken as a pastoral act seeking the welfare of the person of concern and the church they serve.

- For ordained or diaconal ministers employed within the church and not serving in one of the exceptional employment contexts noted in section 2 above, the presbytery conducts an investigation, which may be followed by a review of ministry (Book of Forms sections 334–40).
- For ordained or diaconal ministers not employed within the church and for certified candidates for ministry or for ordination, the presbytery conducts an investigation (Book of Forms sections 334–35).
- For individuals under the care of the session and not serving in one of the exceptional employment contexts noted in section 2 above, the session follows the procedures for complaints against members and office-bearers of the church (Book of Forms sections 325–27).

One possible outcome of such judicial process is that the responsible church court imposes a requirement of professional assessment and, if indicated, treatment as a condition of continuance in office. Failure to comply may lead to suspension of the person of concern, either with or without a limit of time.

A word about confidentiality:

Church courts are advised of the need to respect the confidentiality of the person of concern, particularly about a diagnosis. The details of a diagnosis are not shared with the church court without the informed written consent of the person of concern.

8. Following any decisions of the responsible court, it decides what part of its proceedings will appear in the public record and carries out communication with others as necessary.

## CONCLUSION

The church's essence as the body of Christ in the world shapes its approach to mental health issues. Responding to the gospel mandate to love, the church strives to promote good mental health and intervenes pastorally in particular cases.

## APPENDIX A: EMPLOYMENT

*The goal of treating people with love and respect is anything but new to the church. The gospel mandate to love as a free and grateful response to the love of God in Christ informs the church's understanding of its place in the world. The church tries to live in ways that enable others to experience God's love in all its gracious, transforming fullness.*

*While the church in every age has affirmed the goal of treating others with love and respect, it must be acknowledged that the church's concept of loving, respectful behaviour has changed over time. Perhaps the most striking examples are the New Testament admonitions exhorting slaves to obedience and masters to fairness (Ephesians 5:22–6:9, Colossians 3:18–4:1). Such instructions for life in community would find no acceptance today. Time and place are key elements of the context that shapes people's expectations of behaviour.*

*In Canada in recent years, concern to safeguard the interests of individuals has led to rules prohibiting discrimination in a number of social areas, including employment. Each of the human rights codes (provincial, territorial and federal) identify the grounds that are protected against discrimination. Disability is one of the protected grounds common to all codes. Significant for this discussion is the fact that, in every case, disability is understood to include mental disorders. As a result, discrimination based on mental disorders is prohibited in the protected areas.*

### Employment Search and Selection

*The legislated protections against discrimination hold implications for employment search and selection procedures. Employers are expected to evaluate the suitability of the different candidates based on the position's essential duties and bona fide requirements. Therefore, seeking information that falls outside this scope is not appropriate. Employers are not permitted to ask questions, either directly or indirectly, about the applicant's race, colour, sex, age, marital status, disability or any other prohibited ground.*

*The same limitations apply to employer communication with the confidential references named by the applicant. References may be asked for information pertinent to job performance. However, it is unlawful to ask references a question that would reveal characteristics about the applicant that are protected against discrimination.*

*So, what importance does Canadian human rights legislation have for the church? The church seeks to offer the world Christ's gifts of grace, truth, wisdom, justice and compassion. Living as a good citizen, respecting and upholding the law and being seen to be doing so – these actions strengthen the church's witness. Conversely, the world refuses to listen whenever it observes the church contravening the law. At the same time, the church wastes resources intended for mission and ministry in judicial process, whether inside the church or in the secular courts. These dynamics motivate the church to strive to uphold Canadian human rights legislation in all its activities.*

*With respect to communication with confidential references in search and call procedures, what can a church ask about the minister's health? The answer is simple: nothing. The employer is required by law to protect the applicant's human rights and to focus exclusively on the requirements of the position. These stipulations prohibit discussion of any aspect of the applicant's health. Employers should not ask for such information and for their part, references should not offer it. The implications of human rights legislation for the use of references are simple and straightforward.*

### **Other Employment Matters**

*Canadian human rights legislation requires employers to adjust rules, policies or practices to permit employment of individuals with needs related to the grounds of discrimination. Employers have a "duty to accommodate," which means treating an individual differently to prevent or reduce discrimination.*

*Sometimes employees choose to disclose mental health issues to their employer (after hiring) and request accommodation in handling their condition. For instance, an employee could request a different work schedule, when changing the timing of the tasks enhances the employee's success in completing them. Typically, requests for accommodation of disability would be supported by correspondence from the employee's doctor. While there may be differences in these expectations across Canada, since some provinces and territories have enacted legislation in addition to federal laws, what should be noted is that Canadian employers have a duty to provide reasonable accommodation of disability to a significant extent.*

### **APPENDIX B: CANDIDACY PROCESS**

*The candidacy process provides the framework for the vocational preparation and shared discernment by which lay members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada become ordained ministers of Word and Sacraments or designated members of the Order of Diaconal Ministry. Over several years, the individual listens for God's voice – the inner dimension of the call – while the church listens as well, testing the call's outer dimension. Unique roles are assigned to different groups in the church – the session of the candidate's congregation, the certifying presbytery, the theological college and the congregation selected for supervised theological field education. Each one plays its part in engaging the individuals in discernment of their calling and in guiding their preparation for it. What begins with an individual nurtured in Christian faith within a home congregation may culminate in a presbytery confirming Christ's call through ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments or designation to the Order of Diaconal Ministry.*

*The church has been asked to give guidance to those engaged in the candidacy process when a candidate experiences a mental health issue. What are the implications for the candidate and how should those with roles in the shared vocational discernment respond?*

*The principle to be affirmed, first and foremost, is that having a mental health issue should not be viewed as a problem. Many ministers manage health issues and various kinds of disabilities, including mental health disorders, while continuing to provide vibrant, fruitful ministry. Some with mental health issues have chosen to disclose these to their congregations and presbyteries, thereby allowing those around the minister to provide care and support. Self-disclosure of this nature has also been a gift to those communities, since it holds the potential to combat the stigma surrounding mental health. Breaking the silence is a critical step to promoting good mental health.*

*When a candidate discloses a mental health issue, the church entity receiving the information should invite the candidate to indicate what accommodation, if any, is needed for the candidate to continue in the process. In some cases, the candidate might not need any assistance – with their current treatment and wellness strategies, they are enjoying good health and strength. In other cases, the candidate might need time to pursue medical treatment and for this purpose, might ask the presbytery for an extension of time before the next recertification interviews. In a similar way, the candidate might ask the college for an extension of time to complete coursework.*

*The situation is more challenging when a candidate does not disclose a mental health issue but others who have been observing the candidate's behaviour are concerned that one might exist. The church entity that is notified of such concerns (or that is, itself, the observer) would follow the pastoral intervention guidelines.*

*In all cases, the church entity receiving information about a candidate's mental health issues should respect the candidacy privacy within the limits of the law. Care should be taken to comply with the candidate's wishes when deciding what details can be released and in what context.*

*Within the limits of agreed-upon accommodation of disability, the church entity receiving the candidate's disclosure of a mental health issue should continue its role in assessing the candidate's suitability for ministry in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. While special provisions by way of accommodation might be in place, the church's responsibility to assess the outer dimension of the candidate's call to ministry remains unchanged. The same gifts and graces for ministry must be demonstrated by all candidates seeking to complete the church's candidacy process.*

**Recommendation No. 33** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 34** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Living Faith 7.1.1.

<sup>2</sup>Canadian Mental Health Association, cmha.ca, FAQ, "What is mental health?"

<sup>3</sup>For more information, see presbyterian.ca/colleaguecovenantgrant.

## **OVERTURE NO. 5, 2020** (see Referred Overtures, p. 2–3)

### **Re Investments in Indigenous enterprises**

Overture No. 5, 2020 was framed by the Session of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa and transmitted with approval by the Presbytery of Ottawa. The overture requests the Trustee Board of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to assess potential investments in Indigenous enterprises and funds that will be profitable for the church and beneficial to Indigenous peoples and communities, with the goal of investing approximately five percent of the assets in the Consolidated Fund in the Indigenous economy and report annually to the General Assembly on its progress towards this goal. The overture was referred to the Life and Mission Agency, in consultation with the Trustee Board. Both of these bodies have named people to form a working group that will study and craft a response.

The overture raises many good points to consider in its preamble, among them assessing which investments are best to pursue not only for the church but for Indigenous peoples. In order to fully and fruitfully respond to the purpose envisioned by the overture, a working group should be struck to research the best ways to fulfill the vision of this overture. More time will be needed to respond fully to the overture's prayer.

**Recommendation No. 35** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

## **OVERTURE NO. 11, 2018** (A&P 2018, p. 493)

### **Re: Support for Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action 57**

Overture No. 11, 2018 was submitted by the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod and referred to the Life and Mission Agency. The overture focused on the implication of Call to Action No 57 and asked the General Assembly "to write the federal, provincial and territorial governments and the Canadian Federation of Municipalities to voice support for the implementation to Call to Action 57, to ask for an explanation of the process developed or to be developed by the Government, how and whether the Canadian Federation of Municipalities will be working with municipalities and to encourage sessions, congregations and individuals to write to their municipally elected officials (mayor, councilor) to ask how they are helping to educate all public servants to fulfill Call to Action 57 or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best."

TRC Call to Action No. 57 says:

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law and Aboriginal-Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism.



This Call to Action recognizes that the need for education in reconciliation extends beyond children and teenagers; all Canadians need to understand Canada's history, Indigenous rights, treaties and Indigenous law in order to work towards a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

The Moderator wrote to the Government of Canada, provinces, territories and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities inquiring about their progress on Call to Action No. 57. At the time the letters were written, the Government of Canada, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, all three territories, Ontario and Alberta had announced measures taken to educate public servants in accordance with Call to Action No. 57. Since then responses have also been received from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities produced the report "Pathways to Reconciliation: Cities respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action". The report, which can be obtained from [info@fcm.ca](mailto:info@fcm.ca), includes some examples of how municipalities are responding to the TRC's Calls to Action and ideas for next steps. According to the report, Montreal, Vancouver, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Edmonton have committed to providing training for public servants related to reconciliation.

A letter template for contacting elected officials regarding Call to Action No. 57 is available upon request from Justice Ministries.

**Recommendation No. 36** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 37** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**OVERTURE NO. 6, 2020** (see Referred Overtures, p. 3)

**Re: Liturgies for same-sex marriage and blessing of civil marriages**

Overture No. 6, 2020 was submitted by the Session of St. James Church, Charlottetown and transmitted without comment by the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island. The prayer of the overture asks that the Life and Mission Agency prepare liturgies for the solemnization of same-sex marriages and for the blessing of previously conducted civil same-sex weddings or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, deems best.

The Life and Mission Agency regularly makes liturgies available for use within the denomination for various purposes. Consultation with appropriate committees and communities within the church is often done so that liturgies reflect the theology and traditions of the church and attend to the needs of congregations. Liturgies for the solemnization of same-sex marriages and for the blessing of previously conducted civil same-sex weddings will be made available by the Life and Mission Agency after appropriate consultation, should the General Assembly permit ministers to perform marriages between people of the same sex.

**Recommendation No. 38** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**OVERTURE NO. 10, 2019** (A&P 2019, p. 514)

**Re: Network of student charges and/or placements**

Overture No. 10, 2019 was framed by the Session of Calvin Church, Toronto and transmitted with approval by the Presbytery of East Toronto. The overture requests that the church's theological colleges and the Life and Mission Agency work together to amend their curriculums and programs to include, administer and promote the creation of a network of voluntary student charges or placements, with an emphasis on congregations that do not currently have Reformed and trained leadership. The overture was referred to the Life and Mission Agency with the request that the Agency consult with the theological colleges.

The prayer of the overture has many merits and is deserving of serious consideration after considerable research has been done. There is a complex of factors to consider, among them are the number of students who would be interested in and available for such a program, the costs and other practical considerations associated with placing students in charges during their studies, the number of vacancies and the percentage of those that have the capacity and need for a program envisioned by the overture. Additionally, the task of responding to the overture is complicated by differing curriculums and standards in the three theological colleges. More time will be needed to respond fully to the overture's prayer.

**Recommendation No. 39** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**OVERTURE NO. 15, 2018** (A&P 2018, p. 496, A&P 2019, p. 316-20)

**Re: Workplace harassment**

**Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in the Church**

The Presbytery of Brampton submitted Overture No. 15, 2018 asking that congregations, sessions, presbyteries and other ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada be engaged in a conversation about workplace harassment within the church for the purpose of creating awareness and developing best practices for preventing and responding to such incidents. A policy was prepared for the 2019 General Assembly and sent to the courts and committees of the church study and report. The Life and Mission is grateful for the helpful comments it received in the past year; the comments that were submitted helped to shape and further develop this policy.

The policy and procedures for addressing harassment in the church outlined below have been reviewed by legal counsel. If approved by the General Assembly, this policy document will be added to the Leading with Care Policy and appropriate references will be proposed for inclusion in the Book of Forms. The church is indebted to the Clerks of Assembly for preparing the procedures.

**Preamble to the Policy**

In the New Testament, the church is likened to the body of Christ and of a flock of sheep under the guidance of Christ's shepherding. John Calvin compared the church to a mother who nurtures a child (Institutes 4.1.6). Christians aspire to the highest expression of Christian fellowship implicit in these images and explicit in the teaching of Christ and the epistles of the early church and so the overture is right in saying that the church should be a safe place to exercise ministry. However, we confess that we are sinners and that our lives often do not reflect the Creator's love, with the result that the church is sometimes less than it is called to be. Regretfully, experience teaches that bullying and harassment takes place in the congregations, courts and committees of the church. Responding promptly, carefully and appropriately to harassment of any kind helps the church become the body Christ called it to be.

**Policy and Procedures for Addressing Harassment in the Church**

The church is called to be rooted in the love of Christ in all its relationships. The gospel mandate to love, under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit, sets the highest standard for our interactions with one another.

The policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is that harassment of any kind shall not be tolerated and will be addressed.

This policy applies to members, adherents, staff and volunteers of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

**Harassment in the Church**

Harassment means physical or verbal behaviours against a member, volunteer or employee in the church that are unwelcome or should be known to be unwelcome.

For example, harassment occurs when someone:

- makes unwelcome remarks or jokes about your race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other of the prohibited grounds of discrimination, which may vary from province to province;
- threatens or intimidates you because of your race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other of the prohibited grounds of discrimination;
- makes unwelcome physical contact with you, such as touching, patting or pinching.

Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. However, serious one-time incidents can also create a "poisoned environment" and be considered harassment.

In the context of employment within the church, conduct is considered harassment if it creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment or unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance.

A "reasonable action" taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace is not workplace harassment. A staff correction or staff performance review may be an example of reasonable actions.

## **Bullying**

There are different types of bullying including:

- Physical bullying: using physical force or physical aggression against others (e.g., hitting).
- Verbal bullying: using words to others (e.g., name-calling).
- Social/relational bullying: seeking to intimidate or harm others by excluding them, spreading rumors or ignoring them (e.g., gossiping).
- Cyberbullying: using electronic media to threaten, embarrass, intimidate or exclude others, including seeking to damage their reputation (e.g., sending threatening text messages).

Harassment is similar to bullying because someone hurts another person through cruel, offensive and insulting behaviours.

Harassment is different from bullying in that it is often a form of discrimination.

This policy covers both bullying and harassment and uses the term 'harassment' henceforth.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Harassment includes sexual harassment, which is defined as:

- engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome; or
- making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada already has policy and procedures for addressing sexual harassment. Since 1993 when the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment was first approved by the General Assembly, the church has committed to follow this established policy when addressing all complaints, it receives of sexual abuse or sexual harassment.

For this reason, whenever the alleged behaviour is of a sexual nature, the church is directed to use the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment.

## **Responsibilities**

Employers, sessions and members of courts and committees of the church will take steps to prevent and address incidences of harassment within the church wherever they may take place.

Employees are responsible for complying with this policy in their dealings with their coworkers and third parties while in the course of their employment. This applies to conduct while at work, during meetings at and away from the workplace and at work-related events.

This policy does not mean that social interaction between people who work together is prohibited but it requires that all employees be sensitive to the restraints required in the conduct of their working relationships with fellow employees.

## **Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Harassment within the Church**

If any minister or member of the Order of Diaconal Ministries (minister), member of the church, office bearer, adherent, employee or volunteer believes they have been the victim of harassment within the church, such individuals are encouraged to attempt to resolve the matter directly and respectfully with the person who they believe has engaged in harassment. Support people could be present for that meeting. A complainant is always free to contact the police if desired. During any police investigation, church procedures will be suspended.

If the person making the allegation does not feel they can safely meet with the alleged offender, then the allegation may be presented directly to the clerk or moderator of the court of jurisdiction or the supervisor in the case of an employee or volunteer.

Allegations made about the conduct of a minister shall be presented to the clerk or moderator of presbytery.

Allegations made about the conduct of a member, office bearer or adherent of the church shall be presented to the clerk of session or moderator of the session, unless the allegation is made by a minister, in which case it shall be presented to the clerk or moderator of presbytery.

Allegations arising out of conduct during a synod or General Assembly meeting may be presented to the clerk or moderator of that court.

Allegations arising in the course of employment are presented to a supervisor at any level in the organization.

### **The Complaint**

Where possible, complaints of harassment should be made in writing and include:

- the name(s) of the complainant(s) and contact information,
- the name(s) of the person alleged to have engaged in harassment (the respondent), position within the church and contact information (if known),
- the name(s) of any witness(es) or other person(s) with relevant information to provide about the incident and contact information (if known),
- a description of the situation or incident(s), including dates and times, frequency and location(s),
- any supporting documents that are relevant to the complaint and
- a list of any documents a witness, another person or the person alleged to have engaged in harassment may have in their possession that are relevant to the complaint.

Complaints may also be made verbally.

On receiving the harassment complaint, the clerk or moderator shall forward the complaint to a committee of three individuals, at least one of whom is a member of the court of jurisdiction who shall promptly conduct an investigation. Since cases will vary in complexity, some investigations may be completed within a few days while more complex situations may take more time. Every effort should be taken to conduct the investigation and complete the report within 30 days, if possible. Steps shall be taken to ensure the safety and comfort of the complainant. This could require that no contact occurs between the complainant and the accuser during the investigation. If further offence is considered a risk, the respondent may be removed from the court or event or temporarily suspended from employment. It should be made clear that this is on a 'without prejudice' basis. The investigation will be handled in a confidential manner, unless disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigating or taking corrective action or is otherwise required by law.

### **The Investigation**

An investigating committee shall be made up of not more than three individuals. These individuals must be able to be objective and are not the alleged harasser or under the direct supervision of the alleged harasser. They should be familiar with this policy and may need to be trained in its use (The Associate Secretary, Ministry and Church Vocations or the Clerks of Assembly can assist with training). Members of a Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment committee may be appropriate choices of individuals.

The investigating committee must preserve confidentiality as much as possible.

The investigation will:

- Fairly and thoroughly interview the complainant and respondent (normally before and after meeting witnesses).
- Give the respondent an opportunity to respond to the specific allegations in the complaint
- Separately interview relevant witnesses
- Collect and review relevant documents
- Take appropriate notes during interviews
- Result in the preparation of a report which summarizes
  - Steps of the investigation
  - Clear summary of complaint and allegations
  - Response to complaint
  - Evidence gathered, including a summary of witness statements

- Findings of fact and conclusion about whether harassment occurred or not.  
These findings are based on a 'balance of probabilities. What would a reasonable person believe took place? Are the parties and witnesses credible?
- Any resolution that has taken place or corrective decisions taken.

Note: In the case of employment the report shall be given to the employer, who shall determine what, if any employment censure shall take place.

During that investigation, the investigating committee may invite but not require, a meeting with both parties together.

### **Resolution**

Following the investigation, the complainant and the respondent will be informed of the results of the investigation and of any corrective action that has been taken. Corrective action must be reasonable and proportionate to the harassment that has been found to have taken place. The investigating committee's written report will remain confidential and filed with the employer or court of jurisdiction.

If possible, the investigating committee shall offer a means to resolve the matter in a manner that is acceptable to both parties. If the investigating committee finds that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate remedial action and any necessary steps to prevent a recurrence. The person found to have engaged in harassment will be disciplined appropriately. Discipline of employees may include a suspension without pay or dismissal from employment, the requirement to offer an apology, agreement to take training, a verbal or written behavioural covenant or other remedy. In the case of an employee of the church, if the recommended corrective action is related to employment, the report and recommendation shall be forwarded to their employer for action and implementation. If the respondent is accountable to a presbytery, the committee may forward the report and recommendation to the court of jurisdiction for information and possible action.

If an acceptable resolution cannot be found or if the remedial action taken by the investigating committee is unacceptable to the complainant, the person may initiate a disciplinary case, which shall follow the steps outlined in the Book of Forms, 345ff, with the provision that sections 350–53 do not apply. Similarly, the respondent reserves the right to a disciplinary case, with the same provision, if not satisfied with the decision or corrective action decided by the investigating committee.

In commencing a disciplinary case regarding allegations related to conduct during a synod or General Assembly meeting, the complaint shall be referred to the court that holds the membership of the alleged offender.

### **Record Keeping**

The employer or clerk of the court of jurisdiction will keep, in a secure locked location, records of all complaints or incidents of workplace harassment, including:

- a copy of the complaint or details about the incident,
- a record of the investigation including notes,
- copies of witness statements, if taken,
- a copy of the investigation report,
- a copy of the results of the investigation, as provided to the complainant and the respondent
- a record of any corrective action taken to address the complaint or incident.

Documents associated with the harassment complaint, incident and/or investigation will not be disclosed unless necessary to investigate an incident or complaint of workplace harassment, take corrective action or otherwise as required by law. All records will be kept for two years from the conclusion of the investigation unless the court deems it necessary to keep them longer.

### **No Retaliation**

Regardless of the outcome of a harassment complaint, the church will not tolerate retaliation against any anyone for making a complaint of harassment in good faith, reporting suspected discrimination or harassment or for cooperating in such an investigation. Such retaliation is a violation of this policy.

Employees and members of the church who make a malicious complaint of harassment may be subject to disciplinary action.

Nothing in this policy prevents or discourages an employee of the church from filing an application with the applicable Human Rights Tribunal on a matter related to the applicable human rights legislation within the time period prescribed by such legislation or from exercising any other legal avenues that may be available.

### **Policy and Program Review**

This policy, once approved by the General Assembly, will be read at least annually by sessions, ministry boards, presbyteries, synods, camps, colleges and standing committees in The Presbyterian Church in Canada to reduce the risk of harassment, including workplace harassment and sexual harassment. To ensure the policy continues to comply with applicable legislation, the Life and Mission Agency will conduct a review at least every three years. All employees and volunteers of the church are to receive training on the contents of this policy.

### **Recommendations**

In order to reference this policy in the polity of our church, the following information is to be added to the Book of Forms:

**Recommendation No. 40** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 41** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 42** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 43** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

### **OVERTURE NO. 11, 2019 (A&P 2019, p. 514-15)**

#### **Re: Preamble to ordination and induction of ministers**

Overture No. 11, 2019 was submitted by the Presbytery of East Toronto and referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency for response. The overture concerns the preamble to the ordination and induction vows of ministers and asks that they be revised using non-exclusive, current and accessible language while maintaining the theological integrity and dignity of the text. The Church Doctrine Committee shared the proposed documents that it will submit to the General Assembly in 2020. The Life and Mission Agency Committee has shared some initial feedback with the Church Doctrine Committee.

### **OVERTURE NO. 30, 2017 (A&P 2017, p. 602)**

#### **Re: Preamble to ordination and induction of ruling elders**

Overture 30, 2017 from the Session of St. Andrew's Humber Heights, Toronto, Ontario, was transmitted with approval by the Presbytery of West Toronto and referred to the Committee on Church Doctrine in consultation with the Life and Mission Agency. The overture concerns the preamble to the ordination and induction vows of ruling elders and asks that they be revised in plain English, using current and accessible language while maintaining the theological integrity of the document. The Church Doctrine Committee shared the proposed documents that it will submit to the General Assembly in 2020. The Life and Mission Agency Committee has shared some initial feedback with the Church Doctrine Committee.

### **OVERTURE NO. 1, 2019 (A&P 2019, p. 508-10)**

#### **Re: Legal advice regarding religious freedom and marriage**

Overture No. 1, 2019 was submitted by the Presbytery of Montreal and referred to the Life and Mission Agency. The overture asks the following two things of the General Assembly:

1. To seek a new legal opinion from a Canadian law firm with significant expertise in the area of Charter jurisprudence and religious freedom questions, concerning the religious freedom protections that may or may not be afforded to those who hold to a traditional view of marriage in a prospective context in which The Presbyterian Church in Canada permits a diversity of views and actions in relation to the definition of marriage and in which the definition of marriage may no longer be said to constitute a shared and core feature of the denomination's religious identity and convictions; and
2. To refrain from recommending the adoption of any form of "tolerated divergence" (under the Barrier Act) prior to its achievement of clarity on the legal questions defined above.

**“Relying on the Holy Spirit, we seek the application of God’s word for our time.”** (Living Faith 5.4)

In the church’s continuing task of reformulating the faith, we have been given the illumination and correction of the Holy Spirit speaking in the scriptures. Relying upon these gifts, elders and ministers discern matters before them through prayer, study and discussion. Because the church’s primary concerns when making decisions are theological and pastoral and because it was believed that the guidance of the Spirit and scriptures were sufficient for the church, a legal opinion about same-sex marriage was not sought in the early stages of the discussions about the matter.

Additionally, informed readings of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Civil Marriage Act of 2005 noted that the law protects clergy from being compelled to perform same-sex marriages against their religious beliefs. Notable in that regard are the following excerpts from the Civil Marriage Act:

WHEREAS everyone has the freedom of conscience and religion under section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;

WHEREAS nothing in this Act affects the guarantee of freedom of conscience and religion and, in particular, the freedom of members of religious groups to hold and declare their religious beliefs and the freedom of officials of religious groups to refuse to perform marriages that are not in accordance with their religious beliefs;

**Freedom of conscience and religion and expression of beliefs:**

- 3.1 For greater certainty, no person or organization shall be deprived of any benefit or be subject to any obligation or sanction, under any law of the Parliament of Canada solely by reason of their exercise, in respect of marriage between persons of the same sex, of the freedom of conscience and religion guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or the expression of their beliefs in respect of marriage as the union of a man and woman to the exclusion of all others based on that guaranteed freedom.

Moreover, the experience of other denominations provided sufficient assurance that the church could confidently rely upon scripture and the Spirit to discern the matters before it without undue concern about legal issues. While the church is wise to take into consideration possible legal implications of how decisions made regarding any remit may be enacted, seeking the mind of Christ for the church is the primary work of its courts.

A legal opinion on same-sex marriage was sought by the Life and Mission Agency after requests for an opinion were made by members of some of the church’s committees and because of a growing sense in the denomination that there were insurmountable legal impediments or severe legal risks that were inevitable if the church were to make any changes to its practices or definitions of marriage. The legal opinion received from the church’s legal counsel concluded that, “The law is clear that a religious official, unlike some civil marriage commissioners, cannot be compelled to perform a marriage ceremony that is inconsistent with his or her religious beliefs. On that basis, we do not believe that The Presbyterian Church in Canada’s proposed policy permitting its ministers to refuse to perform same-sex marriage ceremonies would expose The Presbyterian Church in Canada or its ministers to liability on the basis of discrimination or on any other ground.”

Other legal opinions sought on this matter in Canada generally agree that a religious official cannot be compelled by law to perform a marriage ceremony that is inconsistent with her or his religious beliefs even if those opinions evaluate levels of risk differently based on their understanding of what they consider trends. Legal opinions are just that – opinions; and they cannot easily predict what might or might not happen. The fact remains that religious bodies currently have sufficient protections under the law. We also know from other denominations in Canada that in the 15 years since same-sex marriage was legalized in Canada, there has been no case of a minister or congregation being held liable through a human rights claim or civil litigation for refusing to conduct or host a same-sex marriage. Similarly, in the 30 years since the United Church of Canada has permitted (optionally) the ordination of LGBTQI individuals, no case has been brought against the church for declining to proceed with such an ordination.

The legal opinion obtained from the church’s legal counsel was not intended to be a principle upon which the church would decide to maintain its current practices and definitions of marriage or change them. Rather, the legal opinion was meant to seek clarity on a matter that was diverting the church’s attention so the church could give its greater attention to the theological and pastoral aspects of the matters before it.

### **The Requests of Overture No 1, 2019**

The first request of the overture concerns the expertise of the law firm from which a legal opinion was sought about legal implications for ministers, should The Presbyterian Church in Canada permit a diversity of views and actions in relation to the definition of marriage and if the definition of marriage may no longer constitute a shared feature of the denomination's polity and statements.

In 2018 the Life and Mission Agency sought a formal legal opinion from Cassels Brock (Cassels), the law firm of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As lawyers have a duty to give advice that mitigates the client's risk it is reasonable to expect a conservative and cautious opinion from the denomination's legal counsel for their protection.

Cassels is one of Canada's preeminent legal firms and regularly argues before federal and provincial human rights tribunals and provincial and federal supreme courts on Charter issues in the area of human rights, privacy, Indigenous issues and human resources. In exercising its duties to its clients, Cassels would not accept work in an area the firm could not give competent, complete and insightful expert advice upon.

The lawyer who led the research and writing of the legal opinion also specializes in human resources law (an area of expertise specifically relevant in these discussions) and has represented clients before provincial and federal human rights commissions, the Superior Court of Ontario, the Ontario Labour Relations Board, the Employment Standards Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Labour and in mediations and grievance arbitrations. The expertise in the area of human resources was supported by the relevant capacity of the legal firm's full resources. The opinion received from the church's legal counsel is generally consistent with insight into the germane legal matters the church had previously received, the experience of other denominations and other legal opinions sought on this subject in Canada.

The second request of the overture asking that the Assembly refrain from recommending the adoption of any legislation under the Barrier act before obtaining a legal opinion is problematic because the Barrier Act process is already underway. If the church were now to submit to the prayer of the overture, it would add an additional decision-making feature that would interfere with the forms and standards of the Barrier Act while the process is unfolding. Such additions would be irregular, added with ill effect and potentially result in challenges to the legitimacy of the outcome of any amended implementation of the Barrier Act.

In light of the gifts of scripture and the Spirit, our traditions and principles of discernment confirmed in a letter from the Assembly Council to presbyteries in 2019 encouraging them to discern the matter before them on theological and pastoral grounds, the Barrier Act process that is already underway, the assurances available in legal advice and opinions and the experience of other denominations, we believe that the General Assembly should respectfully decline the prayer of the overture.

Should the Assembly adopt any change to either its definitions or practices of marriage, the Clerks of Assembly would seek and obtain ample and necessary legal advice required to carry out the church's decisions responsibly and in the most appropriate way within the parameters of both the polity of the church and Canadian law.

**Recommendation No. 44** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**OVERTURE NO. 20, 2018** (A&P, 2018, p. 489–90)

**Re: Endorsing the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth**

Overture No. 20, 2018 was submitted by the Session of St. David and St. Martin, Ottawa, transmitted with the approval of the Presbytery of Ottawa and referred to the Life and Mission Agency. The response to the overture that was submitted to the General Assembly in 2019 was referred back to the Life and Mission Agency for additional consideration. The overture asks that The Presbyterian Church in Canada endorse the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth (Joint Statement).

### **Introduction**

Children and youth are gifts from God and bearers of the Kingdom. The wellbeing of children and the care of their bodies, minds and souls should be at the forefront of the church's pastoral care.

The physical punishment of children and youth is an emotional and highly charged subject. Our thoughts and feelings about this matter are shaped by family customs, cultural traditions, and, perhaps most painfully, our own experiences of physical punishment as people who may have received and used physical punishment. In addition to



the influence of these factors and experiences, the Bible and the theology of the church as well as the laws and universal declarations adopted by Canada, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, contribute to the church's understanding.

The response to the overture is divided into the following sections:

- The Preamble of Overture No. 20, 2018
- The Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth (definition, purpose and findings, recommendations, what endorsement does and does not mean)
- The Criminal Code of Canada and Physical Punishment
- Canada and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Presbyterian Church in Canada Statements about Physical Punishment and the Protection of Children
- Studying the Overture: Consultation with the Church
- Conclusions and Recommendations

### **The Preamble of Overture No. 20, 2018**

The framers of the overture base their request that the church endorse the Joint Statement on a number of compelling points that warrant careful attention and consideration. Some aspects of the preamble to the overture are explored below.

The overture begins by invoking scripture passages (Matthew 15:26, 18:2–6, 19:14; Mark 9:37, 10:14–16; Luke 18:16) that testify to the dignity of children and youth and their special role as recipients of the Kingdom of God.

The preamble to the overture goes on to point to the overwhelming amount of widely accepted well-researched evidence that confirms physical punishment places all children at risk for physical injury, poor mental health, impaired relationships with parents, weaker internalization of moral values, antisocial behaviour, poorer adult adjustment and tolerance for violence in adulthood. New data has emerged since the report was published in 2004 that further supports the findings of the Joint Statement. Remarkably, no published peer-reviewed research and scientifically credible evidence has contradicted the findings of the report.

There is broad international endorsement for the report including over 600 Canadian medical, educational, social, professional organizations and faith groups (e.g., Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law; Canadian Medical Association; Canadian Paediatric Society; Canadian Psychological Association; Canadian Public Health Association; etc.). These endorsements testify to the integrity of the methodologies and conclusions of the scientific studies the Joint Statement is based on.

The framers of the overture further remind the church of the importance of appropriate discipline in the formation and development of children which helps them become the people God created them to be. As the Joint Statement says, “effective discipline is an important part of raising well adjusted, respectful and responsible children”. We can all attest to the positive power that discipline has played in our spiritual, psychological and human development. The polity of the church recognizes the positive power of discipline by regarding it as a spiritual good for people and therefore practices discipline as a form of pastoral care.

The Joint Statement points not only to the ill effects of physical punishment but to the benefits of alternative positive forms of discipline in raising children. Additionally, the Joint Statement advocates for the development of universal parenting and care-giver education that will help parents use safe, appropriate and effective discipline with their children.

The preamble of the overture cites the church's Confession recognizing the church's role in operating residential schools and the harm those schools caused to Indigenous children, their families and communities. In the Confession we acknowledge that we “used disciplinary practices which were foreign to Aboriginal peoples, and open to exploitation in physical and psychological punishment beyond any Christian maxim of care and discipline.” (Section 5) Additionally, we prayed that God would “guide us in compassionate ways towards helping them to heal” (Section 6), and that “with God's guidance our Church will seek opportunities to walk with Aboriginal peoples to find healing and wholeness together as God's people”. (Section 7)

One way we continue to walk with Indigenous peoples is by responding to the Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The following statement about the residential school system was made in the prelude to Call to Action No. 6 in the Commission's final report:

In their mission to ‘civilize’ and Christianize, the school staff relied on corporal punishment to discipline their students. That punishment often crossed the line into physical abuse. Although it is employed much less frequently now, corporal punishment is still legally permissible in schools and elsewhere under Canadian law...The Commission believes that corporal punishment is a relic of a discredited past and has no place in Canadian schools or homes.

As a result, the Commission’s sixth Call to Action reads: “We call upon the Government of Canada to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada.”

The Hon. Murray Sinclair, Chairman of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a member of the Senate of Canada has sponsored a bill in the Senate that seeks to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code. During debate on the Bill in the Senate on March 7, 2017, the Hon. Sinclair said that:

The violence that indigenous children experienced at the hands of their guardians at those schools became so much a part of their lives that it is often reflected in the way that they came to treat their own children. Residential schools in this country are clear evidence that child violence begets parental violence. Hitting children to change their behaviour simply does not work.

The Joint Statement recommends that children in Canada must be given the same protection from physical assault as that given to Canadian adults. This recommendation is consistent not only with Call to Action No.6 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission but also with Canada’s ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### **Joint Statement on the Physical Punishment of Children and Youth**

The Joint Statement was developed by a coalition of six Canadian organizations led by the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario and endorsed by over 600 religious, medical and educational bodies. The document examines physical punishment in Canada from legal, developmental and human rights perspectives and provides examples of resources on effective parenting. Based on extensive and authoritative research, the document provides an overview of the developmental outcomes of using physical punishment on children and youth and concludes that:

The evidence is clear and compelling – physical punishment of children and youth plays no useful role in their upbringing and poses only risks to their development. The conclusion is equally compelling – parents should be strongly encouraged to develop alternative and positive approaches to discipline.

The text of the Joint Statement can be found at [cheo.on.ca/en/physicalpunishment](http://cheo.on.ca/en/physicalpunishment).

### **How are physical punishment, protective physical restraint and self-defense different and how are they defined in the Joint Statement?**

Physical punishment and protective physical restraint are different. The important distinction between these two physical interventions is made clearly on page 2 of the Joint Statement.

Protective physical restraint is the application of external control meant to protect the child or others from harm or pain. Protective restraint includes such actions as holding a child back from a busy road, moving a child’s hand away from a hot stove, or holding a child who is causing pain to another.

Likewise, self-defense, which is not intended to correct a behaviour but to protect oneself from harm, is not physical punishment. Protective physical restraint and self-defense are not the focus of the Joint Statement.

The Joint Statement defines physical punishment (distinct from both physical restraint and self-defense) as any action intended to cause physical discomfort or pain used to deter a child from repeating an action or behaviour, change a child’s behaviour, or to ‘teach a lesson’. Physical punishment may be administered directly with a hand or may be mediated by objects such as rulers or belts. Not all physical punishment involves striking children; such things as requiring a child to maintain an uncomfortable position, kneel on hard objects, or placing any offensive-tasting substance in their mouth are also examples of physical punishment.

## **The Purposes and Findings of the Joint Statement**

The Joint Statement's stated purposes are:

- to provide an understanding of the ways in which physical punishment can affect children's development
- to summarize the evidence of the risks of physical punishment
- to identify the factors that perpetuate the use of physical punishment
- to encourage caregivers to choose approaches to discipline that do not rely on physical punishment

### **The Joint Statement had a number of primary findings**

- Physical punishment is most likely to begin when a child's behaviour threatens a parent's sense of control.
- There is no clear evidence of any benefit that comes from the use of physical punishment on children and youth.
- There is strong evidence that physical punishment places children and youth at risk of injury, poorer mental health, impaired relationships with parents, weaker internalization of moral values, exhibition of antisocial behaviour, poorer adult adjustment and tolerance of violence in adulthood.
- Most parents believe physical punishment is unnecessary and harmful and few parents believe physical punishment is effective. The majority of parents believe the most common outcome of physical punishment is guilt or regret in the parent.
- Parents are more likely to use physical punishment if they approve of it, experienced it themselves as children, feel anger in response to their children's behaviour, are subject to depression, or are burdened by stress.
- Alternate ways to address discipline include improving a child's problem-solving skills, modelling and reinforcing positive behaviours, reducing personal and family stress, learning to recognize the things that trigger anger and creating strategies to address them.

### **Recommendations of the Joint Statement**

The Joint Statement outlines a number of recommendations based on the extensive research that was conducted. Among the recommendations are the following:

1. Public awareness strategies must be developed to inform all Canadians about the risks associated with physical punishment.
2. Provincial and territorial ministries that deliver health and social services must be mandated and positioned to provide education about the effects of physical punishment as well as effective approaches to discipline.
3. Organizations that serve children and families or provide relevant professional education must have policy and service responsibilities regarding physical punishment of children and youth (i.e. clear guidelines that parents and professionals can refer to and that the organizations serving children, parents, and associated professionals can also refer to and use to guide their actions).
4. Child welfare eligibility and investigative protocols must be reviewed and sufficiently resourced to ensure that they facilitate early supportive/preventative intervention and services (specifically, the Joint Statement advocates intervening through educating parents early on before violence escalates, with the aim of "building parenting competence" so less children have to be taken from homes).
5. Change the Criminal Code such that the physical punishment of children can no longer be justified by the Criminal Code of Canada.
6. As a shared responsibility of national provincial and territorial governments, collect reliable data about the attitudes of Canadians toward child and youth physical punishment, to assess the success of the recommended public awareness and education strategies, and where they can be improved.

### **Endorsement of the Joint Statement**

There are no legal, financial or follow-up obligations associated with the endorsement of the Joint Statement. Many organizations use the Joint Statement and accompanying resources as the basis for their own education programs and purposes.

On the basis of the cumulative and consistent evidence that physical punishment of children and youth plays no useful role in their upbringing and poses risks to their development, the researchers and the more than 600 religious, health, social services and educational institutions that endorsed the report to-date, believe parents should be strongly encouraged to develop alternative, positive approaches to discipline. Support for the Joint Statement has been broad and clear. Among the institutions that have endorsed the statement are university departments, hospitals,

school boards in all provinces and territories, medical health officers across the country, coalitions of social workers and child protection agencies in Canada. Below are some examples of the calibre of the endorsing institutions:

Amnesty International Canada, Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; Canadian Association for Community Living; Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists; Canadian Association of Social Workers; Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport; Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators; Canadian Council of Provincial Child and Youth Advocates; Canadian Dental Association; Canadian Federation of University Women; Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law; Canadian Institute of Child Health; Canadian Medical Association; Canadian Nurses Association; Canadian Paediatric Society; Canadian Physiotherapy Association; Canadian Psychological Association; Canadian Public Health Association; the Canadian Red Cross; and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (headed by Cindy Blackstock, who received the Cutting Edge of Mission Award from The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 2017).

Among the distinguished Canadians who have endorsed the Joint Statement are the following:

- The Hon. Louise Arbour: former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; former Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada; former Chief Prosecutor of War Crimes for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia;
- The Hon. Claire L'Heureux-Dubé: former Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada; President of the International Commission of Jurists, Geneva; Companion of the Order of Canada;
- The Hon. Stephen Lewis: UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa; former Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations; former Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);
- George Thomson: Executive Director, National Judicial Institute; former Deputy Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada; former judge Provincial Court, Province of Ontario; Lieutenant-General;
- The Hon. Roméo Dallaire: former Commander, United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda; Special Advisor on War-Affected Children to CIDA and to Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade on non-proliferation of small arms; Member of Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights;
- Dr. Cindy Blackstock: Executive Director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada; Associate Professor, University of Alberta; recipient of the Cutting Edge of Mission Award from The Presbyterian Church in Canada;
- Dr. Fraser Mustard: Founding President, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research; Co-author, The Early Years Study on brain development for the Children's Secretariat, Government of Ontario; Companion of the Order of Canada;
- Dr. Richard Tremblay: Founding Director, Centre of Excellence for Early Child Development, University of Montreal; Professor of Psychology, Pediatrics and Psychiatry and Director, Research Unit on Children's Psycho-Social Maladjustment, University of Montreal; Canada Research Chair in Child Development; Director, Research Center on the National Longitudinal Survey of Children; Director, Knowledge Centre for Early Childhood Learning.

Among the faith-based bodies in Canada that have endorsed the Joint Statement to date are the following:

The Anglican Diocese of Ottawa; Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association; Canadian Council of Reform Judaism; Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers); Canadian Unitarian Council; Catholic education bodies in Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, and The Northwest Territories; Christian Children's Fund Canada; Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada; Islamic Social Services Association Canada; Jewish Child and Family Services in Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg Edmonton, and Calgary; Presbytery of East Toronto (The Presbyterian Church in Canada); Presbytery of Ottawa (The Presbyterian Church in Canada); St David & St Martin Presbyterian Church (Ottawa, Ontario); St Mark's Presbyterian Church (Toronto, Ontario); the Salvation Army, Bethany Hope Centre, Central Eastern Division, Ottawa, Ontario; the United Church of Canada; and the Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education.

### **The Criminal Code of Canada: Physical Punishment**

The Joint Statement calls for the repeal of certain legislation in Canada in light of its findings. Using non-consensual physical force against another person is considered assault under the Criminal Code of Canada, which legally protects all citizens. However, Section 43 of the Criminal Code entitled "Correction of child by force" provides the following exception:

Every schoolteacher, parent or person standing in the place of a parent is justified in using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.

In 1994, the Province of Quebec removed the right of correction from the Civil Code. In 1999, the constitutionality of Section 43 of the Criminal Code was first challenged in Ontario's Superior Court of Justice on sections of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In its judgement, the provincial court recognized the "growing body of evidence that even mild forms of corporal punishment do no good and may cause harm." The provincial court's decision also observed that experts on both sides of the debate about physical punishment agreed that:

1. "Hitting a child under two is wrong and harmful...has no value and can destroy a child's sense of security and self-esteem."
2. Physically punishing teenagers "is not helpful and potentially harmful."
3. "Corporal punishment using objects such as belts, rulers, etc. is potentially harmful both physically and emotionally and should not be tolerated."
4. "Physical punishment should never involve a slap or blow to the head."
5. "Corporal punishment that causes injury is child abuse."

The court's decision also acknowledged that no expert witness recommended physical punishment as a form of discipline. Nevertheless, the provincial court ruled that Section 43 of the Criminal Code was constitutional. The Ontario Superior Court's decision was upheld by the Ontario Court of Appeal. Its decision was appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, which limited the definition of who may use physical punishment on a child, on what ages and body parts of children, and under what circumstances.

At the same time, it is worth remembering that two former Supreme Court Justices and a former Deputy Minister of Justice have personally endorsed the Join Statement that calls for the repeal of Section 43.

Some questions were raised about the legal implications for parents if Section 43 were to be removed from the Criminal Code. This concern is worthy of some attention. The purpose of repealing Section 43 is to provide children the same protection from violence Canadian adults have. Mild physical interventions made by parents seeking to do their best under stressful circumstances would not result in criminal prosecution or child welfare interventions in families. There is absolutely no evidence that countries that have changed their laws to protect children from the harm associated with physical punishment have seen increased legal actions with families. Prosecutors are not interested in pursuing the vast majority of parents raising their children in good faith and as best they are able. The realistic outcomes of rescinding Section 43 include:

- It will be easier to improve parental education on child discipline.
- It will prevent violent parents from using successfully this section as a defense against acts of violence against children.
- It will satisfy Call to Action No 6 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

### **Canada and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention)**

In 1991 Canada ratified the Convention, Article 3 of which states that "...in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."

Under the terms of the Convention, the best interests of the child include protection from assault. By ratifying the Convention, Canada was obliged to put in place "all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and education measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse" (Article 19).

Since 1991 the UN has called for the repeal of section 43 of our Criminal Code no less than three times and has expressed "grave concern" about Canada's inaction on this issue.

In 2003, during the second review of Canada's compliance with the obligations of the Convention, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child indicated it was "deeply concerned" that Canada had "not enacted legislation explicitly prohibiting all forms of corporal punishment and has taken no action to remove section 43 of the Criminal Code, which allows corporal punishment". The committee recommended that Canada "adopt legislation to remove the existing authorization of the use of "reasonable force" in disciplining children and explicitly prohibit all forms of

violence against children, however light, within the family, in schools and in other institutions where children may be placed.”

In 2006, the UN Secretary-General’s Study on Violence against Children concluded that all governments are ultimately responsible for the protection of children, and to fulfil their human rights obligation, states were called upon to end justification of violence against children, whether it be accepted as a tradition or disguised as a discipline.

### **The Presbyterian Church in Canada Statements about Physical Punishment and the Protection of Children**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has made various statements about physical abuse of children and forms of domestic violence. In 1973 the General Assembly approved several reforms the Government of Canada introduced to the penal code regarding corporal punishment, which had historically allowed the use of the strap on people incarcerated in Canadian prisons. However, the church has yet to speak on behalf of the most vulnerable in society in relation to corporal punishment of children at the hands of teachers and parents.

In 2005, The Presbyterian Church in Canada committed to providing safe environments for all persons, including children, youth, vulnerable adults, and those who minister to and with them, when it adopted the Leading with Care Policy. The church committed to the following pledges in Leading with Care:

- We will prevent abuse of children/youth/vulnerable adults.
- We will protect the vulnerable in our midst.
- The Presbyterian Church in Canada affirms that the protection of all children, youth and vulnerable adults is a spiritual, ethical and legal imperative.

### **Studying the Overture: Consultation with the Church**

Extensive consultation with members of the church about this matter was conducted. The Joint Statement and some interview questions were distributed to Presbyterians living in every presbytery. Great care was taken to ensure that consultation was conducted with a cross-section of people in the church and especially with those who had experience as youth workers, ministers, diaconal workers, camp staff, teachers, physicians, nurses, social workers, theologians, academics and lawyers. People connected to ministries with Indigenous peoples, people from visible minorities, newcomers to Canada and members of the denomination’s committees were intentionally overrepresented among those who were invited to participate in the consultation process. More intensive interviews and conversations were held with people in and outside The Presbyterian Church in Canada who had specialized knowledge and experience.

For some of those consulted, physical correction was a difficult topic to read about and consider. Gratitude is owed to those who were consulted for their candid, sincere and courageous responses, which demonstrated the depth of thought and care people showed in their responses to the Joint Statement. Respondents spoke and wrote in compelling and thoughtful ways about how faith, the Bible, theology and experience informed their discernment on this matter and the theological reflections that were received are incorporated into the section on the Bible and theology below. Many noted that their thinking and practice have evolved with time, experience and education.

The overwhelming majority of people who were consulted (125 people) enthusiastically supported The Presbyterian Church in Canada endorsing the Joint Statement. Almost without exception, people said they found the research compelling and the resources helpful. A very small minority (representing about 3%) of the respondents raised concerns about the research, conclusions and recommendations of the Joint Statement and suggested a nuanced or limited endorsement for a variety of reasons. A few people believed the Joint Statement should not be endorsed.

People appreciated that the Joint Statement was well written, educational and came with an extensive bibliography that made it an “empowering resource” that, in the words of the Strategic Plan, was “relevant, contextual and missional”. A number of people said that the research and findings of the report resonated with their experience; for example, people repeatedly said they had used corporal punishment out of fatigue and frustration, not because they felt it was effective or a desirable way to relate to their own children or the children in their care.

Many respondents saw endorsing the Joint Statement as another way to fulfill the sentiments in the Confession the Church made in 1994 to Indigenous people for our role in Indian Residential Schools. A significant number of people said that they saw the Joint Statement as a natural and logical extension of the sentiments the church has already expressed in the Leading with Care Policy.

The leaders of the church's National Indigenous Ministry Council (NIMC) were asked especially for their input into the response to this overture, and a draft was also circulated to the members of the Council. On the matter of physical punishment of children, respondents noted that the Cree, Dakota and other Indigenous cultures used non-physical ways to discipline and teach children, and that, "Traditionally, our people did not believe in hitting children as it was believed it could ruin the spirit of the child. But from a very young age, children were taught the right way to live and to be." It was recalled by one Indigenous leader that a Jesuit priest was quoted as saying about the Innu people (relatives of the Cree) in Eastern Canada that, "these savages will not so much as raise their voices at their children, and if you do, they will come down hard on you". One Indigenous minister wrote: "We use a lot of love and attention and affirmation about their worth and value. Love and attention seem to work the best for them. We give them hope that they are the leaders and elders of the future."

Special mention was made of the importance of training parents, ensuring that children be protected and that the mistakes of the past not repeated, especially in the context of children in foster care.

One member of the NIMC noted that the Canadian experience has repeatedly taught us that children who are physically punished within the home or school sometimes flee. Tragically, these children often end up homeless, missing or murdered. This observation is in keeping with the findings of the effects of using pain to discipline children identified in the Joint Statement.

### **Biblical and Theological Reflection**

Everyone who was consulted was asked to reflect on the Joint Statement from a biblical and theological perspective. The theological reflections from the church were often dynamic and very thoughtful, as the respondents drew upon scripture, the nature of God, the ethical implications of the sacraments and the church's faith statements.

### **Scripture**

Most respondents framed the matter of the physical punishment of children and youth in the larger context of how the Bible (especially Jesus's teachings and the pastoral teaching in the epistles) instructs the people of God to treat one another and to deal with anger and conflict. Among the texts that people referenced in this regard were Matthew 5:22–25 and Matthew 18:15–18 that speak of anger, patience and reconciliation. 1 Corinthians 13 was frequently cited as a reminder to parents that the love they were obliged to show in the "high and holy duty" God placed on them as parents was often stretched by circumstances and frustration, but that Christian love is patient, kind and not irritable. It was noted that love is not just a sentimental feeling, but an intentional way of behaving, acting, reacting towards and dealing with those whom we love. Similarly, the treatment of love in Galatians 5 and the fruits of the spirit listed in that passage were mentioned as qualities parents should model for children. Likewise, people cited Colossians 3 as a passage that contained instructions about behaviour and family life that parents are instructed to embrace (e.g., compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience) or reject (e.g., anger and rage) in order to have constructive "holy" relationships. People recalled that Jesus rebuked the use of violence by his followers at the time of his arrest (Matthew. 26:51–54; Luke 22:49–51; John 18:10–11) and that Jesus called peacemakers "the children of God" (Matthew 5:9).

Concerning discipline generally, it was noted that the scriptures witness to God's divine discipline which is given for the loving benefit of humankind. On the specific matter of the physical punishment of children, almost every person commented on the verses in the Book of Proverbs that permit and even advocate the physical punishment of children ("Those who spare the rod hate their children, but those who love them are diligent to discipline them." [13:24]; "Blows that wound cleanse away evil; beatings make clean the innermost parts [20:30]; "Folly is bound up in the heart of a boy, but the rod of discipline drives it far away." [22:15]; "Do not withhold discipline from your children; if you beat them with a rod, they will not die. If you beat them with the rod, you will save their lives from Sheol." [23:13–14]; "The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a mother is disgraced by a neglected child." [29:15]). All but a couple of respondents made observations about the texts from Proverbs in relation to other parts of scripture, their historical uses and the familial contexts for which they were originally envisioned.

It was observed that there are a number of instances in the Book of Proverbs where beating adults with rods is encouraged, a practice the church would not condone and has protested against. So, it was asked, why the church would not advocate for the same treatment for children as the church has advocated for adults?

The majority of people did not simply list biblical texts in their reflections. Rather they put passages from the Book of Proverbs in conversation with other biblical texts and the fullness of Jesus' ministry, creating robust and generative theological reflections on the topic.

Some people read the passages from Proverbs in light of certain “texts of terror” that preserve stories of destructive parental actions, such as Jephthah offering his daughter as a sacrifice (Judges 11:28–40). In contrast, some people interpreted the Proverbs passages in light of the Golden Rule (Matthew 7 and Luke 6), which puts the adult and child in a respectful relationship. Likewise, James 1:19–20 and Ephesians 4:26–27 and other passages about sin and anger were used to interpret the Proverbs passages.

Frequently respondents put the passages from Proverbs in dialogue with 1 Timothy 4:11–12, which reads, “These are the things you must insist on and teach. Let no one despise your youth but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”

Some respondents noted that, while it was culturally normative at times in some biblical communities to regard children as having little worth, Jesus saw childhood as the means of entering the kingdom of God (Mark 10:13–16, Mark 9:42) and he held children in high regard in the faith community. Similar insights were yielded from readings of Deuteronomy 6:4–9 and 31:12, in which children are named as valued members of the family and faith.

There were intriguing reflections on Matthew 18:2–6 in which Jesus says, “If anyone causes one of these little ones to stumble,” questioning whether the long term effects of physically punishing a child could cause children to become violent and harmful to others in turn. The Joint Statement points out that physical punishment of children almost always leads to significant impairment of the parent/child relationship. Trust is strained and distance is created by the use of physical punishment.

### **Theology**

Unsurprisingly, respondents spoke of God's loving and gracious nature. People readily drew upon images in the Book of Isaiah and the Psalms where God is seen as a providing, caring, supporting parent and shepherd and the people as God's children and flock. If children sometimes learn about the nature of God from what they see in those who care for them and teach them (primarily parents and teachers), then any punishment that inflicts bodily pain or harm particularly as the result of anger or frustration translates directly or indirectly into child's concept of God. Such understandings of God will be very difficult to replace as a child matures.

People noted the preferential care Christ showed for the weakest in society as instructive about how the weakest in families, congregations, homes and churches should be treated. Greater care, mutual respect, and understanding of the developmental abilities of a child in any given situation should be the foundation of any care-giving relationship.

Some wrote compellingly about the implications of the incarnation as a reminder of the value and dignity of the human body. Flesh matters and physical punishment and violence towards it is an assault on God's creation and the people God loves.

Many talked or wrote about the implications of our covenantal understanding of baptism on our stance on the physical punishment of children. Through Baptism we experience the grace, mercy, forgiveness, and tenderness of God. We do not deserve it and we cannot earn it, but we are recipients of all these divine gifts in baptism. When human beings are defiant and wayward, God responds with acceptance and a warm embrace. The lost is found and restored; what is broken is made whole; and those who deserve wrath are offered forgiveness. The love that is shown to us in baptism, in turn, shows us how to love our children.

Even more people reflected on the generous and broad implications of the vows congregations and parents make during baptism to nurture the faith of children. Congregations promise to encourage, teach and pray for children, as well as support their families. These vows include participation in protecting the physical and spiritual wellbeing of children. The whole church is called upon to extend loving-kindness to each child, as if each were our own child. Baptism implies that no matter the state or condition of a child and regardless of a child's behaviour, our response to children must be guided, accompanied, and shaped by unconditional love. Such love is the most powerful force of correction and transformation.

Likewise, some pointed out that The Presbyterian Church in Canada has said that children are welcome at the Lord's Table. Children are no less worthy of the sacrament of God's love, and at the same time, will have different understandings of God than adults do. In faith, as in all things in life, there are stages of understanding and development. Recognizing the effects of developmental stages in terms of how we can most effectively raise, teach, discipline, and form our children in Christian love is an important feature of our faith. This study shows that physical punishment is detrimental to children's development and at the same time points out that parents and



caregivers who resort to physical punishment of children most often do not adequately understand or take into account a child's developmental stage or ability. Recognizing that children receive and understand God's love differently than adults, due to their age and ability, but no less profoundly, is a core value in opening the Lord's Table to children. In the same way, recognizing that children cannot always understand or meet an adult's expectation of behaviour, due to age or ability, is an essential component of responding to children with patience, creative and constructive correction, and loving discipline rather than with physical punishment or harm. Children at all stages of development are worthy of our best efforts of love, even as God graciously receives them at the Table.

### **The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Faith Statements**

Questions 122–133 of the Large Catechism are related to the fifth commandment to honour parents. Question 122 summarizes the fourth to tenth commandments (which relate to our duties to one another) as “to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to do to others what we would have them do to us”. In this way the Large Catechism places the fifth commandment to honour parents in the context of mutual concern, reciprocal respect and care.

The catechism includes “not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts...over us in place of authority” (Q 124) in the definition of parents who are to be honoured in the fifth commandment, which would include teachers covered in Section 43 of the Criminal Code. The catechism proceeds to say that parents and all superiors are required “to love, pray for, and bless their inferiors; to instruct, counsel, and admonish them; countenancing, commending, and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproving, and chastising such as do ill; protecting, and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body: and by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honour to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them” (Q. 129). The Joint Statement points out that physical punishment can include depriving a child of basic bodily and psychological needs, which is contrary to the requirements of those entrusted with the care of children outlined in the catechism. And while the catechism does not specifically forbid corporal punishment overtly, the physical correction of children, Q 130 about the sins of superiors includes the sin of “correcting them unduly” and provoking them to wrath. It warns people in positions of authority (including authority over children) of being dishonourable because of injustice or behaviour that is excessively rigorous.

One minister of the church wrote that, “the catechism is proactively concerned about the weak, not just here [in the sections about the commandment to honour parents] but in other areas as well”.

Using language carefully in this discussion is also theologically significant. The Joint Statement invites us to consider the difference between correction and discipline on one hand, and punishment in which any form of physical force or neglect is employed on the other. Our own tradition advocates strongly for proper discipline within the context of pastoral care for members and ministers. The discipline of children is necessary if we are to love them as we ought and raise them well. However, discipline is not synonymous with physical punishment. In fact, some would argue that physical punishment of any kind is contrary to effective, loving and corrective discipline.

Some respondents referred to Living Faith (8.2.4), which affirms that, “Parents in caring for their children are mediators of God's love and discipline.” People concluded that if parents are mediators of the love and discipline of God, then the church must teach, promote and encourage a style of parenting that is loving, caring, correcting and gracious. We desire that children develop a spiritual life that imagines God and love as not punitive, non-violent and loving.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Joint Statement reflects the care and concern expressed in Scripture for children and the vulnerable. A Christian Theological Statement in Support of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action No. 6 created at a gathering of ecumenical theologians sponsored through the School of Religion at Queen's University concludes that:

A full reading of scripture in light of the revelation of Jesus Christ, who embraced and welcomed children, is incompatible with physical punishment. Scripture constantly invites the people of God to imagine a better future. We affirm the following biblical principles: children are sacred gifts from God; fully human and deserving of dignity and respect; blessed with gifts, wisdom and strengths that enrich the common good; vulnerable persons deserving nurture, protection and justice; and individuals with growing moral and spiritual capacities.

Additionally, the Joint Statement's findings and recommendations resonate with principles expressed in some of the subordinate standards of the church. In Living Faith (8.4), we affirm that God is always calling the church to seek the justice in the world that reflects the divine righteousness revealed in the Bible. Justice is seen when we:

- deal fairly with each other
- strive to change customs and practices that oppress
- seek to protect the rights of others and protest against everything that destroys human dignity.

This justice to which the church is called (according to Living Faith):

- seeks the best way to create wellbeing and fairness in society
- is concerned about education, health, rights and responsibilities
- involves the protection of human beings
- requires fair laws justly administered
- opposes prejudice and rejects discrimination on such grounds as race, age, status, or ability
- stands with our neighbours in their struggle for dignity and respect
- demands the exercise of power for the common good

The extensive well-researched and widely accepted conclusions of the Joint Statement reveal the destructive results of physical punishment on the mental, physical and spiritual health of children. Further research and consultation has revealed that since the report was published, additional scientific studies have confirmed the findings of the Joint Statement. At the same time, no peer-reviewed research and scientifically credible evidence has contradicted the Joint Statement's findings.

Discipline is important for the development of children and is a feature of the responsible care for children. Physical punishment, however, is found to be ineffective and also corrosive to the sacred parent-child bond. The Joint Statement is an empowering educational resource that helps parents, teachers and care-givers learn about positive disciplinary alternatives to physical punishment.

Call to Action No. 6 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools calls for the repeal of Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada. Endorsing the Joint Statement helps the church live out the commitments we made in the Confession to walk the path of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

For the reasons outlined above, the following recommendations are presented.

**Recommendation No. 45** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 46** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 47** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 48** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 49** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

**Recommendation No. 50** (will be presented in final report to the General Assembly)

Cindy Stephenson  
Convener

Ian Ross-McDonald  
General Secretary