



Ministering to Children and Youth

Please Pass the Faith

By Tori Smit, Regional Minister for Faith Formation, Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda

"My granddaughter loves going to church. We're all there together; three generations sitting in the pew—it makes me the happiest grandparent I can be. My kids are doing a great job, but I often wonder if it's all up to them. What should I be doing to pass on my faith to my grandchildren?"

"My children no longer go to church, and don't want to have anything to do it. I bring my grandchildren to Sunday school as often as I can, and I tell them the stories of Jesus. I am so sad my grown children have walked away from the church. How do I make sure I don't fail with my grandchildren?"

In my job serving as Regional Minister for Faith Formation I've been asked a lot of questions by grandparents: grandparents who, alongside their adult children, share their faith with their grandchildren; grandparents who rarely get to see their grandchildren; and grandparents who grieve that their adult children have left the church and who deeply desire that their grandchildren know Jesus. Regardless of the circumstances, these grandparents all want to know how they can best pass their faith on to their grandchildren. It's a wonderful question, and it's one that I have a few answers for—for them and for you.

In the last couple of decades there has been a great deal of discussion surrounding the religious influence of grandparents, and the good news is that grandparents have far greater agency than was originally thought. Vern L. Bengtson, professor of social work at the University of Southern California, began studying families in 1969 by asking one question, "Why do some people adopt their families' (religious) views, while others...strike out on their own?" Bengtson asked this question initially with 350 families

representing mainline Protestant, Roman Catholic, Evangelical and Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints denominations. And he kept asking that question of those same families' children, and their children, and their children up to 2008. At that point he was able to draw some significant conclusions about how parents pass on faith, but also how grandparents and even great-grandparents pass on faith to the next generations.

Most significantly, Bengtson discovered that family bonds matter. Telling the stories, worshipping together, following the practices of faith are all important, but more important than these is the quality of the relationship that children and grandchildren have with their parents and grandparents. "Without emotional bonding these other factors are not sufficient (to pass on faith from one generation to the next)." Two simple words summarize Bengtson's decades of research: **"WARMTH MATTERS."** Parents and grandparents who are unconditionally supportive, and provide consistent role-modelling of religious practices, and who do not force their beliefs or practices on their children have the greatest success in passing on faith to the next generation. So we all need to turn up the heat with respect to relationships that invite conversation and affirm unconditional love.

Addressing grandparents in particular, Bengtson points out that grandparents who reinforce or accentuate the parent's religious socialization pass on their faith most successfully. Recognizing that this is not always the case, he then cautions that grandparents who challenge or subvert the religious socialization of their adult children are often ineffective and counter-productive, leading some adult children to deny grandparents access to their grandchildren. Likewise, he states that doing nothing also passes on nothing.

So what is a grandparent to do? Here are a few best practices identified



Children taking part in musical leadership at Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Beaconsfield, QC.



by Holly Catterton Allen, professor of Christian Ministries at Lipscomb University, that are uniquely reserved for grandparents:

PRAYER is the primary way grandparents share faith with their grandchildren. Children believe people who know God pray—A LOT! Therefore, if grandpa prays a lot, he must know God very, very well. In Allen's study, one child declared that her grandmother prayed from the moment she got up at dawn to the last second before she fell asleep at night. She stated that her grandmother was the closest person to God that she knew. However, just praying isn't enough. Grandparents lead by example when they pray in front of their grandchildren. Just talking about praying won't work, praying in front of, with and for their grandchildren makes the difference. Likewise, asking your grandchildren to pray for you matters.

Grandparents provide continuity of faith by passing down family **STORIES AND TRADITIONS**. Take as many opportunities as you can to share those wonderful stories that make us break out in gales of laughter and bring us to



Drawings by the children's art club at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Toronto.

loving tears; tell stories of baptisms, of Sunday school and church services "back in the day," of wonder-filled Christmases, family gatherings, and those who loved the Lord and are no longer with us. Repeat family seasonal rituals from one generation to the next. In these, children are able to see that their grandparents know God. Special stories should reflect grandparents' faith journeys, teaching succeeding generations how to live a life

consistent with family and religious values. Personal stories add meaningful coherence to grandchildren's lives and offer structures with which they can frame their own experiences.

Grandparents share their faith when they **MODEL FAITH**. They become "God with skin on!" This is the best practice I often highlight when grandparents do not have permission to talk about God or faith with their grandchildren.

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MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

Looking Back, Looking Ahead



By the Rev. Daniel W. Cho, Moderator of the 144th General Assembly

"Hey, you look like Jackie Chan!"

The gentleman and I hadn't even shaken hands yet as he arrived for a meet and greet with the Moderator when he suddenly felt delightfully compelled to remark on this purported resemblance. Now, I'm a big fan of martial arts films, and certainly Jackie Chan (with whom I have two degrees of separation) is among my favourite stars. So although it's flattering (I think?), I for one see no resemblance! That was the start of a good-humoured conversation that later in the evening went off into an unexpected and poignant direction (more on that later).

This was definitely among the more lighthearted moments of my visits with congregations, presbyteries and synods as well as mission projects across Canada and beyond. I have thoroughly enjoyed this incredible privilege to serve as Moderator, travelling this past year and meeting with so many wonderful and faithful people in our church.

I was inspired by Isaiah's call to be "repairers of the breach" (58:1–12) and made it my foundational theme for this year, which speaks of the true expression of our faith commitment to God as it is lived in loving connection and care with one another. In my visits, I have been sharing my desire to highlight this theme of bridging in a three-fold manner: to connect with the young people of our church; learn to stand in solidarity as one in each other's struggles; and to connect as friends and siblings in our church, particularly as we face the challenge to collectively find "a way ahead that allows the mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to continue" (General Assembly recommendation for the Special Committee of Former Moderators).

Guided by this connectional challenge, I have shared my passion for a church committed to love—a love that's not always easy or comforta-

ble; a love that is so outrageously and powerfully counter-cultural that it even calls us to live it in relation to our "enemies." And in the words of Thomas Merton: "Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy." Even as a ubiquitous and familiar teaching in church circles, I have found this gospel of love to be a very welcome and timely message for our congregations.

I think we see here a sample of the contradictions we face in everyday life. For example, we can feel alone even in a crowd; we might feel lost even as we are so occupied with many clear tasks; we can live bold lives of faith in the midst of many doubts we may harbour; and we might be unswerving in our commitment to live Christ's path of love even as we find it difficult to express this toward some individuals. The presence of these contradictions in our lives can sometimes be irritating and discouraging.

How much of this discouragement is reflected in our conversation gridlock over sexuality? There's a general sense of eagerness to come to a resolution, yet so many people say that we/they are "stuck." We fully acknowledge and accept the authority of General Assembly, and yet, last year it acquiesced to former moderators to help propose a way ahead. Our experience as a relatively small denomination with close relationships among congregations and leaders has at times been wrought with quarrelling and discord.

This brings me to the gentleman I mentioned above. Our benign conversation between two visible minority persons about ethnicity and resemblances reminded him of a previous conversation he had with an Arab friend of his. Commenting on the ongoing conflict and tension between Palestinians and Israelis he asked his friend point-blank, "Why do you fight so much?" The answer surprised him: "Because we're family, and families fight."

This is the paradox we, too, seem to find ourselves in today. In the midst of our challenge, let us hold on to the love and hope we have for one another and for our church. And framing it this way—as a family—hopefully we will understand the implications of the inherent responsibility, connection and care that holds us together and that can give us the mutual encouragement we need to move ahead. This is my earnest prayer.

I'd like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and thanks for many things and to the many people who have helped make



The Moderator (center) at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Banff.

my year so very special and heart-warmingly memorable.

Thank you to all the congregations that extended such wonderful and gracious hospitality during my visits. I was very moved by the incredible welcome and support that I received from all of you. Thank you for enveloping me with the laughter and joy that overflowed from the vibrancy of your church fellowship. Thank you also for honouring my request to include young people in the services and setting up youth events whenever it was possible.

Thank you for sharing with me both your passionate concerns and hopes for the church in these next few years.

I'm thankful for the new friendships that were formed with ministry colleagues and the special moments of sharing both the joys and pains of life, even briefly.

I'm truly thankful for having the chance to connect and reconnect with many young people over the course of this year, including those who came out to attend or who intercepted my visits both here and

abroad. (Speaking of connection, one young teen commented that she attended her church all her life and found it quite silly whenever adults in the church would say to her, "I knew you since you were a baby! Do you remember me?" She thought that was the most ridiculous thing to say. Then with a smile she added, "But I like that...it makes me feel loved. I hope it doesn't stop.")

I'm thankful for all the staff at 50 Wynford who in substantive ways facilitated and supported my work as moderator. They are a faithful, dedicated and gifted group of people who want the best for the church, and we are blessed to have them.

I'm extremely thankful to my "new" congregation, St. Mark's Presbyterian Church in Toronto, for their patience, support and understanding of my frequent absences starting at the end of my very first month as their minister. I look forward to spending uninterrupted time with you all.

Thank you also to my former congregation, Rexdale Presbyterian Church, who I know played a big role

in my being here today.

Thank you to my wife, Esther, who always accompanied me and provided selfless support during my whole term. I will always be grateful.

Finally, I thank God for this tremendous honour and privilege to serve the church. It has been both life-changing and life-giving for me. My gratitude knows no end.

This passage has new meaning for me now:

"But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death. You are members of God's family...and the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself." — Ephesians 2:13–20 (selected, *New Living Translation*)



MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY



A picture drawn by Sarah for the PCC 2020 wall calendar, age 9.

By the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald,
Life and Mission Agency

Colouring outside the lines

“...when the eye sees something beautiful, the hand wants to draw it,” says Elaine Scarry in her book *On Beauty and Being Just*. She’s right. God spoke and the world was beautifully created and, ever since, painters, sculptors, poets and musicians have tried to imitate all they see and hear. True, in the Book of Proverbs it is written that “charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting,” and beauty has frequently been distrusted and fallen into disfavour in Christian history. But, in the scriptures at least, misgivings about beauty is a minority report. The bulk of scripture swells with verse after verse in praise of beauty and all that our senses can tell us about creation: “worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;” “the heavens are telling the glory of God;” “you are all together beautiful, my love;” “Taste and see that the Lord is good.” Our puritan ancestors may have been suspicious of beauty and art, but in Exodus, God orders the temple to be decorated with beautiful art and reminds the people that artistic ability is a God-given gift: “in the hearts of all who are skillful, I have put skill.”

This year, we asked young people in the church to submit artwork and we received amazing submissions that the church will enjoy in calen-

dars, posters, bulletin covers, and on the web. The artwork reveals that there are lots of young hearts filled with skill and creativity. Some of the art is technically advanced, some is more abstract, some is multimedia (where would we be without cotton balls, glitter and Popsicle sticks?); all of it is beautiful. Noah’s ark, rainbows and nativity scenes were the most common subjects, which is fitting since these stories all point to God’s promises and great acts of salvation.

It’s true that sometimes these young theologian-artists coloured outside the lines. But that’s when they are most like God—that first and greatest Artist—whose lavish grace, extravagant love and overflowing goodness spills over the lines and cannot be contained.

Considering the treatment of children

In June, the General Assembly marked 25 years since the church first confessed its role in operating Indian Residential Schools. These schools and the spiritual, political and cultural context through which the schools came to be and continued to operate under, caused lasting harm to Indigenous children, their families and their communities. Along with marking this Confession, the Assembly also considered a re-

quest from St. David & St. Martin Presbyterian Church in Ottawa that the PCC endorse the *Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth*, a study developed by a national coalition of organizations concerned with the well-being of children facilitated by the Children’s Hospital Eastern Ontario (CHEO). It concluded that there was clear and compelling evidence that the physical punishment of children and youth plays no useful role in their upbringing and only poses risks to their development. Additionally, the Assembly was asked to consider requesting the Canadian Government repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada, which allows parents and teachers to use force to correct a child’s behaviour. This request is in accord with the 6th Call to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Since the 25th anniversary of the Confession coincides with the request to endorse the *Joint Statement* and the proposal to encourage repealing Section 43 of the *Criminal Code*, the General Assembly took an unflinching look at how society has treated children historically. Just as importantly, however, we were asked to envision a future where we amend and revise our treatment of children, doing the best for those most in need of care among us, i.e., the weakest and smallest—not because they are less but because they are more and are beautiful—and to place their well-being at the centre of the church’s care.

Gaston Bachelard wrote that: “... like a forgotten fire, a childhood can always flare up again within us.” Let’s hope so. It is recorded in Matthew 18:2–4 that Jesus “called a child, whom he put among them, and said, ‘Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.’” It’s worth noting that Jesus made the child the focus and placed her or him at the centre of the gathering because there is something about childhood that is holy and a means to the kingdom. May we be so faithful as to remember that, and may we be so blessed that we glimpse the kingdom of heaven expanding among us.



Created (with a little assistance) by Mary, age 5.



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Moderator of 144th General Assembly: The Rev. Daniel Cho



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FEATURE

The Religious Influence of Grandparents

Continued from page 1

dren. The everyday lives grandparents lead can exemplify faith in God, strong values, respect for all human beings and a strong sense of self-worth. So, bring your grandchild along when you deliver Meals on Wheels, have them help you rake an older neighbour's yard, or introduce them to the lady you visit because she is lonely. Know, too, that grandparents can also have a negative influence. "Some grandparents embrace life, deal constructively with losses, and maintain a sense of optimism and hope," Holly Catterton Allen explains. "Others become negative, are critical of the oncoming generation, and cover life, family, and community with a blanket of darkness." Children pick up on and imitate these attitudes, both positive and negative.

Children crave attention and love. Many parents are running in twelve directions at once, multi-tasking with work, school, meals and after-school activities. Grandparents share faith when they are able to take time to sit, play and just enjoy their grandchildren. **SHARING UNHURRIED TIME** helps children to know that they are loved, cared for and appreciated. This is your calling. During these times a bond forms and this allows children to reveal themselves emotionally and



Tori's son with his Oma, Trudy Smit, a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Guelph.

feel reassured that they are loved.

Finally, grandparents get to **SPOIL AND BLESS** their grandchildren in ways their parents can't. To spoil implies giving someone better than they deserve. Every kid needs a bit of that. God spoils us and gives us better than we deserve—it's called GRACE. Blessing grandchildren can have a powerful, positive impact on them by demonstrating grace and love that is not the result of good behaviour but is bestowed simply because their grandchildren are loved.

I love to turn to Mark 4:26–29, the parable of the Growing Seed. In this story I am reminded that as much as we prepare the soil, fertilize, weed and water, it is God who brings the growth, we don't know how. We are not alone as we pass on our faith to our grandchildren, and that brings incredible comfort. I also appreciate that this parable describes a growth that is incremental, bit by bit, row by row, day by day. There are no quick fixes, only faithful living and attention to those we love. And in this we give glory to God.

Feeding the Bodies and Souls of Our Kids

By Dorothy Brown Henderson, retired from ministry at Caven Presbyterian Church in Exeter, Ont., and is still actively engaged in children's ministry.

Ten years ago, we began with a problem. We were an aging congregation with no children. Since then, we have offered numerous children's programs to hundreds of children: a Sunday morning Roots and Wings program; Ecology camps (we're situated on the edge of an amazing trail and wildlife area); Art camps led by skilled local artists; and an annual March break Culinary Camp for children.

For the members of Caven Presbyterian Church in Exeter, Ont., it has been a satisfying and rewarding journey.

We have come to know, love and expect eight or 10 children to be with us week by week on Sunday mornings in our Roots and Wings program. Our annual Culinary Camp is so popular that we no longer need to advertise; it fills up by word of mouth.

A positive by-product of these programs has been the increased involvement and commitment of older members as they contribute leadership, financial support and snacks. Almost all members are involved, directly or indirectly, in helping with the children's work. In addition, we have

mentored literally dozens of teens and watched their leadership skills grow in our programs.

This journey began in 2009 with a grant of \$4,000 from the national church's Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund. At that time, we had no local financial support and needed to pay for leadership. We anticipated that our funding would last three years but, with prudent management and increased local commitment, we are now entering our 10th year.

Caven's Culinary Camp for Kids provides a vignette of our programming. During March school break 2019, 16 eager young chefs and volunteers participated in preparing (and eating!) roast turkey breast, grilled fruit rings, apple pie, chocolate chip cookies and much more. They learned new table prayers, how to set a beautiful table, how to scrape, stack, wash and dry dishes. The week included nutrition games, planting tomato seeds, learning to compost and hearing food stories from the Bible; but of most importance, it was a recipe for nurturing food, faith and fun in a cooperative, supportive setting. In an age of fast-food living, it was a week to appreciate the need to feed both body and soul.

Creative Ministry with Children and Youth

By Canadian Ministries

Picture dozens of children accompanied by their favourite stuffed animals hanging out in the church yard enjoying drinks and snacks on a picnic blanket. Each of them has brought extra stuffed animal friends to donate to the local hospital. It is Teddy Bear Picnic Day at Knox Presbyterian Church in Palmerston, Ont.

Hundreds of kilometers away from this happy event, other children have gathered in the sanctuary of Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Beaconsfield, Que., to learn from adult mentors how to read and play music. On Sunday that week, they will be providing musical leadership in a contemporary worship service.

On the other side of the country at an event put on by Hummingbird Ministries, children from Indigenous backgrounds are celebrating their heritage by learning traditional dances. As the drums beat, the youth dance their stories and share their rich history with Indigenous and non-Indigenous com-

munities across the Vancouver area.

These are just a few examples of the many exciting and creative programs for children and youth in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. While it is a common lament that Sunday School Programs and Youth Groups don't seem to hold the same place that they once did in the lives of children, we can rejoice that we are discovering new ways to invite and guide youth into lives of faith. The stories and the contexts of the ministries supported by the PCC's Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund are very different, yet there is a common thread that runs through them. Each ministry is intentional about reaching children within their congregations as well as in their communities.

Lucknow Presbyterian Church is an inspiring example of how even small churches can connect in big ways with children in their communities. Nestled away in southwestern Ontario, this rural congregation is running a thriving Messy Church program. The program reaches

families unfamiliar with the church as well as those looking to explore faith and Christian community in a new way. The gathering begins with a welcome, followed by crafts, activities and games. There is a short celebration involving song, Biblical storytelling and prayer, and then everyone enjoys a prepared meal before departing with take-home materials. Since its inception, Lucknow's Messy Church program has become a popular community event having hosted more than 130 children and adults.

Through Lucknow and the other ministries supported by the Creative Ministry with Children and Youth Fund, Presbyterians are exploring new ways of sharing the gospel of Christ with this generation of children and families.

If you are looking for resources or have a new idea for ministry outreach that you would like to explore, we would be happy to hear from you. Email us at canadianministries@presbyterian.ca



FEATURE

Children's Art Club Gives Roots and Wings

By the Rev. Emily Bisset, Calvin Presbyterian Church in Toronto

In February 2017, the congregation of Calvin Presbyterian Church (an Ecumenical Shared Ministry of two congregations in Toronto) began a new children's ministry called the Children's Arts Club (CAC). We hired Ramona Gilmour-Darling as our director. Ramona is a children's theatre and musical professional who has served as one of our choir section leads and is a member of our community of faith. She engaged an assistant director with skills in theatre, music and children's activities, and the group began to meet on Thursday afternoons. The CAC is free of charge to families and welcomes children aged 4–12 for an hour-long program one afternoon a week.

Each session of the CAC begins with a welcome circle and a time to share news. And then the theme is introduced before everyone brainstorms about what the theme words mean to each participant. And then there is a drama game related to the theme, choir practice (on the song that is being prepared for worship), a story and a craft. The crafts have included making cards for congregants who may be sick or experiencing some difficulty, angel boxes (which contain the words they have studied and other positive words), joy jars (where the children write down happy memories to store and save in

a hand-decorated glass jar for times that are sad or difficult), and encouraging notes to struggling farmers in other countries (to accompany a donation from the congregation to Presbyterian World Service & Development). The children sing during Sunday worship half a dozen times a year and have presented a Christmas pageant. On the Thursday before a performance in the sanctuary, families are invited to stay after the CAC for dinner, where members of our adult choir join us. This promotion of inter-generational friendship and a connection between the adult and children's choirs has been a wonderful time of fellowship for the children, families, single adults, couples and the staff.

This year, we have focused on themes like honesty, belonging, wonder, kindness, love, friendship, gratitude, positivity, being yourself, listening, family, compassion, focus, acceptance and inclusivity. The creation of our angel wings came out of the theme of inclusivity, which focused the conversation on creating a sense of belonging, feeling respected and valued for who you are. The children are encouraged to think about how to create healthy friendships, to remember that everyone has something to offer and how important it is to learn to get along with lots of people. Research shows when one person takes a stand against bullying, it stops. The children discussed ways

to take a stand against exclusion and ways to intervene, invite and mediate such bullying situations as well as how to befriend an excluded student. They talked about the skill of scanning the room to see who might need a friend. The children learned that, "kindness is contagious and leads to more happiness."

For this theme, the CAC leader, Ramona Gilmour-Darling, wanted the craft to have a personal feel and to remind the children of the wider circle of support coming from their community and the congregation. So, on paper, the children outlined and coloured not only their own arms/hands but those of various members of the congregation, until there were enough sets to make colourful angel wings. The addition of the words, "Do not be afraid," is linked to a theme that we have tried to emphasize over a period of time with the children: whenever angels or messengers of God appear in the Bible, the very first thing they say is, "Do not be afraid." Ramona thought that this also echoed the message of living with strength when you know that your community "has your back." When the angel wings were complete, we brought them into the sanctuary one Sunday morning as the subject of our children's time, and congregation members were invited to have their pictures taken with the wings, if they wished. These colourful wings made the joy of God and our church community visible to us.



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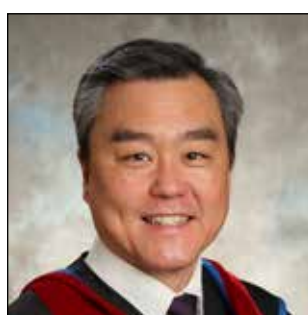
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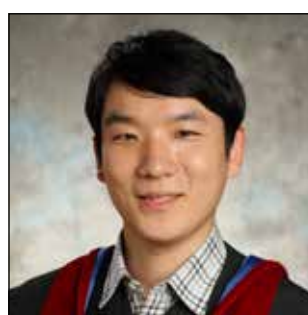
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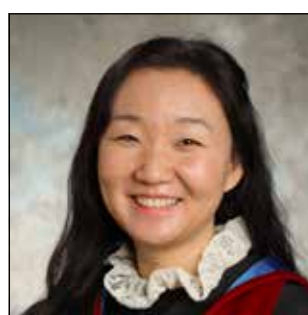
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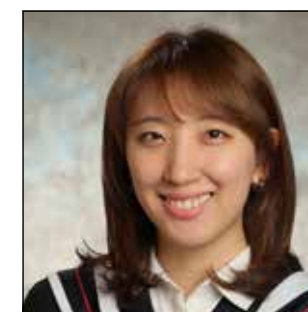
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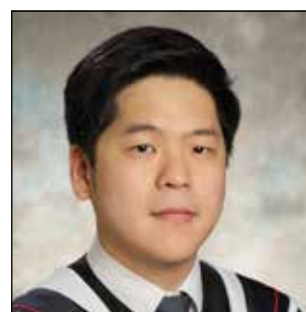
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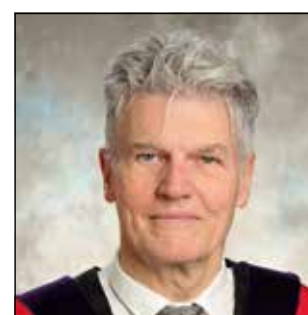
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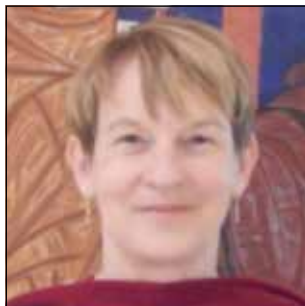
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Sharing Our Gifts



By Karen Plater,
Stewardship and Planned Giving

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone." 1 Corinthians 12:4-6.

Presbyterians Sharing changes lives because Presbyterians are working together as part of the church of Jesus Christ. It's more than the generous financial contributions sent in by congregations and individuals to support mission and ministry across Canada and around the world—it's also the time that people invest in committees, working groups and planning teams, the skills shared by coaches and mentors, the prayers offered for mission and ministry, and so much more. When people share their gifts of time, treasure and talent with The Presbyterian Church in Canada, they are Presbyterians sharing. Together, we are investing in congregational ministries, collaborating on leadership development and living out Christ's witness in the world.

Over the past few months I have been working with the Stewards by Design planning team to prepare for the final conference in May. Over 300 congregations have participated in Stewards by Design since it was launched as a pilot project 20 years ago. The name was chosen to reflect both that participants are designed to be stewards of God's grace, and that

the conference equips them to design a stewardship approach unique to their communities. Stewards by Design introduced a highly effective educational model: congregations attended the three-day conference in teams of four, experiencing strong worship, excellent teaching and time allotted to work on plans to move forward. Over the years, participants have noted that the conference helped them explore effective ministry techniques as well as how to find the resources (people and money) necessary for what God was calling them to do. Gifts to Presbyterians Sharing have provided years of support for this innovative conference, equipping hundreds of congregations in their mission and ministry.

Stewards by Design is just one of the many creative programs that helps congregations transform their ministries through exciting new strategies. Other innovative ideas include *New Beginnings* (which was highlighted in the last issue of the Presbyterian Connection), the Cyclical program (see page 11), which helps nurture leaders to start new ministries, and the Presbyterian Evangelism Network, which helps congregational leaders think of new ways to reach out in their communities. Financial gifts to Presbyterians Sharing are matched by the gifts of time, energy, enthusiasm, experience and skills provided by the coaches and mentors. Together we support and equip leaders to minister in new ways.

Presbyterians Sharing supports theological colleges. In addition to the traditional biblical and theological

teachings, today's students acquire a diverse skill set that include cultural understanding, problem solving and conflict resolution in order to meet the changing needs of today's congregations. The graduates you see celebrated on pages 6-7 are beneficiaries of gifts made to Presbyterians Sharing.

By supporting international partners and mission staff with finances, prayers, encouragement and solidarity, we share our gifts around the world. The Rev. Dr. Blair and Vivian Bertrand are able to work with PCC partners in Malawi because of Presbyterians Sharing. Ever since Cyclone Idai devastated communities in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe (see page 22), Vivian has been engaged in helping Churches Action in Relief and Development (CARD) write proposals for emergency items such as food, plastic sheets, cooking pots, water buckets and chlorine to treat water, not to mention agricultural items to help people reclaim livelihoods after the loss of crops and livestock. While CARD is responding to the disaster with funds raised through Presbyterian World Service & Development, Vivian's presence and her gifts of accompaniment, solidarity and proposal writing are supported through Presbyterians Sharing.

By pooling our gifts, we are able to participate in a mission and ministry that has more impact than we could ever imagine. This is Presbyterians Sharing in action. Thank you for your gifts.



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PRESBYTERIAN WRITERS

An Interview with Esther Acolatse

The Rev. Dr. Esther E. Acolatse is the Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Intercultural Studies at Knox College in Toronto. This article was reprinted with permission from Knox Connexions, April 2019.

Powers, Principalities and the Spirit: Biblical Realism in Africa and the West
Written by the
Rev. Dr. Esther E. Acolatse
Eerdmans, February 2018



Why did you write this book? What's the main thing you want readers to take away?

This book is about helping the Western church and academy to rethink their position on the theology of the spirit world that we find in scripture. We in the West have completely demythologized the mythos of scripture. We tease apart the ethical, rational aspects of scripture from the supra-rational (not illogical or irrational but transcending human understanding). We see scripture as merely a vehicle for ethics.

But how can we account for the declension of Christianity in the North and West, and the ascension of the same faith in the Global South? Could it be because of our attitudes and beliefs about the spiritual nature of faith? Could it be because of the difference in attitude toward the otherworldly picture painted by the scriptures? You can't draw a direct cause/effect connection, but there seems to be at least a relationship between a more literal and literary understanding of scripture, of belief in the spirit world, and the flourishing of Christianity. This is happening not just in the Global South, but also in certain more conservative, spiritually demonstrative denominations of the North.

Secularization and modernity are mediating our reading of scripture. But if we keep saying we don't believe in demons, Satan, the unseen spirit world—does that mean we are indirectly saying we also no longer believe in God? Are we expelling God because we are eliding the spirit world in our theological accounts of life? The way that we have read scripture has said that we can “do faith” without the God of the scripture. We have distilled the moral ethical vision that we think it wants to project, and we think that's all we need to carry on. So, we can go to church, and it doesn't matter if God shows up. We are not expecting God

in the now. When we read the Bible, it's as though we are reading a history of Israel's story with God—not reading our own story with God. The main thing I want readers to take away from this book is that the God of scripture—of Israel's faith, of the apostles' faith, the God the early church knew—is the same God today. The God who walked in scripture wants to walk with people of faith again today.

What implications do you see for the church today?

If we continue to ignore the spirit world, we will have an arid faith that gives no life to us, and we can't invite people to that. People will have deeper ethical mores to draw from. Scripture is a living, breathing document, a place where God continues to address humanity. God is already here and invites us to join him at work. If we aren't able to invite people to this kind of faith, this kind of God, and a palpable, spirit-filled life, should we be inviting them?

This is not about making people better; it's about making people fuller. We all know people who don't believe in God who are “better” than us. Faith is not about civil society, it is about God coming to be with us, to be in relationship; this is a God who was not just in scripture, but who is today. Everywhere you turn, people are looking for enchantment. Look at Harry Potter and so many movie blockbusters! The enlightenment has come, yet everyone is turning to the spiritual (but not to religion). The world people want to inhabit is very different than what we give them in the theological academy and the church. So, can our attitude toward the supernatural become, with integrity, more in line with what the scripture presents? Can we reclaim the mystery of the spirit world?

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LEADERSHIP

Our Journey Toward Renewal

*By the Rev. Torrey Griffiths,
Kensington-St. John's, New London
Pastoral Charge, P.E.I.*

Like many congregations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Kensington-St. John's, New London pastoral charge in P.E.I. has been searching...searching for answers, for solutions, for relevancy, and for guidance. As small rural congregations, we have not been immune to the downward trends seen in main-line churches. With aging congregations, dwindling numbers and few young families, you could hardly blame us if we resigned ourselves to our fate and lived out our remaining years "doing what we've always done." Yet, despite the challenges, there was a burning desire to look to the future, to try new things and to see what God had in store.

In answer to this prayer, we became aware of pilot projects Canadian Ministries was seeking to test. After making inquiries, we found ourselves embarking on a bold new initiative as we piloted the *reVision* program. Through this program, we looked to seek and discern God's will and guidance for our congregations as well as identify, with the help of the Holy Spirit, new ministry opportunities.

As a minister, I was excited about the program, because it contained a large spiritual component. Throughout the program, participants were given daily devotions and encouraged to take up a spiritual practice. The focus was to seek the Holy Spirit and learn how to discern the Spirit's calling and direction. The program centred around small group devotions, discussions and visioning. We were also given a coach, through Canadian Ministries, to help guide us through the process. There's no doubt the Rev. Dr. Tim Archibald was sent by God to help, encourage and gently nudge us along our journey. We could not have done it without

him!

Any new undertaking often has growing pains, and the *reVision* program was no exception. From the beginning we faced a number of challenges and setbacks. Trying to advertise and make the congregations aware of what we were doing took some trial and error as the program offered very few resources to draw from. Recruiting leadership team members that represented a cross-section of the congregations and finding small group leaders that had the gifts, the time and the willingness to serve in this capacity was a challenge because of the smaller congregations. Inviting and encouraging as many participants as possible for small groups proved to be time-consuming. We also faced technical problems with participants not receiving the daily e-mail devotions. Meanwhile, many participants did not have internet or e-mail, so we had to format and print off hard copies of the devotions. Yet, despite our challenges, God was at work!

In our leadership team meetings, and as we Skyped with our coach, we learned that for all the disappointments or problems, there were at least as many blessings and positives. There was hope and energy generated. There was lots of positive feedback from our small groups. Participants who weren't involved in other aspects of congregational life took part in the small groups. People met and got to know others within the congregation. New people took up leadership opportunities and flourished in their new roles. There was genuine excitement and hope for what could come and what God could possibly have in store.

If we had any doubt that the Spirit was at work through this process, our eyes were opened at our first congregational summit meeting on a Saturday morning in June. We began with worship in the sanctuary, then moved downstairs into table groups where we discussed and identified our congregational gifts and passions. As each group shared their lists, we quickly realized that the



Convergence Summit: where we discussed our gifts/passions and ministry ideas.

same gifts and passions kept coming up. Furthermore, we recognized that our gifts and passions aligned with each other! This was the proof we needed to confirm that the Holy Spirit was helping us discern who we were and in what direction we were being led. After identifying our gifts, participants in the table groups discussed what we were inspired to do based on our gifts and the passions we identified.

Before the summit, our leadership team believed that if we had one or two ministry ideas/projects come out of the summit we would be happy. Much to our surprise, many ideas came forth. So many, in fact, that the participants had to prayerfully consider the options and identify the ministries/projects they would support. From our short list, proposal teams were created to research and explore details such as costs, logistics, timeframes, needs, interest, etc., and how they could be implemented.

After a break for the summer, the congregations came together in November to hear the proposals for new ministry opportunities. Each group shared their proposals and after much prayer and discernment the participants identified which minis-



Action Summit: Listening to proposals for ministries/projects.

tries/projects they felt called to support. In the end, we determined there was enough interest to move forward with all four proposals.

Our pastoral charge has been working on implementing our new initiatives identified through the process. Since February, the churches have been hosting free Kraft Dinner lunches every Thursday for the Junior/Senior High students in Kensington. This has been well received by the students and the community, and well supported by the congregations. The Kensington church has approved the installation of a vertical lift, to make the building accessible to all. Their hope is that by making the building more user-friendly, they might expand their ministry by hosting more functions and activities for the congregation and the community. The pastoral charge has also created a new Outreach Team with the focus of "making our churches more relevant by sharing God's love by reaching out to our communities." The fourth ministry opportunity is an

adult Sunday School which is slated to start later this spring.

The process has been a blessing for our churches in general, as well as individually. Although our small congregations still face challenges, and we are still searching, as a pastoral charge we find ourselves moving forward in faith and in hope as we implement our new initiatives. Many who began spiritual practices are continuing with them, including taking time for daily devotions. Others have found a new place in the church. Together, we have become closer to God and have learned more about ourselves and others within our church families. We have seen God at work, and we pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us as we seek to listen to our Saviour's call to be God's church.

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come" John 16:13.

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LEADERSHIP

God on the Move

By Jen de Combe and Matt Borough,
Canadian Ministries

Imagine a time when new worshipping communities are springing up across the denomination and more and more people are coming to know and love Jesus Christ. This may feel like a far-off reality...but it could also be just around the corner! Already, we are seeing signs of God on the move encouraging leaders to connect, serve and love the people in their neighbourhoods and through that service to discern where the Holy Spirit may be calling new communities to emerge.

In the fall of 2018, the PCC entered into partnership with Cyclical Inc. to help foster this type of discernment within the denomination. To date, over 40 leaders are taking part in this exploration and already we are seeing the first fruits of this initiative that we call Cyclical PCC. The leaders in Cyclical PCC come from a variety of backgrounds and testify to God's movement within the denomination. We are seeing leaders both lay and ordained, young and old, and from every corner of the globe coming forward to explore and grow into their call to start new ministries. Some have already started gathering new worshipping communities, others are in the very early stages of discernment and others still are from established congregations that feel called to start new ministries with the support of the congregation.

One of the first leaders to benefit from the Cyclical Network is Stephen Kwon, pastor of The Well Church in Mississauga, Ont., a newly formed Presbyterian church. This ministry began just over a year ago and was spearheaded by a group of 13 young Christians who wanted to share the love of Jesus in their neighbourhood. As they began discerning what kind of ministry they felt they were being directed towards, they faced the challenges that many second-generation ministries encounter. Should they design the church to reach out to second-generation Koreans or should they broaden their scope and try to reach a multicultural crowd?

As they prayerfully explored these options, they quickly realized that God wasn't calling them in either



A gathering of people interested in starting new worshipping communities met in British Columbia earlier this year.

direction. Instead, God was calling them to embrace their identity as a third-cultured people, a people whose identity was distinct both from their culture of origin as well as from the dominant culture. The founding members of this congregation see parallels between their cultural identity and the Christian faith. As Stephen describes it, Christians are third-cultured people who are in the world, but not of it, and whose citizenship is not in an earthly nation or culture but is in the Kingdom of God. It is from this place in between that the members of The Well Church are reaching out to their community and inviting them into a life of faith.

Cyclical PCC has been a tremendous help for Stephen. One of the main challenges that leaders of new worshipping communities face is isolation. They lead ministries with issues different from the traditional church, often leaving them with few places to turn to for support and guidance. Having a Cyclical PCC coach as well as colleagues who are also starting new ministries provides a support network and an opportunity to learn alongside leaders going through similar things. Stephen's prayer for Cyclical PCC is that many ecosystems (communities that encourage and support church planting) spring up across the denomination and that many new Christians will come into relationship with Jesus Christ.

For the Rev. Rebecca Simpson, minister of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Mission, B.C., the discernment process began long before joining the Cyclical PCC program.

About four years ago a recently widowed congregant sat at a table with some other members from the congregation and said, "I've got my husband's garage full of tools and I don't know what any of them are. Do you have any ideas for what I could do with them?" The following week, the clerk of session shared an arti-

cle about a ministry that emerged in Australia and declared, "Maybe this is what we should do with Doreen's tools." It described something called a man-shed ministry that has become a new movement in many countries around the world. It is for Christian men who don't enjoy sitting in church.

Simpson talks about it this way, "The men want to encourage each other, hear a gospel message, but do it while they are using tools in each other's garages. They want to have a barbeque, drink some Cokes, fix somebody's car for them, AND talk about God, and talk about their lives, and encourage each other as Christians."

This was just the spark of an idea that has stuck with Rebecca and St. Paul's over the last few years. They didn't jump into anything right away, but Rebecca kept listening and observing in the congregation and in

the wider community. She noticed that often the men loved getting together to work on a project, whether it was building something, gardening or cooking for a pancake breakfast. Often, the conversations while working together would turn to matters of theology or mutual support.

In the wider neighbourhood, they continued to hear stories of people struggling with loneliness. In particular, there were many men who had downsized and moved into town from rural areas. They had been used to having workshops and garages to putter in while working on projects, but now there seems to be nowhere to go to do similar activities.

Cyclical has been helping Rebecca continue to discern how the Holy Spirit is moving in her community by determining which ideas to pursue, or whether multiple new worshipping communities might be birthed by the Spirit. It has also inspired the people

of St. Paul's to think about out-of-the-box ministry, and it has reinforced Rebecca's faith in the power of following the Spirit.

In recent months, the man-shed ministry has been moving closer to reality. St. Paul's is working on plans to build a new workshop on their property. Meantime, it's gathering people to "try it out" in congregation members' garages.

These are but two examples of the many ministries and leaders receiving support from the Cyclical PCC initiative. It is our prayer that these ministries flourish and that many more leaders will step forward to explore the idea of new worshipping communities. If you are interested in learning more about this initiative, or if you would like support discerning a call to start a new worshipping community, you are encouraged to contact Canadian Ministries for more information.

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LEADERSHIP

How Would John Calvin Vote in the Coming Federal Election?

By the Rev. John Congram, former editor of the Presbyterian Record magazine

Before one of our Canadian elections I had a visit from a couple of Jehovah Witnesses. In the literature they left behind were articles on why Christians should not be involved in politics. Today many Canadians, including Christians, adopt this Jehovah Witness position. Often, they do so, not out of religious conviction but through disillusionment with politics and politicians of all stripes. Many declare there is no use voting, nothing will change, all politicians are crooked. Politicians never do what they say they will do, so why bother voting or being involved in the political process? I understand why we sometimes feel this way. I am writing this in the midst of the SNC-Lavalin affair and on the actual day that two gifted members of parliament were expelled from the federal Liberal caucus.

But can Christians, especially Presbyterians, justify such a position? To throw some light on this situation let us go back to the Reformation and to the French lawyer, John Calvin. He is generally seen as the founder of our denomination.

At the time of the Reformation (16th Century), Calvin was persuaded to move to Geneva to assist their leaders in dealing with many political problems.

Although the political system un-

der which Calvin lived was quite different from ours today, the roots of our democratic system lie deep in Calvin's theology. I believe we can say with confidence that if Calvin lived in our time he would have been involved in the political system. He did not believe in the separation of church and state. Both were parts of God's activity and reign. All vocations are from God and therefore sacred. Failure to participate in the political process, including voting, would be viewed as unfaithfulness to God.

Although church and state each have different and specific functions, these functions come from God, and both—whether acknowledged or not—exist under the Lordship of Christ. Both are servants of God and ultimately answerable to God.

Calvin preferred a tyrannical government to anarchy. True, in the end evil leaders will ultimately be punished by God, but even under them God's will gets done. So even if you are disillusioned by politics and politicians and tempted to sit this one out, think again. To vote is not only your duty as a citizen of the country, it is your responsibility as a Christian.

Calvin said the church asks only one thing of the state: not unconditional freedom to do as we please, only freedom to preach the gospel. That is the one thing it cannot compromise on in its relationship with the state. This is critical because of the ever-present temptation of lead-

ers of all kinds to assume the role of God. Sometimes Christians have a responsibility to disobey the state when this happens but, even in the worst of times, they have the responsibility to pray for those in authority.

During the rise of Nazism, I think Calvin would have applauded when Dietrich Bonhoeffer preached his sermon on the text, "You shall not have any other gods before me." He would have said "Amen!" to the Barmen Declaration (1934), which declared that Jesus is Lord, not Hitler.

A big issue for Calvin was employment, something he believed gave meaning to people's lives. It is therefore easy to deduce that unemployment would be an important issue for Calvin. This was an important issue in Geneva in the 1500s, where refugees were flooding into the city. Calvin urged the city fathers to establish industries for the manufacture of cloth and watches to relieve unemployment.

This must always be an important issue for Christians. Although many manufacturing jobs are disappearing in our time, great wealth is still produced, often through the use of robots and technology. For us, the issue is how this wealth can be distributed equally.

Some have seen Calvin as the father of modern capitalism because of his emphasis on the necessity of work and because of his positive attitude toward the emerging economic order of capitalism. He disagreed



with Luther, who said interest was invented by the devil. Calvin said reasonable interest on money loaned was a good thing. The city fathers in Calvin's Geneva said that 5% was reasonable interest, but levied severe penalties for any who went beyond that. Calvin believed in capitalism with restraints: interest, yes, but never usury; capitalism, yes, but the benefits to be shared for the common good. In Calvin's words, "regulated by the law of love."

For Calvin, politics provided a way to love your neighbour. In the kind of world we live in, sometimes it's the only and best way aside from prayer.

Recently, I received an appeal from Presbyterian World Service & Development for people suffering in southern Africa. The federal government has promised to match whatever gifts we give. In this regard, questions about the percentage of our national wealth given to poorer nations are always something we should address to our politicians.

Calvin, of course, lived under a much different political system than we do. And we can only speculate about whether or not he would have

joined one of the political parties if he lived in our times. Maybe he would have, because it is sometimes the only way you can effect change. If so, he never would have remained a quiet backbencher going along with the party line uncritically, supporting his own political prejudices and personal interests.

How then would Calvin vote in the coming federal election? I confess, I don't know. However, because of his conviction of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all life, we can be confident that he would have been politically involved, seeking the best way to serve and love his neighbour.

So, try to enjoy the upcoming election. Remember that, like worship and service, politics is another way to serve God. I realize that sometimes it may not seem that way. Politics sometimes stinks. But then, it is not always odourless inside the church either. As the famous Heraclitus of Ephesus once reminded us, sometimes "the power of sin is strongest where the odour of sanctity fills the air." Take your political life seriously, knowing it can be another way to help the suffering and serve the poor.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When Will It be Enough?

The Rev. Dr. Margaret Mullin's article (Spring 2019) came at a time when I sincerely needed to hear her message. I am a first-generation immigrant to Canada. I was born three years after the Second World War ended in Germany and my parents moved our family to Canada when I was three years old. In school, I learned how the settlers in New England were saved from starvation by the Indigenous people that they encountered that first winter and about Tecumseh's death at the Battle of Longwoods during the War of 1812. I did, however, have nightmares throughout my teenage years about the Holocaust. Recently, I have been involved through the Presbytery of London in helping to prepare a daylong event around Healing and Reconciliation. The work involved learning about Canadian history that brought back all the guilt and pain that I felt from being born in a country with a history that I was ashamed of. Now I was learning that the country I had adopted has a history I am ashamed of. The Rev. Mullin's article gave me hope that reconciliation can happen, even if not quickly, and has brought me healing in dealing with my shame and guilt for those historical injustices.

—Inge Stahl

Disturbing the Comfortable

Regarding the response (written by Paula Hamilton, Letters to the Editor, Spring 2019) to my letter (in the

Winter edition), it is clear I misunderstood a part of the role military chaplains play—the fact that they neither bless nor endorse war. However, an aspect of pastoral care is not just to comfort the disturbed, about which aspect the author was clear, but also, in a prophetic way, to disturb the comfortable. Such pastoral care should, thus, include the necessity of all military service-people laying down their weapons or roles and refusing to fight others, as there is no place for violence. In Jesus' words, love your enemies and do good to those who hate you. If military chaplains truly refuse to bless or endorse war, it seems clear that such ironic advice to those in their charge should form a large part of their care, and, for the laity, such advice should be coupled with a refusal not only to fight but also to pay any taxes that are spent on national defence, which should be directed instead toward a conscientious-objectors' fund, perhaps one such as Conscience Canada's. It is to be hoped that positions such as these inside the ranks of the Canadian Forces and outside them would only increase the apparent secularization of society and the waning of Christianity within the nation, a worldliness to which our only answer is, we ought to lay down our lives for one another (1 John), and a political, social and economic powerlessness, an emptiness, that is the result of Saint John's words displayed in loving actions and in truth.

—Joshua Weresch

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HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

Our Confession to Indigenous People After 25 Years

By the Rev. Dr. John Vissers, former moderator of the PCC and Principal of Knox College, Toronto

In June 2012, I was interviewed by Global News in Saskatoon about the apology to Indigenous people I had offered as Moderator of the 138th General Assembly on behalf of the Anglican, United and Presbyterian churches in Canada at a national gathering of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The news item that aired later in the day highlighted a comment I made, something like this: "The experience of making this apology has moved my own church's confession to Indigenous people from my head to my heart. It now matters to me in a way it did not before."

Eighteen years earlier, in June 1994, the 120th General Assembly adopted the Confession of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to Indigenous people. It is now 25 years since the church offered this apology for its role in the Indian Residential School System and committed itself to walking with Indigenous sisters and brothers on a journey toward reconciliation. What did this confession

mean in 1994? What does it mean in 2019? And more importantly, where are we, after 25 years, on the journey toward healing and reconciliation?

It's widely known that the relationship between churches in Canada and Indigenous people has been complicated and difficult. Presbyterians, together with other Canadian churches, brought the Residential School system into existence. The 1994 Confession acknowledges that Presbyterians were complicit with the Government of Canada in a policy designed to assimilate Indigenous people to the dominant colonial culture (paragraph 2), by removing children from their own homes and placing them in Residential Schools (paragraph 5).

As the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) made clear, these schools did real harm. The TRC's Calls to Action include calls to churches and their theological schools to acknowledge the past and work toward a new future. That work, though taken up in earnest, is just beginning. Indigenous people in Canada continue to be oppressed and marginalized on their own land. So, 25 years on, we still have much



The Rev. Dr. John Vissers with residential school Survivors Eugene Arcand and Madeleine Basile at the TRC National Event in Saskatoon, 2012.

to do.

Nevertheless, as we consider the challenging way ahead, the 1994 Confession continues to provide Presbyterians with a touchstone for this journey. It calls us as Presbyterians to remember what we have done, to feel deeply the pain inflicted on Indigenous people, to re-examine our faith and practice as followers of Jesus in terms of the legacy of Residential Schools, and to respond in ways that promote *shalom* (peace with justice) among all people on Turtle Island.

How should we understand our own confession, and how might it shape our relations with Indigenous people going forward? The word confession in English has a double meaning for Christians in the Reformed tradition. Let's look at the first interpretation: it can mean the act of acknowledging one's sin. In worship we acknowledge our sin against God and others in prayer. We seek forgiveness and reconciliation. It is an apology, an owning of fault, a regretful acknowledgement of failure.

The 1994 statement of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is such a confession: it is an acknowledgement that we have sinned against Indigenous people, an apology to "those whom we have wronged with a hurt too deep for telling." It is a humble recognition that forgiveness is being sought, and it expresses a commitment to walk in ways that promote healing and reconciliation. It is a word of truth which we must continue to speak, for without it no reconciliation is possible. Our confession of 1994 is, therefore, not something only for history, but needs constant repeating. We have con-

fessed, but we are also, in this sense, a "confessing" church.

For Presbyterians, the word confession also has another meaning, not unrelated to the first: it can also mean the affirmation of one's faith. As Presbyterian writer Donald McKim defines it, "A confession is a proclamation or statement of beliefs... Confessions of faith are formal standards that serve as authoritative guides to the doctrinal beliefs of a church body." Presbyterians in Canada have three such statements: The Westminster Confession of Faith, The Declaration of Faith Concerning Church and Nation, and *Living Faith/Foi Vivante*. We also acknowledge parallel statements of other Reformed churches.

Some in the church today do not like creeds and confessions because they appear to promote a narrow and rigid faith. But rightly understood, confessions arise when Christians proclaim the meaning of their faith in response to the urgent issues of their time and place. That's what makes a confession more than an objective statement of our faith. It makes it a living reality. The Canadian Presbyterian theologian Walter Bryden said, "It is easy to make statements of our faith, but confessions are wrung from those who have been on their knees," in sorrow and in prayer. Confessions emerge when people are under the constraint of God's Word.

The 1994 Confession to Indigenous people can also be understood as a confession in this sense. It is a confession of faith. It begins with the affirmation that the "Holy Spirit, speaking in and through Scripture, calls The Presbyterian Church in Canada to confession" as "our re-

sponse to the word of God." It offers an apology, rooted in faith, to Indigenous people because we have sinned against God and against First Nations people by what we have done, and by what we have not done. We have not loved God with our whole hearts, and we have not loved Indigenous peoples as ourselves. We believe that our faith in Christ compels us to confess that the harm we have inflicted on Indigenous people is a failure on our part to believe and practice the Gospel.

After 25 years, the 1994 Confession of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to Indigenous people still matters. But it must be more than words on a page. It must become part of the fabric of our church's faith and practice, and here I offer a friendly provocation to my fellow ministers and elders, and to the Church Doctrine Committee of the General Assembly: one way of ensuring that we never forget what has happened and keep the need for reconciliation before our church is to adopt the 1994 Confession as a "Confession of Faith"; that is, as a subordinate standard of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Perhaps then the prayer with which I ended a column in the *Presbyterian Record* in October 2012, would be answered, at least in part: "My prayer is that our work with the TRC will move our apology not just from our heads to our hearts, but also to our hands." The future of The Presbyterian Church in Canada may just depend on whether we really believe what we said in the Confession of 1994 to Indigenous people, and whether we are prepared to put actions to those words.

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of the PCC's
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JUSTICE

Fighting Climate Change at Camp Kintail



By Shelagh O'Neill, Director of Outdoor Education, Camp Kintail, Goderich, Ont., and a PCC representative on the KAIROS Ecological Justice Circle

The most recent annual gathering of the Presbyterian Church Camps and Conference Association (PCCCA) included an exciting opportunity. The 156 PCC and PCUSA affiliated retreat, camp and conference centres had the chance to make a commitment to operating more sustainable organizations within the Church by signing the 2018 Climate Change Declaration for Affirmation. The declaration was created by the PCCCA in response to the

most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on our global environment (IPCC, 2018: Summary for Policymakers), which acknowledges that the average global temperature has risen and will continue to do so, and that this is directly linked to human activity.

Camps are particularly well-placed to witness the effects of our changing climate. Rising global temperatures are altering the earth's climate system, causing environmental, economic and public health challenges. Recognizing that we are all responsible for caring for the earth to the best of our ability, organizations and individuals who signed the PCCCA's 2018 Climate Change Declaration for Affirmation committed to the following:

- Reducing meat consumption. Livestock overbreeding is one of the most greenhouse gas producing and carbon-intensive acts by humans.
- Completely eliminating the use of

Styrofoam products and committing to a reduction and/or elimination of single-use plastics in programs, meals and practices. The production of these single-use products creates gases and chemicals that are damaging to the earth.

- Informing others about actions that were taken. Empowering others to reduce their environmental impact by sharing and educating.

Camp Kintail, located in Goderich, Ont., was one of the centres that signed the declaration. As a Presbyterian summer camp and year-round retreat centre, Camp Kintail has always recognized its unique role and responsibility to protect God's creation and maintain places where people can come to experience God. Kintail is committed to actively taking steps to conserve energy and water in as many ways as possible. Other steps that Camp Kintail takes to be more environmentally re-

sponsible include recycling, composting waste and promoting the consumption of locally grown food. Prior to the conference, Kintail had already been serving local dairy products and predominantly local meat products. Since the conference, Camp Kintail is working towards serving three meatless meals a week and continues to supplement with fruits and vegetables grown in the Camp's own garden. The garden itself is an opportunity for awareness about our environment and how to care well for it, since it is tended by campers and staff. Additionally, Camp Kintail has been working towards creating as little food garbage as possible by eliminating single-use plastics and ordering in bulk. Through nature sessions, garden sessions, Bible studies, signage and announcements, Camp Kintail shares with campers and guests several ways to reduce their carbon footprint with ideas for how sustainability can be practiced at home.

In the book of Genesis, we learn God

created Earth and that it is our responsibility as Christians to care for all that is on it. Collectively as humans, our use of natural resources is not fulfilling our responsibility, and instead we are hurting the earth. PCC churches, retreats, camps, conference centres and other organizations are in a position to embody sustainable practices and educate congregation members and visitors about the ecological benefits of even small changes like:

- using public transportation and carpooling when travelling to meetings or events
- eating locally produced food
- eliminating the use of single-use plastics and foam
- switching to energy-saving elements, such as motion-sensor lights and faucets

Together, we can better serve God through caring for creation and changing some of our daily habits in order to support a sustainable future for the earth.

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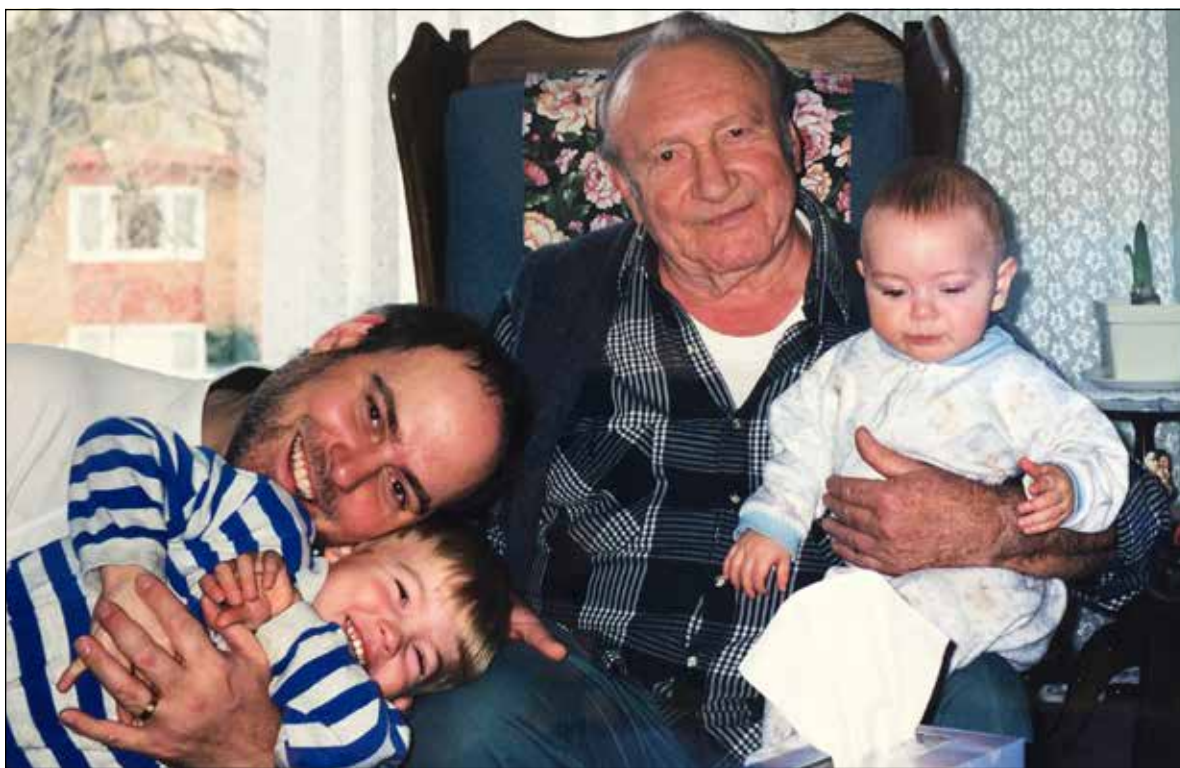
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PLANNED GIVING

A Parent's Gift of Planning



When Adam, seen here with Jim and his grandchildren, passed away, his good planning allowed his family to grieve without complications.

By Jim MacDonald, Development Manager for Stewardship & Planned Giving, part-time M.Div. student at Knox College, and Elder at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Vaughan, Ont.

The first time my wife, Linda, and I sat down with a lawyer to make a will was when we bought our first house in 1999. The next time was five years later—when we moved to New Brunswick. When we moved back to Toronto nine years after that, our children had grown up and it was time to rewrite our will again. Now I have a new job at The Presbyterian Church in Canada so we are reviewing our situation once more. It seems that every time life circumstances change, we have to update our “just in case” plan.

Our first home was a 160-year-old heritage house in Markham,

Ont. How we loved renovating that old fixer-upper. The bedrooms were small, so we asked my father-in-law, Adam, if he could help us plan an addition on the back. Talk about planning! If it wasn't for my father-in-law, we would never have achieved that beautiful addition. Adam was retired, and he had the time and the skills to organize everything. He did a great job, planning out every door, window and electrical outlet—and during the construction, he got to spend every day around his small grandchildren. It is a very happy memory.

When Adam passed away a few years later, we had reason again to be grateful for his talent for planning. He'd thought of everything—and thank goodness, because there was so much to think about. At every turn, we found that he had provided all the decisions and all the needed

information. Adam never stopped giving, even after he died.

Helping Your Family the Way Adam Helped Ours

It will take much less time and money for you to sort through your own belongings and paperwork now than it will take your adult child, spouse, parent or siblings to do it later. A simple three-ring binder can be used to hold all the important information and legal documents that will someday be needed. The binder should include a list of your key contacts: lawyer, accountant, insurance broker, landlord, condo board, doctor(s), dentist, handyman, helpful neighbour, furnace repairman, etc., as well as friends and family who will need to be informed and/or invited to a memorial service.

The binder can either include a

“If you don't have a will, the government decides where your money, property and belongings go—and while your property will inevitably go to your closest relatives, the government won't give any to your church or favourite charity.”

copy of your last will and testament or a note explaining where your will can be found. The original should be kept somewhere safe, often with your lawyer. If you don't have a will, or if your existing will is so old that it no longer reflects your circumstances or wishes, it is wise to draw up a new one as soon as possible. You can acquire a book or digital tool to do it yourself, but, unless your financial circumstances are very simple, a lawyer is preferable.

Preparing an up-to-date will is particularly important if you want to give a legacy gift to your congregation, Presbyterians Sharing, Presbyterian World Service & Development or another charity. If you don't have a will, the government decides where your money, property and belongings go—and while your property will inevitably go to your closest relatives, the government won't give anything to your church or favourite charity. Creating a will is an opportunity to discuss your wishes with your family and heirs, and to let them know that you plan to donate a proportion of your estate as a legacy gift to the church.

Your binder is all about making lists. You'll want to list:

- Your valuables and where they can be found
- All your identity numbers, including your Social Insurance Number
- Real estate holdings
- Bank accounts and mortgage information
- Investments, pensions, and other sources of income
- Home insurance, health plans, property tax, utilities, telephone/internet/cable supplier and any other property-related contacts and accounts
- Where you keep your last few tax returns

Don't include usernames and passwords in the binder unless you

plan to keep it locked up; just indicate where they can be found in an emergency. Of course, as you sit down and reflect, you'll probably think of many other things that ought to be listed in the binder.

Remember, should something happen to you and/or your spouse, any bills that are automatically debited will continue until they are cancelled. Bills that are paid manually must be paid. It's important to make sure that you list all such items in your binder, so your family or executor can immediately take care of your affairs and make any necessary payments with money from your estate. In fact, that may be the best reason to make a will—your loved ones won't have to pay your immediate obligations out of their own pockets while they wait months for lawyers and the government to work out all the details. Since you left an up-to-date will, the money can come from your estate.

My wife, Linda, and I are following the example set by my in-laws and maintaining a loving gift of an up-to-date estate plan for each other and for our children. I can't think of a better way to leave a legacy of love that I know my family will appreciate. It's important to me that my wishes will be known and the things I care about will be remembered.

None of us likes to think or talk about death. And yet it is going to happen to us all. Estate planning—making plans to disperse the things we own after we die—is both meaningful and kind. We can take care of our family and support causes that reflect the generosity we shared in life. If you would like to receive a copy of our *Will Planning Guide & Workbook*, please visit presbyterian.ca/stewardship or feel free to contact me or any of my colleagues in the Stewardship & Planned Giving Department at The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We'll be happy to email or mail you a copy of this useful booklet.

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BOOKS REVIEWS

A Review of *Journeys to Justice*

By the Rev. Jeff Lackie, St. John's
Presbyterian Church in Medicine Hat,
Alta.

*Journeys to Justice: Reflections on
Canadian Christian Activism*
Written by Joe Gunn
Novalis Publishing, 2018

Joe Gunn's engaging and very personal introduction sets an instructive tone for the selection of interviews and reminiscences that make up "Journeys to Justice." This collection offers an inside look at the development of Christian social justice activities within Canada, in what some might consider a season of uncertainty for faithful intervention in public policy and for social action. Is this work really at a low ebb? Or is it simply evolving beyond its congregational (and denominational) origins? These are among the questions raised by this thoughtful and hopeful collection.

To a Christian community in danger of losing sight of its social justice heritage, Gunn's book serves as a

bracing reminder of what is possible. To a generation of socially engaged folks who have no time for "religious nonsense," these stories are a gentle and honest reminder of the lengths to which faith can carry social endeavour.

Each chapter is presented as an interview, and while some of the narratives are more focused than others, the style draws the reader into each story. The ten Canadians interviewed by Gunn tell their stories with the benefit of clear hindsight. Mistakes and gaps are acknowledged—victories are tempered by current realities.

For example, in her interview Marie Zarowny, Province Co-Leader of the Sisters of Saint Ann (Victoria, B.C.), describes a decade of work in the North trying to stem the tide of violence against women. While rejoicing that her work with the Northern Bishops has made room for important conversations about family violence, her final statement expresses the difficult truth: "The attitudes that remain towards women, especially towards Indigenous

women, are still dismissive" (p. 89).

The world has changed and the names of those who are directly involved have changed, but everyone represented recognizes that justice still needs to be done. All of the initiatives covered in this book will be familiar to the reader—the work done by this representative group of faithful people and the organizations they represent changed things—but those who lived these stories question the lasting effect of their work. Some of the efforts around refugee sponsorship are reflected in our current public policies—other initiatives have been smothered by economic and social changes—and in nearly every instance there is the tacit acknowledgement that the Christian church (specifically) has lost the respect of society at large, and therefore much of its power to affect social change in matters of national importance.

How might this book be useful to the church?

For those who need to remember that the Christian Church once had



a profound influence in social action circles—and to those who long for a return to the "good old days," when leaders in the faith communities occupied headlines for all the right reasons—this book may serve as a reminder of what is possible. For those who wonder where to start, who imagine that there is no room at the table for people of faith, this book will remind you that even the grandest triumphs must start from nothing. For those who are engaged in justice work, this book may offer a hint of discouragement. The stories are so triumphant, and yet, there is so much still to do.

Gunn's introduction lays the groundwork for those people—planting seeds of hope, and perhaps subtle reminders that most of the work

must be done out of sight. The high-mindedness of the social-media-based social-justice warrior will be brought back to earth. Campaigns and petitions are well and good, but Gunn's subjects are masters of the persistent conversation, the grinding, tedious work of asking and asking again, for some hint of justice in some small fraction of their corner of the world.

The penultimate reflection in the collection, offered by the Rev. Christine Boyle, sums up the book nicely: "[Christians] come from stories that remind us that all sorts of miraculous transformations are possible. When we forget this...change feels impossible, because it feels like things have always been just as they are now" (p. 155). Joe Gunn's collection of remembrances reminds us of our history. It is a history told carefully, for those telling the tale are trying to remember the best and the worst of their experiences. The honesty of Gunn's introduction and the patterns of faith revealed in this collection of memories offer practical encouragement to those of us who hunger for justice as we try to follow Jesus in our tumultuous present.

A Review of *True North Rising*

By the Rev. Joan Masterton, St. James
Presbyterian Church in Stouffville, Ont.

True North Rising
Written by Whit Fraser
Burnstown Publishing House, 2018

I've heard the story before...the story of someone who goes north—Arctic north—for a job for a specified duration, with every intention of returning to the south with the big bucks made after the contract or commitment is up...and then changes their mind. People fall in love with the Arctic, and Whit Fraser is no exception.

Whit Fraser left his home in the Maritimes and headed north to Iqaluit (then Frobisher Bay) as a young twentysomething in 1967 to work with the CBC Radio's Northern Service, and never looked back. Now in retirement, he wrote *True North Rising* to share the stories of his grand adventure and his learnings about life in the north. His whimsical, folksy storytelling style opens our eyes to aspects of northern people, development and life in a way that only someone who actively participated in it could.

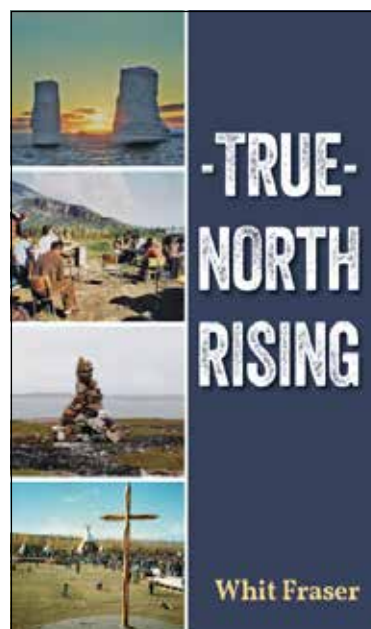
Fraser reported in-depth on whatever was happening politically, economically or culturally in the Arctic. He witnessed the response of the Inuit and First Nations people when Jean Chrétien and Pierre Trudeau released the 1969 and 1970 white papers proposing to "manage" Indian issues and aggressively develop the north; the hunt for oil in the Beaufort Sea was on. The proposed assimilation policy outlined objectives for social and economic "equality" while promoting the abolishment of the federal department of Indian and Northern affairs, the only voice Indigenous people had in the Government of Canada. Fraser watched as Indigenous organizations came together to develop larger visions for their own future. Land-claim settlements became the goal of many groups. Fraser is unequivocal in his descriptive observations of the racism that pervaded north/south and "white"/Indigenous relationships.

One of the more enjoyable features of Fraser's book is his descriptions of key individuals who, though largely unsung, played major roles in the "rising" of the north: Jonah Kelly, Joe

Tobie, Stephen Kakfwi, Tagak Curley, Charlie Watt and Mary Simon (whom he eventually married). Fraser shares their stories as well, and gives the reader the Indigenous perspective on important events and the struggle to claim nationhood.

During the years of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, Fraser travelled with Justice Thomas Berger across the western Arctic, throughout Yukon, and to other northern destinations as Berger consulted with local communities about pipeline proposals. Fraser developed the CBC's approach to broadcasting those meetings daily to southern audiences in English and to northern audiences in seven aboriginal languages. He hired the people needed to fill those roles, and thereby developed relationships with many northern people and communities.

Fraser writes as he reports: with honesty. His book also shares his struggle with alcoholism and the challenges of sobriety, the failure of his first marriage and his meeting and marrying Mary Simon, Canada's first Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs, and lead negotiator for the



creation of the Arctic Council. He tells the story of his biggest mistake as a broadcaster—insisting on speaking to the Berger Commission himself. Reporters are supposed to report the news, not create it, but Fraser's passion for the northern Indigenous peoples and their way of life overcame his normally sound judgement.

Fortunately, he suffered little in the way of consequences and carried on as a reporter and broadcaster through the years. He witnessed the creation of Nunavut, the Healing

and Reconciliation Commission and Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology to the First Nations of Canada in the House of Commons. After retiring from the CBC, Fraser went on to chair the Canadian Polar Commission and become the executive director of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the national voice of Canada's 60,000 Inuit.

For those interested in healing and reconciliation issues with Canada's First Peoples, *True North Rising* provides a different perspective, through an Arctic lens, and through the eyes of northerners Fraser now calls family and friends. His down-to-earth language and sense of humour help to make the reading of his adventures compelling and entertaining as well. His love of the Arctic is evident. His vivid description of key moments of awe—walking on a clear night in -40-degree weather under "spectacular dancing columns of blue green yellow and red Arctic aurora" while listening to the distant ringing of a church bell—cause the reader to yearn to be there.

Whit Fraser presents a perspective on Canada that few of us have the opportunity to experience; enjoy *True North Rising*!



GATHERINGS



Every purchase of gourmet soup from The Raw Carrot Soup Enterprise helps people in need. The Raw Carrot provides employment for amazingly talented individuals living with disabilities and mental illness in communities in Ontario so that you can enjoy delicious handcrafted soup! The Raw Carrot hires individuals on the Ontario Disability Support Program to cook and package handcrafted gourmet soup that is sold in farmers markets and retail locations in the local community. Sales of the healthy soup fund the salaries of those working at the Raw Carrot.



Each year at First Presbyterian Church in Regina, we hold a "Birthday Sunday," where we celebrate everyone's birthday. We have 12 cakes at separate tables, and everyone sits at their birthday-month table and enjoys cake with their coffee. This year, in honour of our minister, the Rev. Amanda Currie, having been elected Moderator of the PCC, we also had a special "Moderator's Cake." A free-will offering was taken and this year it is supporting our Refugee Sponsorship Fund.



Oriana Singers of Northumberland County, Ont., presented "Rivers of Reflection" at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Port Hope on March 31, 2019, celebrating the power and beauty of rivers and the ways in which they touch our spirit. St. Paul's was an early home for the Orianas. The acoustics of the church are exceptional and the recent flexible redesign of the choir loft around the magnificent Casavant organ, creates a wonderful space for making music—for choirs both large and small, and for congregations! PHOTO CREDIT: LARRY KEELEY.



The Rev. Dr. Ian Wishart preached his last sermon as interim moderator of St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church in Grand Falls-Windsor, N.L., on March 31. It is a position he has held for 23 of the past 29 years, and one from which he was already retired, only to take it up again when his replacement moved from the province. The congregation paid tribute to Ian during a luncheon following the service. He is pictured with the three oldest members of the congregation (from left) Betty Baird-Cross, Louise Baird and Don Baird. Taking over the duties of interim moderator is the Rev. David Sturtevant of St. David's Presbyterian Church in St. John's.



A super successful Mom To Mom Sale, sponsored by Mt. Zion Presbyterian Church's "New to You" store, drew a large crowd to Ridgetown, Ont., on March 30. Over 90 consignors sold gently used children's clothing and items to the 600-plus shoppers, who left with bags full of bargains. Profits from the semi-annual event are donated back into the Chatham-Kent area through the New to You Outreach Fund. Special thanks to our hard-working volunteers!



The Session at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Fredericton, N.B., conferred the title of Elder Emeritus on John Astle, in recognition of faithful service to the congregation as an elder.

GATHERINGS



From March 19 to 21, St. Andrew's Hall in Vancouver had 32 high school students from across the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island join us during spring break to learn more about discernment, vocation and to try to catch a glimpse of where God is calling them to in their life. The teens stayed in residence on campus, joined in with student lives, learned some new spiritual practices, hung out with seminary students and local church leaders, and learned from our many wonderful speakers. And of course, there was plenty of time for fun and adventure as we explored the UBC campus.



Lochwinnoch Presbyterian Church in Renfrew County, Ont., held a Noisy Offering Sunday. The congregation brought coins to add to the empty paint cans. The Noisy Offering was in support of PWS&D. The young people counted and rolled the gifts of change. The amount collected was \$300.



Following his Farewell Service on Feb. 3, 2019, the Rev. Dr. Rick Horst with his wife, the Rev. Dr. Karen Horst (retired from St. Andrew's PC in Orillia), celebrated his retirement with the congregation of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Barrie, Ont., after 35 years in the ministry. A time of cake-cutting, speeches and presentations was held as friends sadly said goodbye to their minister of almost 15 years. A retirement dinner, commemorating Rick's years of service at St. Andrew's as well as in the community, was also held in January. Happy trails to Rick and Karen!



Dorothy Dixon celebrated her 100th birthday on Feb. 7. Dorothy has been a member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Riverview, N.S., since it was founded, over 80 years ago. She has served as Sunday school teacher, treasurer, elder and clerk of session. She is also a member and former president of the Truro-Wallace Presbyterial of the Atlantic Mission Society. Happy birthday, Dorothy!



The Sunday School at First Brockville have taken up the "PWS&D Sunday School Challenge" to send children in developing countries to school! Activities included a Read-a-Thon, during which the children sought pledges from the congregation, and a "Name That Student" photo contest. Pictured above, the children proudly display their fundraising achievements, along with Karen Mahon, First Brockville's PWS&D Champion.



In March 2019, a group of Presbyterians gathered at Camp Kintail near Goderich, Ont., to continue conversations covering a range of concerns and hopes for the denomination. More than 50 adults, young adults and children gathered for intergenerational worship and encouragement, in a movement called "Re:animate." The goal of the group is to foster a courageous, inclusive and creative church. On the last day, a coordinating circle was commissioned to plan a large fall event in Waterloo, Ont., in October.



GATHERINGS



The congregation at Burns Presbyterian Church in Milverton, Ont., gathered together for an evening of food, games and music to celebrate the upcoming marriage of their minister, the Rev. Marc Fraser, to Sonja van de Hoef. The couple were presented a one-of-a-kind congregational recipe book and a handcrafted wooden sign. Congratulations!



At its recent annual congregational meeting, the folks at Knox Presbyterian Church in Bracebridge, Ont., celebrated the service of a beloved and very active member of the congregation—Irene Thomson. Irene has served Knox in a variety of roles since 1952, and while cake was enjoyed in recognition of her retirement from the Board of Managers, Irene continues to be an active member of the church family...at the age of 95! Knox has been—and continues to be—so blessed by Irene's ministry. Pictured above, left to right: Elaine Heron, Clerk of Session, Irene Thomson and the Rev. Dr. Heather Malnick, minister.



The Rev. Charles MacPherson with Larry Mills and Elspeth Lawrence who were recently inducted as new elders at First Presbyterian Church in Hopewell, N.S.



On March 17, 2019, Place of Hope Indigenous Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg, Man., welcomed 12 new members to their church. Seven joined by baptism and five by profession of faith. The Rev. Margaret Mullin presided over the events.



It's been over two years in the making, and on Sunday, Feb. 24, the new vertical lift was dedicated at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Stirling, Ont. Many in the congregation are thankful that they can now access the sanctuary with ease! St. Andrew's would like to thank all those involved who made this addition possible. Generous donations were given by the Parrott Foundation, the PCC's McBain-Barker Fund, the congregation and friends. And most of all, we thank our generous Lord who made it happen. All are welcomed to come and visit one Sunday to check it out!



On Mission Awareness Sunday on April 28, Knox Presbyterian Church in Burlington, Ont., presented the Rev. Mike Aldred and Kayla Orr each with a \$1,000 award from the Rev. Mark Hoogsteen Memorial Trust Fund. This annual award is presented as a testament to Mark's ongoing passion for mission and outreach work, through a mission trip, outreach project, educational workshop or conference. The Rev. Mike led a team on a mission trip to the Dominican in March and Kayla will be taking a 9-month course, "Foundations for Revival and Reformation" as she continues her Christian studies. During the service, the Rev. Mike and three team members shared their journey and the personal impact their work has had on their lives. Pictured above (left to right): Clare Mezgec, Ben Gerrits, Janet MacIntyre, Kathy Hoogsteen, Wayne Hoogsteen, Rev. Mike Aldred, Maria MacKenzie and Rev. Emma Duncan, absent Kayla Orr

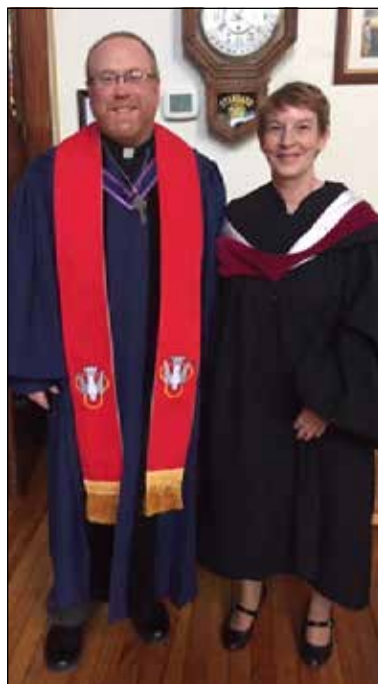


Morningside-High Park Presbyterian Church in Toronto recently welcomed new members. Pictured above (left to right): Alex Fensham, Holly Boyne, Jonna Killeen, JD Killeen, the Rev. Janet Ryu-Chan (minister) and Patty Farris.

GATHERINGS



At our service on Dec. 16, 2018, the congregation of Ratho Presbyterian Church in rural southwestern Ontario was excited to celebrate the 90th birthday of our music director, Jeanette Laing. Jeanette drives 35 km to and from Ratho from New Hamburg every Sunday to lead in music—and has for over the past eight years. Jeanette was presented with a cake by the congregation in honour of her birthday. We are blessed to have her dedication and musical talent available to our faith community!



The Rev. Andrew MacDonald with the moderator of Pictou Presbytery, Bonnie Langille, at his induction service at First Presbyterian Church in New Glasgow on Saturday, March 2, 2019.



Two new elders were added to the session at St. Giles Presbyterian Church in North Sydney, N.S., on March 31, 2019. Diane Clarke and Linda Langer are pictured in front with the Rev. Ritchie Robinson who ordained them. In the second row, from left to right, are Wes Stewart, George MacLean, Norma MacAdam, Mary MacFarlane, Alex Nicholson, Ruth Slade and Georgina Keeping. PHOTO CREDIT: NANCY ROBINSON.



The quilting group at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Fredericton, N.B., met Friday afternoons in the church hall to sew quilt tops. This initiative is an example of the church in action as the beautiful finished pieces will be donated to a local charity, such as Women in Transition House.



From November through March, Glenview Presbyterian Church in Toronto works with two other congregations to serve a hot dinner to up to 100 people who need a meal. Glenview hosts Out of the Cold and guests are always excited when Elder Otto Akkerman is cooking. In March, Otto and his family prepared a roast beef dinner. Pictured are Alison, Robert, Grant and Otto Akkerman.



This year at Glenview Presbyterian Church in Toronto, two events were combined. Instead of a Shrove Tuesday supper, pancakes were served at lunch before the Annual Congregational Meeting on March 3. The experiment worked. The meeting after the meal was well attended and several people said it was the best Annual Meeting they could remember. Here are Anne Gannon and David McIntyre, hard at work.



On March 13, 2019, Renfrew Presbyterian Church in Renfrew, Ont., hosted a "Learn 'n Fun Evening" to mark the start of their Lenten journey toward the cross. The theme of the evening was: How are our hands and feet serving others this Lent? After sharing a time of laughter and a brief message, the gathered crowd worked together to create a banner made up of their outlined hands (and traced foot stencils), which was displayed in Kirk Hall to serve as a reminder of the Lenten season. At the conclusion of the evening, participants washed each other's hands.

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

Responding to Devastating Cyclone

By Karen Bokma,
PWS&D Communications

Millions of people in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe are in need of humanitarian aid due to flooding from Cyclone Idai. The weather system produced heavy rains over Malawi in early March before developing into Cyclone Idai, which struck Mozambique and Zimbabwe on March 14.

The rain and subsequent flooding killed hundreds and destroyed homes and infrastructure, displacing hundreds of thousands of people. The risk for cholera, malaria and other diarrheal diseases is high. Agricultural crops in many areas were completely washed away, deeply impacting immediate and long-term food security, as agriculture is the main source of livelihood for many of the affected.

PCC mission staff, the Rev. Dr. Blair and Vivian Bertrand, currently serving

in southern Malawi, provided regular updates on the situation. "Close to half a million people live in compromised housing, many with contaminated water and without adequate food. The population of Malawi is incredibly young: 46% of the population is under 15, so that half a million includes about 200,000 children," says Blair.

PWS&D is responding to immediate needs through partnerships at ACT Alliance and Canadian Foodgrains Bank. In close consultation with local partners, PWS&D has been assessing needs to ensure that the most appropriate and effective aid will be provided. Whenever possible, PWS&D is supporting interventions where donations are matched, allowing funds to go further and do more.

Responding through ACT Alliance partners in Mozambique, PWS&D is providing safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services, shelter and



For many people displaced by the cyclone, access to safe, clean water is a significant concern. CREDIT: ACT ALLIANCE/BELLAH ZULU, NCA

psychological support. Thanks to membership in Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and with government-matching funds, PWS&D provided immediate food security interventions to target families in Malawi who lost their food stores and crops. Food distributions, as well as seeds for the next round of crops, are being provided to those households in most need.

Your donations doubled

The Canadian government announced that all donations made to the Hu-

manitarian Coalition and its members, in response to Cyclone Idai between March 15 and April 14, 2019, would be matched, up to \$2 million.

The Humanitarian Coalition is a collaboration of ten leading aid organizations, including Canadian Foodgrains Bank, that come together to provide Canadians with a simple and effective way to donate during international humanitarian disasters.

Generous Presbyterian contributions of over \$125,000 have been received as of May 10.



Emergency food and hygiene supplies are distributed to families in greatest need. CREDIT: ACT ALLIANCE/ELISA IANNO-CONE, DKH

Persistent Drought Grips Pakistan

By Anna Muir,
PWS&D Communications

In 2015, a severe drought swept across Pakistan. Many farmers and their families suffered when harsh weather destroyed grain and other staple crops. At the time, PWS&D provided much needed food packages to 1,800 families over a seven-month period through generous support from partners at Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

After consecutive years of very little rainfall, a similar situation has occurred across southern Pakistan, particularly in the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan, where rates of poverty and hunger are already high.

The resulting drought has impacted the lives of about five million people. In rural areas, where most people are farmers, the repercussions have been devastating—destroying livestock, crops and livelihoods. Countless families have no idea where their next meal will come from.

Access to health care has also been impeded by drought conditions. Finding themselves without an income,

many rural families living in remote areas can no longer afford the cost to travel to distant health facilities.

To get by, many have accepted loans from relatives, shopkeepers and landlords, and are trapped by unmanageable debt.

Responding with local partners at Community World Service Asia and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, PWS&D is helping to provide relief to 8,900 people in the affected region through food assistance.

One part of this response is to distribute food packages over a six-month time period, prioritizing households headed by women, the elderly and people living with disabilities. This assistance allows families to use cash for other urgent necessities, such as health care.

This effort is an attempt to encourage farmers to look to the future with hope by providing seeds that will help cultivate their land and harvest a good crop next season.

To empower communities to build resilience to future weather-related disasters, PWS&D is supporting training in early warning systems. These



Community members gather for the first round of food distributions. CREDIT: COMMUNITY WORLD SERVICE ASIA

systems will help protect livestock and introduce drought-resistant crops.

Through your generosity, we can assist those whose livelihood, food source and future are in flux because of the harmful and long-term consequences of climate change. To

learn more and make a gift that will restore hope for vulnerable families across Pakistan, visit WeRespond.ca/pakistan-drought.

PWS&D is a member of Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a coalition of 15

church-based agencies working together with the common goal of eliminating global hunger. This project is undertaken with matching support from the Government of Canada.

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

Partner Spotlight: International Nepal Fellowship (INF)

By Sean Jeffrey, PWS&D Programs

Nirmala Kumari BM—manager of Shining Hospital in Banke, Nepal—is deeply inspired by her work that allows her to walk hand in hand with women and men living with leprosy on the journey to good health.

PWS&D has a long-standing partnership with International Nepal Fellowship and supports the work of Shining Hospital—a health centre established by INF that brings health and hope to people affected by leprosy through medical care, nutrition support, health education and awareness raising.

Nirmala is proud that Shining Hospital's services not only cure patients of leprosy, but also help patients regain their confidence, find meaningful work and live a fulfilling life.

How did you become the manager of Shining Hospital?

I grew up on a farm in rural Nepal where we grew vegetables and raised buffalo. When I was 15, I got married and moved to Nepalgunj in Banke district. I earned two bachelor's degrees in public health and health education and a master's degree in rural development. Seven years ago, I started working with INF as a nutritionist. Two years later, I became the hospital

manager at Shining Hospital. I began working in the health field because I felt called to help support those with physical and spiritual challenges.

What is a typical day at work like?

I work Sunday to Friday managing the hospital's 18 staff and meeting the needs of health professionals who work directly with leprosy patients. We are one of five leprosy hospitals in all of Nepal so it is also our responsibility to remind the government, which does not place a huge focus on health issues, that there are still high-risk communities which are in need of support.

What is an accomplishment through Shining Hospital that you are particularly proud of?

I am proud of the work that we have been able to do to promote women's health and menstrual hygiene. Conversations around menstrual hygiene are often repressed. We have been able to empower girls and women to take control of their health and allow important conversations to take place.

Why is it important to continue supporting Shining Hospital?

Nepal experiences an average of 3,000 new leprosy cases each year. The prevalence is much higher than



Nirmala Kumari BM, Manager of Shining Hospital in Nepal.

this national average. While we are the only hospital in the mid-west region of Nepal targeting leprosy, we receive minimal funding from the government. Without PWS&D support, we wouldn't be able to provide this level of care to leprosy patients. Through this partnership, we can reduce stigma and provide care to people who are infected and living in isolation and help them access education and livelihood opportunities.

What do you like to do when you're not working?

Two of my three children are in China studying at university. I spend a lot of



With partners at International Nepal Fellowship (INF), the longest-serving NGO working in Nepal, these patients are receiving care to restore their health and well-being.

my time video-calling them!

Aside from that, I enjoy working in my garden and knitting clothes for my family. I also like to try cooking new recipes from YouTube. My favourite meal is Dal Bhat Takari, which is a traditional meal of lentils, rice and vegetable curry.

What inspires you?

When people are infected with leprosy, they are often banished from their community and face a great deal of discrimination. This spiritual and mental anguish can be just as damaging as the infection itself.

My inspiration is rooted in the opportunity to allow people who are discriminated against to realize their personhood. Having the opportunity to remind people that God loves them is such a gift!

What message do you have for people in Canada reading this?

We all have a purpose from God and a mission. We should all be following the mission in our heart and paying attention to the signs that appear along the way. If you listen and follow the signs, God will provide for you in your pursuits.

Life-Changing Work in Haiti

By Donna Wilkinson, member of the PWS&D Committee and First Presbyterian Church in Regina

In December 2018, as a new PWS&D committee member, I had the privilege of participating in a visit to Haiti. Since my return, people have been asking what it was like. I've had a hard time answering that question.

My first impression of Haiti was one of new smells, people everywhere, traffic and noise. It's also a country that needs a lot of work on infrastructure and might be considered dirty by Canadian urban standards.

I think the noise is what I remember most. Haitians speak Creole, French and English. There are people and animals everywhere. What was really fascinating to me was the lan-

guage of honking! Haitian's honk for everything—to get out of way, to let you know they are coming through, to say thank you and any other reason you can imagine. And it really does feel like a language as every honk is a little different!

Since I first became a committee member, over 20 years ago, I've been able to travel to a number of countries where PWS&D works. I am always amazed by how these trips change me, and this time was no exception.

There is a saying in Haiti that, "Haiti is the life lived outside." This is so true as electricity is not a guarantee. Ever since my visit to Haiti, I've been much more conscious of the power I use. I turn off lights and don't use more than I need.



Community members in St. Marc, Haiti, receive education on nutrition.

What also struck me is that people want the same things for their children no matter where they live—for them to be safe, go to school, have access to necessary medical care and, ultimately, have the opportunity for a better life than previous generations.

Every time I travel, it is the people I meet that stay with me.

One day we visited two malnutrition treatment programs run by Partners in Health, a partner of PWS&D. These clinics go into some of the poorest communities around St. Marc, an area in western Haiti, and assess children between the ages of

six months and five years. In each community they gather women and children, as well as some men, and educate them on all the different foods children need to eat in order to develop and grow.

One by one, the children are then weighed, measured and the circumference of their upper arm is measured. This data helps the nurses identify who is malnourished and in crisis. Those in dire need are given a jar of Nourimanba—a peanut butter-like supplement made of peanuts, milk and vitamin supplements. As this is therapeutic feeding, clear in-



Children in St. Marc are weighed, measured and evaluated for malnutrition. Therapeutic treatment is provided when necessary.

structions are provided on how to use the Nourimanba. A spoonful a day for 12 weeks gives these children the opportunity for a good start on life.

In Haiti, PWS&D also supports work with farmers to empower communities to achieve greater food and economic security. These projects are run in collaboration with Mennonite Central Committee and Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

But more than anything else, this monitoring trip reaffirmed my belief in the work that PWS&D does around the world and the impact it has!

COMMITTEES

Funds of the Church

By Tim Herron, Convener of the
Trustee Board and Chair of the
Investment Advisory Committee

In a previous article in the Presbyterian Connection newspaper ("Stewards of the Church's Funds," Spring 2019), I wrote about the role of the Trustee Board and its relationship with the Investment Advisory Committee (IAC). Both the Board and the IAC have oversight of two portfolios: the pension plan funds and the consolidated funds of the church. While both are large pools of capital, they fall under different guidelines and legislation as to how they are invested. The Board has the final authority to make decisions on the pension assets and the consolidated fund, with recommendations from the IAC. For this article, I will discuss the Consolidated Funds portfolio.

The Fund falls under the *Securities Act* of Ontario and is structured like a mutual fund. Therefore, it is subject to the financial disclosure requirements of the Act and securities regulations.

The Board and the IAC are held to the standard known as "prudent person." This means the Board and IAC members are to invest the funds in securities or financial instruments that any reasonable individual investor would purchase with the intention of receiving a good return of income while preserving the invested capital.

The assets in the Fund are those of the national church, funds endowed to the church and funds of different congregations across Canada. Currently, the Fund's size is about \$170 million. We have approximately 110 unitholders of which the national church is the largest. Churches across Canada can take advantage of investing alongside the national church by making application and by having a minimum initial deposit of \$150,000. Financial assets of the church include money from specific restricted endowment funds, Presbyterian seminaries and proceeds from the sale of real estate.

The Board acts as trustee of the Fund. We monitor the investments of

the Fund in conformity with appropriate investment and Church policies. The Board retains the services of outside managers for day-to-day portfolio management. Each manager is required to follow the Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures (SIPP), a document that outlines the roles of the Board, the IAC, the Chief Financial Officer, the asset or investment manager, the consultant and the custodian. Each has a defined role in managing the funds of the church.

Currently, the IAC has members whose backgrounds include money management, securities law, actuarial analysis, risk oversight and technology. We also have Santa Claus as a member of the committee (Bruce Templeton from Newfoundland)! We are fortunate to have members of the Board whose skill sets complement those of the IAC, including pension law, audit and financial risk analytics.

In 2018, the IAC undertook a full review of the money managers, the SIPP, the custodian and the consultant. We have completed the money



manager changes, and by June 2019 will have completed a full review of our SIPP. A letter to all unitholders from me, as convener, will be sent out with the June 2019 statement outlining all the changes that have been made and any that might be anticipated by year end.

As for the returns this past year, it was a challenge if you only look at the year-over-year results. The Fund is run with a view of providing decent returns as well as an income for the operations of restricted funds and those of the national church. Unitholders should not look at only one timeframe. For the year ending

December 2018, our results were -0.5%. When we look at the first quarter of 2019, the Fund did greater than 7%. Over the 3, 5- and 10-year timeframes, the results have been in the high single-digit range and have exceeded our portfolio benchmarks.

For the remainder of 2019, the Board and the IAC plan to review and research best practices of money management. We will continue to act prudently, ethically and with an eye on good governance. I go back to the great investor Warren Buffett who said, "Rule No. 1: Never lose money. Rule No. 2: Never forget rule No. 1."

ELDERS

The Role of Presbyteries

By the Rev. Don Muir,
General Assembly Office

The Presbyterian Church in Canada comprises four levels, or courts: Session (at the congregational level), Presbytery, Synod and, since 1875, the General Assembly.

Did you know there are 45 presbyteries within The Presbyterian Church in Canada? Do you know the name of your presbytery? Do you know how many congregations are in your presbytery? (Tip: you can find the full list of presbyteries online at presbyterian.ca/presbyteries)

Presbyteries are made up of ministers and elders. Most of the ministers serve congregations but some are engaged in other ministries. Members of the Order of Diaconal Ministries who serve in qualifying positions are also on the roll. Each pastoral charge elects one elder to represent it at presbytery. Equalizing elders are appointed when there is a need to balance the number of ministers and elders on presbytery's roll.

Presbyteries range in size in terms of square kilometers and the number of pastoral charges within their bounds. The Presbytery of New-

foundland, for example, has three pastoral charges; however, there are more than 400 kilometers of highway between St. John's and the next pastoral charge in Grand Falls-Windsor. The Presbytery of Montreal has over 30 pastoral charges but is spread over a smaller area. Some presbyteries have substantial resources in terms of elders, ministers and financial investments. Others must manage with few people and tight budgets. Nevertheless, all presbyteries are called upon to provide the same sort of ministry.

What does the presbytery do?

The presbytery's primary role is to care for and oversee ministers and congregations within its bounds. Here are a few illustrations of what that looks like, especially in relation to sessions. This is not a complete list of all references or presbytery responsibilities.

- Ministers are responsible to the presbytery for how they conduct worship and the content of worship.
- The presbytery is responsible for the care and good order of the churches within its bounds.
- The presbytery may visit congregations as part of its exercise of care.

gations as part of its exercise of care.

- The presbytery may call for and examine session records.
- Only the presbytery can form a new congregation or permit a church building to be constructed.
- Session must seek permission from the presbytery before selling its property or contracting debt.
- Session must seek permission from a presbytery to change the name of the congregation.
- It is the presbytery that can bring two or more congregations together to form a multiple-point pastoral charge. Often this means one minister serves two or more congregations.
- Similarly, it is the presbytery that can separate congregations that are currently in a multiple-point charge. This allows them to function as single congregations.
- If a Presbyterian congregation wants to enter into an Ecumenical Shared Ministries agreement with a congregation from another denomination, it needs to apply to the presbytery for permission.
- It is only the presbytery that can dissolve (close) a congregation.



- While congregations, sessions and colleges play a large role in identifying and encouraging people who might be called to a ministry of Word and Sacraments, it is the presbytery that, after prayerful examination and discernment, certifies them for ministry and ordination.
- It is the presbytery that ordains ministers of Word and Sacraments.
- It is the presbytery that approves calls to ministers and inducts ministers into pastoral charges.
- If a minister would like to take a leave of absence, an intermission or a maternity or paternity leave, they must seek the permission of the presbytery.

- A minister must seek the permission of the presbytery to retire.
- The presbytery appoints interim moderators as needed. If a vacant congregation is not ready to proceed with a call, the presbytery appoints a stated supply minister, an interim minister or a lay missionary. Sessions do not "hire" ministers independent from the presbytery.
- The presbytery appoints minister and elder commissioners to the General Assembly.

For more detailed information about the relationship between the session and the presbytery, go to presbyterian.ca/mcv and download Called to Covenant – Part 1 and Called to Covenant – Part 2.

COMMITTEES

We Have Listened. How Will We Respond?

A Special Listening Committee Update

By the Rev. Dr. Bob Faris and Sue Senior, Committee Co-conveners

As a Special Listening Committee formed by the General Assembly in 2017, Rainbow Communion was mandated to hear the stories of those harmed by homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism and hypocrisy, as well as those who have experienced God's grace in ministry amidst those challenges. You can find out more about the listening process as well as the Rights of the Storyteller at presbyterian.ca/listening.

Rainbow Communion has spent the past year listening to the stories of people from all across Canada who represent the full diversity of the church. You can still share your story, but you must contact Rainbow Communion (rainbowcommunion@gmail.com or 1-800-619-7301, ext. 300) by June 15, 2019. At the General Assembly in 2018, a recommendation was approved that removed the threat of censure indefinitely for those who serve with Rainbow Communion and for those who share their stories, who might otherwise be subject to discipline with respect to the PCC's stance on same-sex relationships, in order to allow them to participate freely and honestly.

Rainbow Communion will be hard at work in the third year of its mandate preparing a final report that is to be presented to General Assembly in 2020. The committee will be organizing and considering the stories received in order to provide The Presbyterian Church in Canada with an overview of the extent and type of harm done to—as well as grace experienced by—various people, including many of those whose voices may not have been heard previously in the Church. As written in the Interim Report to the 2019 General Assembly, several themes are already apparent and continue to emerge from the stories shared. They include gratitude for the opportunity to share stories, the importance and pain of church community, and the trauma and barriers to healing.

The Rev. Peter Bush delivered the Moderator's Letter of Repentance in February 2018 to The Presbyterian Church in Canada and to all those harmed by homophobia and hypocrisy by and within the church. The letter acknowledges that harm has occurred because of homophobia and hypocrisy in the Church and also points to the work of Rainbow Communion as a starting place for the PCC to find ways to enter into a path

of genuine repentance:

[...] God calls the church to be a welcoming community where we welcome one another as Christ has welcomed us. In our hypocrisy the church offers welcome to heterosexual people but often shuns people who do not identify as heterosexual. In this homophobic environment, the church is often an unsafe place for people to name their sexual identity and orientation. For the church and our congregations failing to be safe and welcoming places, we are sorry, and we repent...

[...] By God's grace, led by the Holy Spirit, and seeking to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ we repent and desire to go in a new way and to be a welcoming church centred in the Triune God of grace who draws us into community. [...] We commit ourselves to pray with one another, weep with one another, and rejoice with one another.

This letter of repentance is neither the beginning nor the end; it is a part of a longer conversation. This conversation is being taken up in part by the Rainbow Communion, a committee with the important mandate of creating a safe space where experiences of LGBTQI people will be told and heard.

Frequently, individuals who have shared their stories with Rainbow Communion have also expressed their appreciation for the Letter of Repentance that acknowledges experiences of harm and isolation, and recognizes these as being traumatic and hurtful.

The Special Listening Committee has also been mandated to provide recommendations in its final report for concrete actions for the Church to take in order to address its homophobia, transphobia, heterosexism and hypocrisy so that true healing and reconciliation may be possible. Rainbow Communion is committed to holding the stories it has heard



YOUR STORY MATTERS

Contact Rainbow Communion by
JUNE 15, 2019
to share yours

rainbowcommunion@gmail.com
1-800-619-7301 ext. 300

presbyterian.ca/listening/

LGBTQI is an acronym used to refer to people whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual and/or whose gender identity does not conform either to binary male/female categories or the "assigned" gender at birth. LGBTQI: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex.

with great care. And with God's grace it will compile a final report that honestly and accurately reflects the experiences of LGBTQI persons in the church as well as those of their relatives, friends, clergy, colleagues and allies, to make recommendations that will take us further along the path of repentance and healing.

Thank you to all those who agreed to be deputized as Listeners across the country, as well as the many churches who offered and provided rooms to hold safe and respectful Listening Spaces. Thanks also go to the churches, sessions, presbyteries, synods and other groups who invited Rainbow Communion to present information about its work and clarify

its mandate; and in turn encourage those among them to share their stories if they wished to do so. Finally, and most importantly, the committee

is deeply grateful to those who courageously accepted the invitation to share their stories. We have listened and we will respond.



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HISTORY

Lindsay's Progressive Pastor: The Reverend Dr. J.W. MacMillan

This article originally appeared online, The Lindsay Advocate magazine, lindsayadvocate.ca, April 2, 2019, written by Ian McKechnie

"The first duty of an industrial order, whatever its nature, is to provide for the needs of the people. Business is good, in the true sense, when all the people are maintained in decent comfort and wholesome security. Salaries for presidents of corporations and dividends on stock should come after that has been accomplished."

These words were printed, not in last week's business or opinion section of one of Canada's major national newspapers, but in Lindsay, Ontario's Evening Post almost 100 years ago, in 1920. The author, a syndicated columnist whose writings appeared in newspapers across Canada, went by the byline, "J.W. MacMillan, D.D." The post-nominal letters, which stand for Doctor of Divinity, tell us that MacMillan was a man of the cloth; a minister of word and sacrament. "What does he think he is doing, sticking his nose into public affairs?" a contemporary observer might sneer. "Shouldn't he be concerned with matters of a purely spiritual nature? Do we not believe in the separation of Church and State?"

Well, the learned Dr. MacMillan would probably beg to differ. For him, his calling as a Presbyterian minister

meant that he had a responsibility to speak out against injustice and educate the masses about what could be done to alleviate the sufferings of the most vulnerable in society. Nearly 125 years after he was called to the pulpit of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Lindsay, MacMillan's progressive approach to understanding and implementing sound social policy continues to resonate.

John Walker MacMillan was born in 1868 and went on to study at the renowned Knox College at the University of Toronto. Ordained in 1891, he served a parish in Vancouver before arriving in Lindsay in 1895. During his pastorate at St. Andrew's, MacMillan took an active interest in the work of the hospital and library, a nod to the significant public role clergy played in Canadian society during the early 20th Century. MacMillan was an enthusiastic outdoorsman, once cycling forty miles over the rough roads between Lindsay and Sonya to attend a meeting of the Presbytery in the latter village (were he with us today, MacMillan would very likely have numbered among those calling for better cycling infrastructure in downtown Lindsay). He was a frequent visitor to Sturgeon Point, where he preached in its church and mingled with the family of prominent Lindsay businessman, John Dundas Flavelle, ultimately marrying his daughter, Amy Cooper Flavelle (1877–1957).

In 1903, MacMillan headed west and served a congregation in Winnipeg for the next six years, though he and Mrs. MacMillan maintained close ties to Lindsay well into the ensuing decades. From Winnipeg, MacMillan headed east again, this time to Halifax, where he served in the pulpit of St. Matthew's Presbyterian [now United] Church on Barrington Street. He remained here until 1915, before returning to Manitoba to take up a position as professor of social ethics and practical theology at the University of Manitoba.

In the spring of 1919, Dr. MacMillan was appointed as Chair of Christian Sociology at U of T's Victoria College. "In his home province, the professor is recognized as a sociologist of high standing," gushed the newspapers at the time, "having acted during the war as chairman of the Minimum Wage Board for Manitoba, while at present he is temporary chairman of the Industrial Disputes Council... The importance of this particular branch of study was emphasized at the last session of the Methodist Conference, in Hamilton, when the Church was strongly urged to take a more active part in economic and social affairs."

Reading through MacMillan's writing in 2019, one is struck by how similar the issues of his day are to our own. Consider, for instance, his warning about the state of political discourse in Canada:

"It will be well to remember that all the world is psychically disturbed at present, and that the tone of all discussions, whether in parliaments or where the union organizers meet the bosses, is more acrid than in former years. We deliberate less and vociferate more about everything. Thus, with both sides impelled to downright and defiant action, the likelihood of trouble is great. Pity that allowance could not be made. And the man who deserves most consideration is the man who is trying to be a father and a citizen on less than five dollars a day."

Perhaps taking a cue from the ancient prophet who wrote, "Come now, and let us reason together," MacMillan decried those who allow the heat of political rhetoric to be turned up to a boil. "It is a dangerous thing for any community to resent the utterances of unpopular views," he wrote in 1919 about the cause of revolutions. "From public discussion comes public opinion, and from public opinion comes social action. So the adaptation is made in an orderly manner, and the storm of revolution gets no chance to rise."

The Reverend Dr. John Walker MacMillan died on April 16, 1932, aged 63. According to authors Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, in their book *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900–1940*, "MacMillan's growing espousal of



The Rev. Dr. J.W. MacMillan.

government intervention in the sphere of social welfare remained tempered by his belief that a cooperative society was anchored upon the primary institutions of family and that the church remained the critical linchpin between the public and private spheres."

Today, MacMillan's portrait hangs above the coat racks at St. Andrew's, gazing down on a stream of volunteers who give of their time and talents to ensure that the hungry are fed and the poor are lifted high in body, mind, and spirit through outreach ministries ranging from the Community Soup Kitchen to the Sunday Suppers. St. Andrew's continues to serve the people of Lindsay, even though the mainline church MacMillan knew and served has become for many a mere cultural relic, no longer enjoying the prominence it once did in Canada.

Nonetheless, J.W. MacMillan's advocacy from the pulpit, the lecture hall, and the newspaper all those years ago, can and should inspire today's advocates of a universal basic income, a higher minimum wage, and unlimited access to health care, among other issues that must be championed by "the people" of faith and no faith, when they are clearly not being championed by the government.

Summer Ministry at the Cap à l'Aigle Church, Que.

By Mary M. (Molly) Harvey. Mary is A. B. Mackay's great-granddaughter and secretary of St. Peter-on-the-Rock, Cap à l'Aigle, Que.

Shortly after the Rev. A. B. Mackay was called to Crescent Street Presbyterian Church in Montreal in 1879, he spent his first summer in La Malbaie, Que. While his ministry in Montreal is well documented in official church records, the story of his summer ministry is little known. His pleasant remembrances of this region (also known as Murray Bay), his ministry and that of seven generations of his descendants are documented in scrapbooks, photo albums, letters and annual reports stored at the family cottage in La Malbaie. This community, 90 miles east of Quebec City, is on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River. The clean air, salt water and mountains provided a healthy

summer respite from the cities of Toronto and Montreal. Mackay and others sought refuge in places such as Cacouna, Métis and La Malbaie.

Upon Mackay's arrival in La Malbaie in 1880, the Hon. Samuel Blake invited him to preach at the union church. Blake was an evangelical Sunday School-teaching Anglican lawyer and politician from Toronto. Mackay was a free church evangelist and Protestant ecumenist.

Blake founded the Murray Bay Protestant Church in 1867. Presbyterian and Anglican services alternated morning and evening throughout July and August. Until his death in 1901, Mackay preached there every summer.

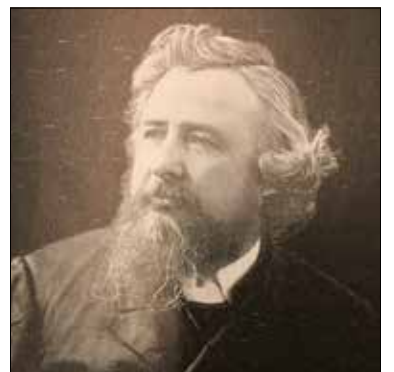
In Cap à l'Aigle, Anglicans worshipped in a converted barn and Presbyterians worshipped in different cottages. At that time, Mackay and The Presbyterian Church in Canada felt it important to exhibit a Protestant

witness to the largely Roman Catholic population. Mackay built his own church with his own funds. The first service was held in 1889 with the Rev. George Wrong, of Wycliffe College, the Rev. A. B. Mackay and the Rev. Robert Campbell, minister at St. Gabriel's Presbyterian Church, Montreal participating.

The little church was a bell-roofed building with two flying buttresses on each side between the three Gothic-arched windows. The east end boasted a small steeple surmounted with an iron Celtic cross and a bell. A round stained-glass window depicting the Burning Bush graced the west end of the building. According to the annual reports, 60 to 70 worshippers attended service there each Sunday with choir practice on Saturdays. Mackay continued to preach at Murray Bay and strongly supported mission efforts at home and abroad.

The Anglicans built St. Peter-on-the-Rock in Cap à l'Aigle in 1889. All three congregations thrived and provided a strong sense of community and jovial fellowship and English Protestant witness. In 1961, the very difficult decision to tear down the Cap à l'Aigle Church, rather than see it fall into disrepair, had to be made. The English community could no longer support three churches. The furnishings were dispersed and the bell was sent to Bafia, Cameroon, where A. B.'s grandson, the Rev. Dr. L. K. Anderson, had been a missionary for the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

St. Peter's warmly welcomed the Presbyterians to their pews, the pulpit and to the organ bench. Today four of the five officers of St. Peter's are Presbyterians, and three are ordained elders and descendants of A. B. Mackay, whose dream of a union church has been realized. Services are now



Portrait of the Rev. Dr. Alexander Bisset Mackay.

held each summer at St. Peter-on-the-Rock in July and at Murray Bay.

Mary Harvey's book, *Pleasant Remembrances, tells what the family did during 140 summer vacations at Cap à l'Aigle. It will be published in time for a Mackay family reunion in July 2019. It is available for \$25 plus shipping by contacting pleasantremembrances@gmail.com.*

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

God at Work in Refugee Sponsorship

By the Rev. Mark Chiang, Minister at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Edmonton

When a member of our congregation asked if we would sponsor his sister and her family as refugees, the Session's first reaction was caution. St. Andrew's Edmonton is a small, inner-city church that can only pay for half-time ministry—and even that is a struggle. Our concern was that we wanted to help, but could we afford to?

We cautiously started the paperwork. We figured there would be so much paperwork for a family of six that it would buy us time to raise funds. We had a five-year plan: year one, announce our decision to the congregation; years two through four, raise funds and awareness; year five, the family arrives. That was our plan.

God had other plans.

As soon as pen hit paper, our sponsorship application raced through its bureaucratic tracks, with God gleefully bulldozing the red-tape hurdles we were relying on. Once our family's safety was threatened in their country of residence, the waiting list for them vanished. Instead of having years to get ready, our family was scheduled to arrive within weeks. It

happened so quickly, Session hadn't yet announced their decision to the congregation.

And then we heard that the family had a niece and infant son who requested to be included in the sponsorship. We were now being asked to sponsor two families at once, three adults and five children in total. Over \$50,000 would be needed. Our eyes widened, but we did not blink. Of course, we would include the niece and her child. God was clearly at work and so, our elders reasoned, we would trust God to make it work.

And God did amazing things in that year. We were blessed that Rob Shropshire, PWS&D's Refugee Program Coordinator, happened to be leading a workshop in Edmonton on Refugee Sponsorship. He gave us the basic information we needed to calm our fears and set us on the right track. Then, when complications to our application arose, Rob went above and beyond to support and offer guidance. We never once felt alone in this process.

Another congregation in our presbytery worked with us to organize our first fundraising event, and as God would have it, our sponsored families arrived that very week to join us for dinner! Our Dinner and Silent

Auction, along with online donations from across the country, helped us to raise enough funds to cover all the start-up costs and housing for the first couple of months. Local newcomer agencies helped us bridge language and employment obstacles and volunteers stepped up to offer rides and friendship.

And, on top of all these blessings, there was one more we didn't expect—the families we sponsored have been joining us in worship! We did not know their faith affiliation when we agreed to sponsor them, and we had no expectations that they would come to church. Our love and support would be unconditional. So for us, it's been a humbling honour that they would choose to engage with the ministry at St. Andrew's.

When God blesses you so abundantly, it's important to share. Buoyed by this positive experience, we wanted to do more. We gathered together individuals from eight local churches and, partnering with the Edmonton Mennonite Newcomer Centre, formed a sponsorship team focusing on LGBTQI Refugees.

Again, we thought we'd have time to fundraise, but again, God had different plans. Three months after our first meeting, we were standing in the



Refugee children experiencing Canadian winter for the first time.

airport terminal waiting to welcome a young gay man from Gambia.

Being there to support someone at such a critical point in their lives is a humbling and exhilarating experience. It's a joy to see God at work, and we feel grateful to be part of it. And we're thankful for PWS&D. We wouldn't have started down this path if it wasn't for their help. And now that we're off and running, we can't wait to see where God leads us next!



A sign welcoming refugee families as they arrive at the airport.

Supporting Refugees

By Guy Smagghe, PWS&D Director

June 20 is World Refugee Day, a day on which we are reminded of the needs of refugees in the world and how we respond—both in Canada and overseas, where the vast majority of refugees remain.

I live in Toronto and can't imagine what it would be like to have to leave my home, with my children and my dog, to go to a safer place. Where would that place be? What if I had to leave Canada or would the border be sealed altogether?

Where would you go if home was no longer a safe place? How long would you be able to get by with your savings, assuming you can even access them?

Did you know that over 95 percent of the world's refugees never get resettled in countries like Canada, the United States or Germany? They live in transition, often for extended periods, hoping to be able to return home one day.

"According to the UNHCR, in 2018, there are over 68.5 million people in the world who have been forced to leave their homes because they were no longer safe. That is the largest number of forcibly displaced people in recorded history. Two-thirds of them are internally displaced in their own countries and 25.4 million have had to cross borders into other countries as refugees, half of them under the age of 18.

Did you know that the largest numbers of refugees are hosted by developing countries? Pakistan and Uganda host 1.4 million refugees each, followed by Lebanon with one million refugees and Iran with 980,000. These large numbers take an enormous toll on host countries.

Canada took in just under 30,000 refugees in 2018. We can do more, we can do better, and we know that newcomers contribute immensely to the richness of our country and economy.

All these statistics are interest-

ing and help to put our contribution in perspective. Presbyterian World Service & Development is deeply concerned about the plight of refugees and helps to support displaced persons overseas, as well as provide sponsorship for many new to Canada. For example, we support refugees from the ongoing Syria crisis with food assistance through Canadian Foodgrains Bank, where our funds are matched by the Canadian government 4:1. Similarly, PWS&D supports Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and others from the Democratic Republic of Congo in Burundi.

The scriptures call us to welcome the stranger. The response of Presbyterians to this call through the refugee sponsorship program has grown dramatically over the past five years.

In 2018, PWS&D provided assistance to 105 congregations and five presbyteries involved in sponsoring 245 refugees. This work is supported by countless volunteers around the country and by generous financial con-



With support from PWS&D, Presbyterian congregations and groups welcome refugee families to Canada.

tributions. However, PWS&D's own capacity to provide assistance is being stretched as government requirements become increasingly onerous.

At PWS&D, we strive to provide quality support to all sponsorship groups. Whether or not your congregation or presbytery is currently

involved, please consider making a contribution to this vital ministry. A designated gift toward the refugee sponsorship program will help sustain the continued partnership between PWS&D and partners to enable the life-giving work that welcomes displaced persons to Canada.

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP

Forty Years of Refugee Sponsorship

By Rob Robertson, PWS&D Committee Convener and member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Ottawa

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Master Agreement between the Canadian government and churches and other private groups for the sponsorship of refugees. This uniquely Canadian mechanism has governed the sponsorship of 327,000 refugees.

The agreement (known today as a "Sponsorship Agreement") created the legal framework for refugee sponsorships. At a celebration of its anniversary at the Senate of Canada, which I was privileged to attend on behalf of PWS&D, former Prime Minister Joe Clark said that the government's role in establishing the sponsorship program was "...not so much to lead the people as it was to recognize and respond to Canadians' broad and extraordinary instincts of

generosity and community. It was a transforming citizens' moment."

The government leader in the senate, the Hon. Peter Harder, whose parents were refugees sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee, recounted the early days of the Sponsorship Agreement. "Within five months 28 denominations and dioceses had signed master agreements. As sponsorship groups mushroomed across Canada, public servants across Southeast Asia and here in Ottawa showed creativity and compassion to deliver on its government's commitments. Immigration officers travelled to 70 distant camps on beaches, islands and jungle clearings across seven countries to identify newcomers."

The Hon. Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship said that what is unique about Canada is the availability of the sponsorship mechanism to give practical



Terry Collins-Williams (Refugee Coordinator, St. Andrew's PC, Ottawa), the Hon. Ahmed Hussen (Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship) and Rob Robertson at the Senate's 40th anniversary celebration.

expression to Canadians' generosity, a mechanism that Canada should be exporting to the rest of the world.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada signed its first agreement with the Government of Canada on March 9, 1979. Since then, in response to many humanitarian crises, our con-

gregations have welcomed and supported refugees from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

For Presbyterians, sponsorship has remained a vital way to express our commitment to social justice and an enlightened worldview. Under PWS&D's administration of the

PCC's Sponsorship Agreement in the past six years our denomination has welcomed 643 refugees. Many more are on the way to Canada to be met with Christian hospitality as they establish themselves in a new country rich in liberty and opportunity for themselves and their children.

NEWS

Theology and The Simpsons

By the Rev. Bradley Childs, Fairview Presbyterian Church in Vancouver, B.C.

It is arguably the most religious and philosophically engaged show on so-called "secular" television. From its outset the clouds part, harps play, a choir sings and we are transported from the heavens down into the town of Springfield. On what show other than The Simpsons is a church used as one of the main sets? On what other show do characters regularly pray out loud before meals and before bed and expect intervention? On what other show do you know the specific religious makeup of every character? What show has interfaith and ecumenical conversations between Catholics, "Presbylutherians," Orthodox Jews, Hindus, Snake handlers, and Buddhists? What other



show makes visiting the minister for advice a regular occurrence or assumes immediate retribution for insulting or challenging God? How many shows quote Scripture or the Talmud or give God guest spots?

As one of the most popular and long-running shows on television, The Simpsons, and it's sometimes biting satire of typical western life, is the perfect touch-point for engaging with our neighbours about spiritual matters. Even if someone has never passed through the doors of a church building before, they are surely aware of The Simpsons. Ask someone on the street what a Presbyterian is and you will likely get a confused look as your reward. But ask someone if they remember when Lisa Simpson became a Buddhist or Homer decided he didn't need to go to church anymore, or when Bart prayed for a

snow day, and you will likely get a smile accompanied by a warm "Yes."

I love The Simpsons but sadly, much akin to Monty Python, a surprising amount of the jokes are lost on the non-religiously educated. But that's the beauty of it. The show is so incredibly packed with religious themes (and even entire episodes dedicated to biblical stories) that you could probably do a thousand Bible studies based around the intersection of The Simpsons, Scripture and Culture. So that's exactly what we did. Well, not a thousand. Instead, we ran a ten-week series. We watched an episode together, read applicable scriptures together and worked through several questions that arose from the show. It was a lot of fun; we had quite a few guests from our community drop in and we learned a lot.

NEWS

Developing Leaders at Camp Kintail

By Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee, Co-Executive Director, Camp Kintail in Goderich, ON

It is a beautiful clear evening. A group from a cabin heads down to the beach at Camp Kintail. They gather with the rest of the cabin groups around a campfire circle. Beginning with silly action songs and ending with linked arms and a reminder that “God is nigh,” the campers sing their faith. While the sun sets over the lake, they gaze at the horizon with awe and wonder. And as campers make their way up to their bunk beds, the remaining staff gather around the dying fire to give thanks for the day and to ask God to look after each camper through the night.

This scene could have taken place in 1930 or it could have happened last summer, and it will certainly happen this summer. For 90 years now, outdoor ministry has changed lives at Camp Kintail. The gift of camping has always been to spend time in creation, to learn about faith and to grow in community. To accomplish this we play, sing, climb, explore, read the Bible, swim, forgive, canoe, share and dress-up.

Camp Kintail is located on the beautiful sandy beach of Lake Huron, between the towns of Goderich and Kincardine in southwestern Ontario. Camp Kintail is now open year-round, so it is possible to kayak in the summer, watch the leaves fall in the autumn, snowshoe in the winter and contemplate the apple blossoms in the spring. Our new year-round building, the Nest, makes this possible. Summer camp remains the heart of our mission and it is complemented with a range of retreats and rentals throughout the year.

At the core of our ministry is our Leader in Training Program. For over 30 years, Kintail has been graduating young adults who have spent a month learning leadership skills for camp, church and community. This program is housed in the Nest and offers young adults the chance to learn and practice leadership. Kintail Leaders in Training (LITs) have gone on to offer leadership in various places, including pulpits, classrooms, mechanic shops, non-governmental organizations and hospitals. Kintail gave them a secure space to identify themselves as leaders.

Leaving behind the rest of the



world, campers and guests surrender their screens, deadlines, worries and routines for a few days. They enter a place where we spend as much time as possible outside, where we connect face to face, where we offer welcome to all, and where we have honest conversations about faith. Each year, a minister volunteers his or her time. When I ran across the minister one evening, we could hear one group of kids laughing and yelling as they finished up their game and another group just beginning their campfire in the Glen. He said, “Grace just runs over in this place.”

This is true of every outdoor ministry across the country. Every time I am invited to lead worship at congregations throughout the Synod of southwestern Ontario, I offer prayers for each of the Presbyterian outdoor ministry sites. In The Presbyterian



Church in Canada, we are blessed with beautiful sites and vibrant programs from coast to coast. This summer, find a way to spend even

an hour or two at one of our camps or conference centres. Your faith will be encouraged and your hope for the future of the church will be renewed.

Activities at Crieff



“Encountering Henri with the Rev. Daniel Cho” was an event held on Feb. 28 at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre in Puslinch, Ont. Almost 80 people welcomed the current moderator, who knew Henri Nouwen as a personal mentor. The group listened as Daniel shared the

profound and lasting impact of Nouwen’s spirituality, authenticity and friendship on his life. The Executive Director of the Henri Nouwen Society, Karen Pascal, was also present to share encouragement and additional resources.



In April 2019, Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre in Puslinch, Ont., welcomed chef Damien Ingrao to the team. A former instructor at Conestoga College and sous chef in several local restaurants, he will help to build connections with local growers and develop specialty menus.

“Hope, Heart & Home”

The Rev. Lonnie Atkinson, retired Presbyterian minister now living in Guernsey Cove, P.E.I., launched a musical CD titled, “Hope, Heart & Home” on March 31 at WellSpring Presbyterian Church. The concert on behalf of the launch was a success and raised nearly \$900 for Winnipeg Inner City Missions, which they will use to support teens attending Canada Youth 2020.

Lonnie has long dreamed to record his own album—a dream that needed to be put on hold while he helped WellSpring Presbyterian Church grow and expand. Once he retired in September 2018, Lonnie used the time to record the album. And he’s already planning a Christmas album!



The Rev. Lonnie Atkinson.



NEWS

Huron Feathers at 50

By the Rev. Ted Creen,
Board of Directors

One of the most unique and creative ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada will mark a significant milestone this summer. Huron Feathers Presbyterian Centre in Sauble Beach, Ont., will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the opening of its building. The vision of providing Christian outreach to people vacationing at this beautiful beach area has remained strong over the decades. Sauble Beach is a 7 km stretch of white sand beach on Lake Huron in Ontario with a unique dune ecology. A small year-round community expands suddenly when summer arrives with thousands of vacationers flocking to cottages and campgrounds. This presents an opportunity for a seasonal mission.

The mission of Huron Feathers actually began in the mid-1960s. Initially, a one-week Vacation Bible School (VBS) program was held at a local provincial park which expanded to a larger "on the beach" offering for children. At that time, Sauble Beach was becoming a destination for the growing "youth culture." Waves of

teens, hippies and bikers descended on the beach resort area. This was seen as an opportunity for expanded witness at Sauble.

Property was acquired through St. Andrew's Owen Sound and work was undertaken to build a permanent centre in 1968. The resulting building was carefully designed: it is a large "A-Frame" multi-purpose building. The name chosen—Huron Feathers—was meant to convey both the design of the building and the ministry. The A-frame exterior and the "Feathers" name are a tribute to the First Nations people who live in this area. The open concept serves as a meeting place for all ages. Since the Centre faces the sandy beach, the word "Huron" draws us outward to the lake with its unique beach environment and to the care of God's creation that we are called to.

If you could travel back in time to those late '60s, early '70s days you would discover a thriving five-night-per-week Coffee House ministry. The Centre would be packed with young people, music would be playing, conversations going strong. Some of the youth would "crash" overnight. On staff in those days, along with the

directors of children, youth and worship ministries, was a worker who dealt with drug and alcohol problems experienced by many of the youth. By the late '70s the numbers of travelling youth dwindled and the Coffee House ministry phased out. For another decade many youth groups came to Huron Feathers for weekend retreats. Presently the outreach to youth continues with special programs two evenings per week.

Huron Feathers began with a Day Camp/VBS ministry, which continues to this day. Each summer for eight weeks a daily camp is run for children ages 5 to 12. It is overseen by a program coordinator assisted by three university-aged workers. Games, stories, crafts and beach time are all part of the program. What is interesting now is to have the children of former Day Campers attending. Huron Feathers has consistently strived to include children with special needs. During the '80s one staff person was hired to enable this ministry.

Huron Feathers has always provided a unique "beach" worship service on Sundays from May to September. A great many Presbyterians have served at Huron Feathers over the



years: often students who have gone on to ordained ministry. Each Sunday has a different blend of congregants: to enable a sense of community, a *koinonia* break (tea, coffee, etc.) is offered during the service. The Rev. Ted Creen and his wife, Lorraine, will be leading worship this summer: it is their twelfth season serving at Huron Feathers.

A great summer of mission is again in the planning for 2019 and we would love to have many join us, particularly those who have been part of this ministry in the past. Day camp, youth ministry and worship (Sundays at 10 a.m.) are all in the



planning stages. As well, special events will help us celebrate. On Saturday, July 27, the Rev. Mark Curtis, Canada's "singing priest" will give a concert of inspirational songs.

To discover more about Huron Feathers: visit huronfeathers.ca.

Community Serenity Gardens Sanctuaries

By Terry Densmore, "Congregational Life" Coordinator, Wasaga Beach Community Presbyterian Church in Wasaga Beach, Ont.

At Wasaga Beach Community Presbyterian Church in Ontario, we are working on two projects in order to increase our community profile and attract new members to our church services.

We are ideally situated beside provincial parkland, and steps away from the sand dunes and shoreline of southern Georgian Bay—the longest freshwater beach in the world.

By dividing our project into two stages, we will be able to focus on one phase at a time. Upon completion, there will be two aligned but separate Serenity Gardens. Our focus this May/June is a botanical garden theme with an arbor and small patio for outdoor events in front of our knoll, boasting a flower garden and treed background.

Our second phase will revolve

around the theme of "Quiet Time," by using a portion of the available space for a small outdoor chapel, a firepit shaped in an octagon, flower beds, colourful shrubs and a bench or two for seating. We hope to host weddings, celebrations, congregational outdoor services and quiet meditations in this space throughout our spring and summer seasons.

The project actually had its start a few years ago, when we realized our PA days in the winter months had limited outdoor activities. A luge track was built on a toboggan hill and it quickly became a favourite throughout the winter months. Over the span of two summers, the rest of that area was cleared of small brush and poison ivy, and a firepit area was also set up. The following year, the area to the north was grubbed, trees and roots removed, and the land was backfilled, creating a natural knoll that we covered with Triple Mix with the intention of planting local flowers this spring. Mature Blue Spruce trees

were brought in to accent the knoll and provide a windbreak. The perimeter along 6th Street (that runs along our north side) was planted with native evergreen species, thanks to a generous donation from one of our parishioners.

In preparation for the planting season, our small but mighty team of four approached the local garden club for their expertise, which resulted in the recruitment of their 20-year founding-board member to expertly guide us. We were then able to present the fruits of our labour at the local Wasaga Beach Lions Club Home and Garden Show. This was a great opportunity that allowed us to increase our profile in the Wasaga Beach community as we were one of 70 local community exhibitors. We received very positive feedback and interest, not to mention a number of additional volunteers from the gardening communities who are prepared to participate in our continuing development this spring.



NEWS

Moderator Elect: the Rev. Amanda Currie

The name of the Rev. Amanda Currie, minister of First Presbyterian Church in Regina, Saskatchewan, will be placed as the sole nominee to be Moderator of the 2019 General Assembly, which takes place June 2 to 6, 2019, at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont.

Amanda grew up in Ottawa at St. Giles Church. Gracefield Camp, Presbyterian Young People's Society (PYPS) and participation in the congregation and choir all contributed to her faith formation and call to ministry. She graduated from Knox College in 2003 and served St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon from 2003 to 2017. In August 2017, she was called to First Presbyterian Church in Regina. Amanda is a pastor

with a passion for preaching, teaching and pastoral care. She loves to sing and to share in ministries of music that include diverse styles to help us sing our prayers and proclaim the good news with joy.

Amanda is committed to both denominational service and ecumenical dialogue and cooperation. She has served as clerk of the Presbytery of Northern Saskatchewan; Presbyterian representative for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's National Event in Saskatoon; small group leader at Canada Youth; adult adviser for Saskatchewan Presbyterian Youth; chaplain at Camp Christopher; member of the Assembly Council; and convener of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee.



The Rev. Amanda Currie.

Ecumenically, she has served on the boards of Interchurch Health Ministries Saskatchewan and the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism. She has also been a chaplain and instructor for the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism's Program in Ecumenical Studies and Formation, and she was on the writing team for the 2014 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity international resources. Amanda is currently the Moderator of the Synod of Saskatchewan and Convener of the Camp Christopher Committee. She also serves as a Presbyterian representative to the Governing Board of the Canadian Council of Churches.

Living in Saskatchewan for the past 15 years, Amanda is well aware of

the legacy of the Residential School System and the need for Presbyterians to be engaged with our neighbours in the work of reconciliation and responding to the TRC Calls to Action.

Amanda is married to Nicholas Jesson, a Roman Catholic theologian who is currently serving as the Ecumenical Office for the Archdiocese of Regina. Her personal experience of being in an interchurch marriage contributes to her desire for the unity of the church and her conviction that unity with diversity is possible through the love of God in Christ. Amanda is working on a Doctor of Ministry degree through the Toronto School of Theology on the topic of interchurch families.

Christian Super Chefs



By the Rev. Mike Aldred, Director of Family Ministries, Knox Presbyterian Church in Waterdown, Ont.

On March 1, 2019, high school students from across Waterdown gathered for an evening of creative and delicious fun. The event, "Ultimate Chef"—a chance for students to impress judges with their cooking, baking and presentation skills.

Not just designed for gourmet goodies, Ultimate Chef partnered with the local food bank for the evening. Waterdown has many who are in need of assistance to make it through each month. And students were required to bring canned goods in donation to the food bank. The hope was to raise awareness to the needs of our community, while offering some tangible support to those who help the less

fortunate.

Youth events are notorious for leaving a mess. It's true the kitchen certainly did require some clean up, but our students spent the evening developing a lifelong skill—cooking. Cooking is a wonderful way to teach students confidence and self-reliance. But it's also a talent which can be used to give back to one's family, friends and church.

Students from Knox Presbyterian Church were not alone. Youth pastors and their groups from Flamborough Baptist and Grace Anglican took part in the event as well. Each of the youth pastors believe it is important for Christian students to know they are not alone in their faith. In their high schools, their clubs and on their sports teams, there are others who share in the Christian journey. Interde-

nominal events allow those students to meet one another and form relationships that can be fostered inside and outside of the church.

In all, the students performed marvelously. They stepped up to the challenge of helping their local community. They learned skills they will take with them wherever they go, and they developed important relationships that will help them strengthen their faith.



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NEWS

Presbyterian College Meets Cameroon



The Rev. Oliver Kondeh Ndula.



Buea University in Cameroon.



The Rev. Prudence Neba.

By the Rev. Dr. Dale Woods, Principal of Knox College in Montreal

In the spring of 2015, I received a phone call from Mr. Solomon Azoh-Mbi, the High Commissioner from Cameroon. He explained that he was a regular attendee at Gloucester Presbyterian Church in Ottawa. The

minister, the Rev. Denise Allen-Macartney, a graduate of Presbyterian College, had mentioned that we were developing new programs at the College in the area of leadership. He wondered if he could come for a visit.

A few days later we met in my office to discuss the importance of leadership and the church in general.

Earlier, the College had received funds from the R. Howard Webster Foundation to assist us in our goal of developing a global place of learning. While the specific program was oriented toward interfaith studies, especially in parts of the world where religious conflict is an everyday reality, the program had a broader mission of engaging young leaders in the global church who would study alongside our Canadian students to create a rich and diverse community of learners. At the end of the conversation, the High Commissioner asked me a simple question: Would I go to Cameroon to meet some of the Presbyterian leaders in the English-speaking Presbyterian Church in there?

Prior to this conversation, I knew very little about the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon. In fact, I knew next to nothing about Cameroon! In the fall of 2015, I made the trip, along with my daughter, to central Africa and the Synod of the Presbyterian Church, located in the city of Buea, in the southwest region of Cameroon.

The Presbyterian Church is the largest English-speaking church in the country, with around two million members. It traces its early history to the mid-1800s when English Baptist missionaries first arrived. They were followed in the later 1800s by missionaries from Basel, Switzerland. During WWI, Cameroon was invaded by both Britain and France, and was later divided between the two countries, forming English- and French-speaking sections. The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon became auton-

omous in 1957 and is a member of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

I met with ministers in Buea (the Synod headquarters), travelled to the seminary in Kumba and visited some of the work of the church in the city of Bamenda, in the northwest of Cameroon. The Presbyterian Church is involved in numerous ministries. It runs several general hospitals, a rehabilitation centre for leprosy patients, and numerous health centres with an emphasis on primary health care in rural villages. It provides education through several primary and secondary schools, a teacher training college and a Christian university. It also administers a centre for agricultural and employment training as well as for its own publishing facility.

On Sunday morning, I joined in worship with a congregation of around 5,000 members. There is something about listening to 5,000 people singing joyful praises to God that is difficult to describe. Following the service, I met with the pastors of the congregation and we spoke about the need for leadership development. I was impressed with the level of dedication of these young pastors. They were thoughtful, articulate, courageous and desirous of serving the church in Cameroon, undaunted by the many challenges that face both the church and the country.

On my way home, I began to wonder how a small college like the Presbyterian College could use its resources and its affiliation with McGill to partner with the leaders I

had met. The faculty decided that we would offer two full scholarships to invite two young leaders from the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon to study at McGill. We asked the leaders there to provide four names, two male and two female, whom they felt were promising leaders in the denomination. The College would review the files and choose two of the four names.

In the fall of 2016, we had our first student from Cameroon—the Rev. Prudence Neba. In the fall of 2017, we received our second student, the Rev. Oliver Kondeh Ndula. The scholarships provided tuition fees and living expenses, while the College offered rooms in the residence. There were numerous hurdles to overcome, but in the end, both students were accepted into the Master of Sacred Theology degree at McGill University. In May 2019, we will joyfully celebrate Prudence Neba's successful completion of the Master of Sacred Theology.

Our relationship with these students has been an exciting journey. We now have two other students from Cameroon as well as a young woman from the Presbyterian Church in Uganda. When we partner with others, the sharing of gifts goes both ways. We have been able to provide these young leaders with academic resources as well as a Christian community of support and prayer. They have brought gifts of faith, new perspectives and a deep spirituality. Our student body has been richly blessed.

NEWS

Footprints of a World Changing Church

By Cathy Macdonald and Leanne Barnes, St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Sarnia, Ont.

The Church School children of St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Sarnia, Ont., along with the congregation, have embarked on a year-long mission program we call "World Changers," in response to our church's mission statement: Love God. Love others.

The idea came from a book written by Kristen Welch, "Raising World Changers in a Changing World" (wearthatfamily.com).

In September, we got "rolling" by collecting toilet paper and hygiene products for the local food bank. The children were all presented with a handcrafted Mission bag, which they used to bring in small hygiene items. Everyone really rolled with love and we were able to build a toilet paper tower, which motivated more giving in subsequent weeks. On the last

Sunday of the month, the Director of the food bank, Myles Vanni, spoke during the children's message within the morning service. He told us that when people have limited funds, buying hygiene products usually comes last.

We named October, "Socktober," and as you can guess, socks were collected. The final count was three large garbage bags of socks, which were given to a local woman, Mary Ellen Elliott, who goes out at night in her "God mobile" (as she likes to call her car) to help homeless people on the streets. Mary Ellen was a guest speaker for the Church School session.

In November, Habitat for Humanity built a five-unit building for seniors, and St. Giles participated by painting, digging fence posts, helping put up siding and donating funds. The day the couples received their keys, they were given a plate of cookies prepared by ladies from St. Giles, along



"Happy Hammers" Habitat build.

with housewarming cards made by the Church School children.

In December and January, donations were collected for the Sarnia Women's Interval Home. The timing was right, and the response was overwhelming. Bundles of beautiful scarves were donated before Christmas and 50 bags of children's and women's clothing were collected in January. We felt this was a win-win project, in that the Home received needed clothing and the environment won, too. Recycling clothing reduces landfill waste as well as the amount of resources (electricity and water) needed to produce new clothing.

As a side note, since so many scarves and clothes were collected, the Home took what they needed and the Goodwill store was given the rest.

Goodwill reciprocated by giving the Home vouchers to their store. When a woman leaves the Home, she will be given one of these vouchers to use to buy kitchen items, etc. That brings us to the halfway point, six months, February.

St. Giles for many years has supported several children from Dr. Graham's Homes in India. With the large amount of snowfall we received in February, the Church School and congregation took photos and wrote about our favourite winter activities here. Then we wrote a gratitude sentence about winter. We are sure the children at the Home in India will get a thrill out of seeing these photos.

Many of the 450 students at a local school regularly require the breakfast and snack program that the school provides, but the children often go without needed food over March break, Christmas break and summer holidays. A program called "Snacks for Summer" started by three sis-



50 bags of children's and women's clothing were collected for The Women's Interval Home in Sarnia.

ters, provides the needed food for these children at that time. In March, St. Giles collected jars of CheezWhiz, jam, peanut butter and Goldfish crackers, Triscuits and Ritz crackers to donate to this program.

In April, we gathered "pocket change for change" to purchase felt Easter eggs (mercy-house.myshopify.com) that were made by women in Africa. The sales provide these women with an income. Also, "Gather in Gloves" was organized for an Earth Day community park cleanup. In May we collected "coins for a crib" to purchase a crib to donate.

In June we plan to celebrate with

custom-made World Changer T-shirts at our church picnic.

Would we do it again? You bet! This article was written with the intention of inspiring and encouraging other congregations to become "World Changers." I leave you with a quotation from Ann Frank: "How wonderful it is that no one has to wait but can start right now to gradually change the world."

And of course, the reason we want to be World Changers: "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'" Matthew 25:40.



All hail the toilet paper tower made from everyone's donations for the September World Changers Mission—Hygiene items drive. What a mountain of generosity!

REFLECTIONS

Home Coming

By Ty Ragan, Centennial Presbyterian Church in Calgary

My family have been pilgrims for many years, searching for home, in the spiritual sense. We have journeyed through many churches to find home. In those journey times, we have floated through Centennial Presbyterian Church in Calgary. Those who know us, know that the Presbyterian theology may be a bit more conservative than we are, but something kept drawing us back.

Belonging means more than serving on committees or taking courses. It means more than "right beliefs" or "right practice." It means folks authentically missing you when you miss a Sunday, who ask how you are doing and want more than just "ok" or "good" as an answer.

Things changed for us this summer when our daughter took part in the Vacation Bible School at Centennial.

Then, surprising things happened: a minister who asked me to join him for coffee; the person running the VBS planned out how my son, with his wheelchair, could fully and comfortably be a part of the end-of-week celebration. Simple things, but something so many churches forget in their rush to have the right programs or theology—the lost art of caring for people and community.

The transition happened, and things started snowballing over the past several months. My daughter has found her groove with the youth group, and being a lay reader (like Dad), and my son has found his own "job," as he states it, as a greeter (and leader of contests on Christmas Cheer and Christmas attire). I have been a part of the Men's Group and in February was able to speak on mental health and faith.

There are Sundays we may miss for some reason and folks are con-

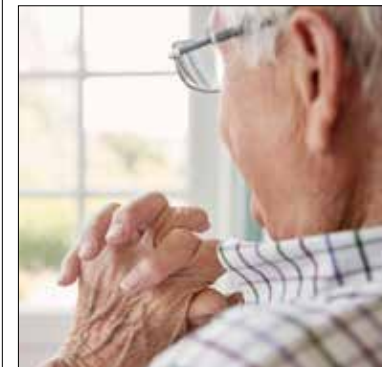


cerned and reach out. It is amazing to be a member of a Body of Christ that reflects the neighbourhood it exists in. The diversity of cultures, ethnicities, political and theological beliefs and socio-economics exist under one roof.

It's not always an easy rhythm as we work as one body to discover who we are. Each of us has our own

understanding of what faith is supposed to be, and how the church should function, but it creates room for deeper discussions. It creates an energy of belonging, just by being, and each day it is a challenge to be authentic. And it creates a space for hearing the still small voice of the Holy Spirit in my heart.

Chosen



By Patricia Schneider, elder at Forbes Presbyterian Church in Grande Prairie, Alta.

I was feeling sorry for myself today. My church activities list had dwindled down to my Friday Bible Study, which now only has about six members, my Prayer Chain and a quarterly church newsletter. I am no longer "the white tornado" that fulfilled a half dozen roles and drove several times a week to the church.

I gave up my condo over a year ago and exchanged its three bedroom, two baths and attached garage for one unit in a "retirement manor." A nice title, but we all know it is just a home for the elderly.

I have asked myself a dozen times, why am I here? I think today I finally have part of the answer. I have been "chosen." Somehow, God decided that all those years of volunteering at the local hospital with seniors could be best used by placing myself right in the midst of them. For a while, that is the way I reacted to the move. I would be like a volunteer, helping the unwell, visiting, spreading my own brand of goodwill.

Then it gradually came to me... I am the elderly here, an integral part of this group of people whose last days are being played out in this facility. Wow! It takes a bit of guts even to type that. We plan for retirement but not for this, but here it is.

Only one of my personal friends is here, too. So why me? There are lots of good reasons, but I do believe God chose me to do God's work here, as best I can. So far I haven't had to use my walker...although my sciatica gets rough at times. I get cups of coffee for those who struggle with the coffee machine, sit in the sun with those who need sunshine in their souls and on their skin and listen as they share their stories. And how I love those stories...lives lived with God beside them all the way.

Yes, the condo is gone, many of my church responsibilities have been let go, but God has chosen me to be here, with God's people, in this new adventure, and God has promised to be beside me all the way.

JUST WONDERING...



Submit your questions to connection@presbyterian.ca

Does The Presbyterian Church in Canada still run summer camps?

Answered by Canadian Ministries

Yes! Many people in the church say that attending a church camp as a young person was one of the most formative parts of their faith development. There are 13 Presbyterian church camps across the country:

- Camp Geddie, Nova Scotia, Synod of the Atlantic Provinces
- Camp MacLeod, Nova Scotia, Presbytery of Cape Breton
- Camp Keir, P.E.I., Presbytery of P.E.I.
- Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre, Quebec, Synod of Quebec & Eastern Ontario
- Camp d'action biblique, Quebec, Synod of Quebec & Eastern Ontario
- Cairn Camping & Retreat Centres, Ontario, Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda
- Camp Kintail, Ontario, Synod of Southwestern Ontario
- Huron Feathers Centre, Ontario, Synod of Southwestern Ontario
- Camp Christopher, Saskatchewan, Synod of Saskatchewan
- Camp Kannawin, Alberta, Synod

- of Alberta and the Northwest
- Dutch Harbour, British Columbia, Presbytery of Kootenay
- Camp Douglas, British Columbia, Presbytery of Westminster
- Camp VIP, British Columbia, Presbytery of Vancouver Island

To learn more about the PCC's camps, visit presbyterian.ca/camping

I know the national church issued a confession to Indigenous people in Canada, and my congregation has done some fundraising for Kenora Fellowship Centre. Can you tell me how the denomination continues to support work with Indigenous people?

Answered by Justice Ministries

In addition to the work of the Kenora Fellowship Centre and the other members of the National Indigenous Ministries Council, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has a Healing and Reconciliation program dedicated to supporting members of the church as they seek to be in right relationships with Indigenous people. Through their Calls to Action, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission encouraged Canadians to learn more about treaties, the history and legacy of Residential Schools, and Indigenous cultures. Justice Ministries' staff of

fer the KAIROS Blanket Exercise to congregations and church groups as one way to encourage Presbyterians to learn about the history of colonization and engage in conversations about steps that we need to take toward reconciliation. Justice Ministries also provides resources for congregations to learn about their local Indigenous history and treaties.

Congregations are encouraged to build relationships with Indigenous organizations in their communities and can apply for grants of up to \$5,000 through the Healing and Reconciliation Seed Fund to help with projects that share Indigenous and non-Indigenous leadership (the next deadline to apply for funds is September 27, 2019).

Along with ecumenical partners, the PCC participates in advocacy campaigns. For example, the PCC is engaged in ongoing efforts to ensure that Canada's laws are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

To learn more or to get involved, contact Justice Ministries at: healing@presbyterian.ca or 1-800-619-7301 ext. 278.

How do the people who work at the national office decide who gets to attend and vote at General Assembly?

Answered by the Rev. Stephen Kendall, General Assembly Office

It is not the national office but presbyteries that decide who attends the General Assembly. According to the Book of Forms, each presbytery names one-sixth of its ministers and an equal number of elders to attend and vote at the General Assembly.

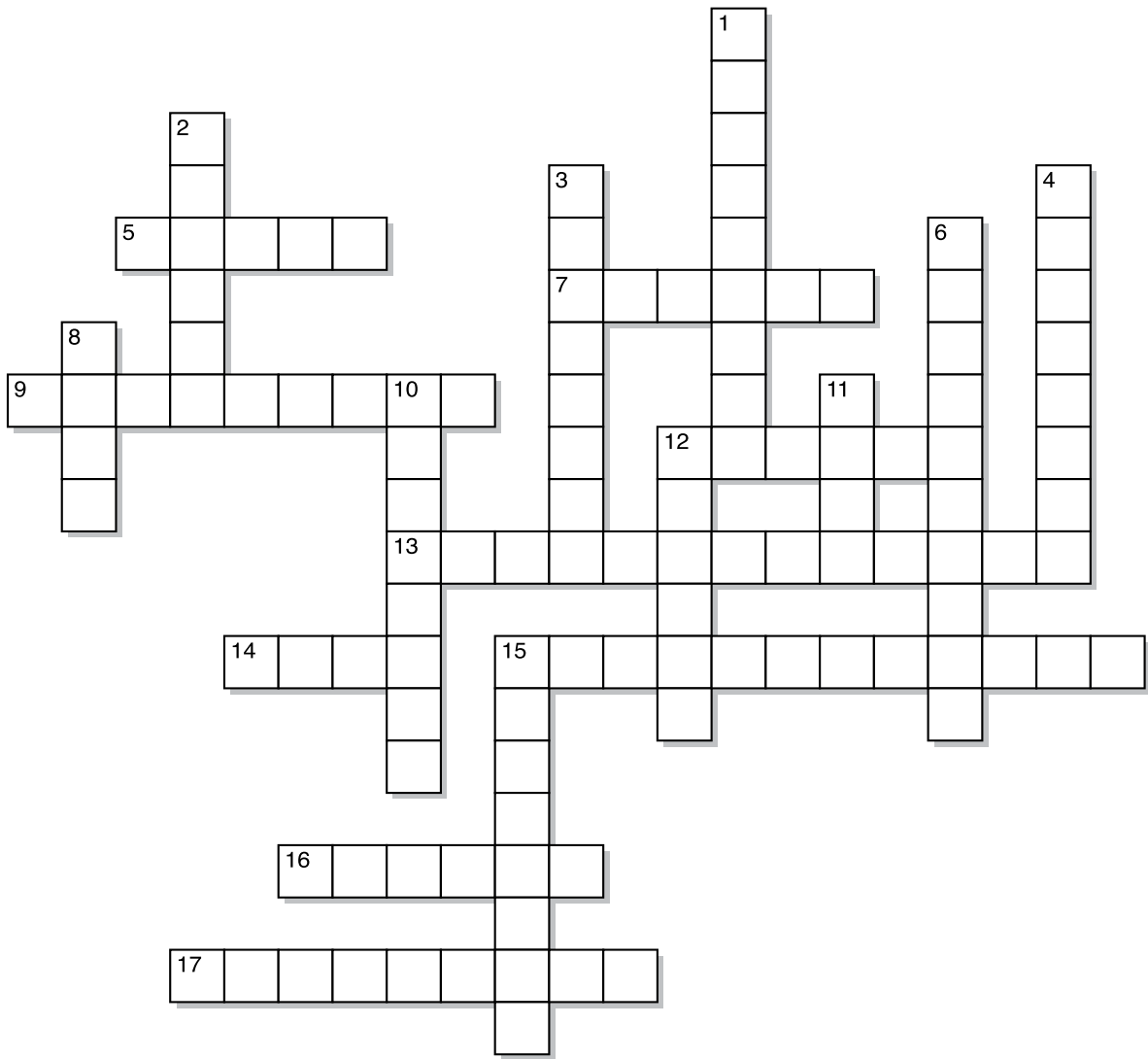
For example, if a presbytery has 12 ministers on the roll, they would appoint two ministers and two elders. Minister commissioners must be on the constituent roll of the presbytery. Most are serving in congregations, but they might also be active in another ministry such as teaching at one of our seminaries. Elder commissioners must be serving on a session.

The General Assembly Office receives the names of these commissioners from presbytery clerks and prepares the roll of the General Assembly based on those names. The ministers and elders are called commissioners because they are commissioned by their presbytery to go to the Assembly and discern God's will for the denomination. They endeavour to accomplish this by engaging with the other commissioners in prayer, conversation, reflection and decision making on a broad array of subjects that come before the General Assembly.

SMILES

Crossword

Test your Bible knowledge with the clues below.



DOWN

- 1. Joseph of _____ is the person who takes Jesus' body off the cross.
- 2. Who was the first person to come upon the injured man in the parable of the Good Samaritan?
- 3. To what city was Saul travelling when he encountered a great and blinding light?
- 4. Meaning "ones who are sent," it is an alternate title for disciples.
- 6. In Micah 4:3, the people are told to beat their swords into _____.
- 8. The shortest verse in the Bible is John 11:35, which says, "Jesus began to ____."
- 10. The Bible is made up of this many books.
- 11. The last word in the Book of Revelation is _____.
- 12. The shortest chapter in the Bible is the book of _____.
- 15. In Mark 10:14, Jesus says that the kingdom of God belongs to these.

ACROSS

- 5. The word _____ is from the Greek word, ta biblia, which means "the scrolls" or "the books."
- 7. In the Acts of the Apostles, Stephen is the first Christian _____.
- 9. On June 9 this year, this Christian celebration recalls the dramatic events that took place when the Holy Spirit came upon the followers of Jesus, and takes its name from the Greek word meaning "fiftieth."
- 12. The author of the Book of Revelation is often referred to as John of _____, so named in honour of the island in the Aegean where the book was believed to have been written.
- 13. The First Epistle to the _____ is probably Paul's first letter and thus the oldest material original to the New Testament.
- 14. The **book** of the Bible bearing the name of one of the twelve minor prophets who spoke against shallow religiosity and greed and in favour of the poor is considered by many to be the oldest material written in the Old Testament .
- 15. In Deuteronomy 11:19, we are instructed to talk about these when we sit at home and when we walk along the road, when we lie down and when we get up.
- 16. In Joel 3:10, the people are told to beat their plowshares into _____.
- 17. The _____ Bible was the first book to be printed using movable metal type.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1. AMOS | 2. PATMOS | 3. DAMASCUS | 4. PLOWSHARES |
| 5. BIBLE | 6. PENTECOST | 7. AMEN | 8. WEEP |
| 9. GUTENBERG | 10. SIXTY | 11. PSALMS | 12. CHILDREN |
| 12. SWORDS | 13. THESSALONIANS | 14. AMOS | 15. CHILDREN |
| 14. AMOS | 15. COMMANDMENTS | 16. SWORDS | 17. GUTENBERG |

Quotation Location: Children and Youth

Draw a line connecting the scripture reference with the correct quotation, then check your answers in the Bible.

(NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION)

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 1 Timothy 4:12 | Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray. |
| Isaiah 11:6 | Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." |
| Psalms 71:5 | The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. |
| Proverbs 22:6 | For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O Lord, from my youth. |
| Matthew 19:14 | Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. |

DEATH NOTICES

Read all full obituaries online at presbyterian.ca

- | | |
|--|--|
| The Rev. William Iver Campbell
Richmond Hill, Ont.
Deceased April 15, 2019. | Remmelt Hummelen
Toronto, Ont.
Deceased March 4, 2019. |
| The Rev. Dennis Carrothers
London, Ont.
Deceased April 8, 2019. | Neil Collins MacOdrum
Forest, Ont.
Deceased March 12, 2019. |
| Judy Morrow Dodds
Ottawa, Ont.
Deceased March 30, 2019. | Georgina Elizabeth "Beth" Wiseman
Strathroy, Ont.
Deceased February 21, 2019. |
| Alison Mackenzie Eldridge
Flamborough, Ont.
Deceased March 23, 2019. | The Rev. Dr. C.M. Kao
Tainan, Taiwan.
Deceased Feb. 14, 2019. |

PULPIT VACANCIES

To see all pulpit vacancies, visit presbyterian.ca/vacancies

- | | |
|--|--|
| New Minas, Kings (full-time minister) – Atlantic Provinces | Cresswell, St. John's (part-time minister) – CNEOB |
| River John, St. George's – Toney River, St. David's (full-time minister) – Atlantic Provinces | New Market, St. Andrew's (full-time minister) – CNEOB |
| Orleans, Grace (full-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario | Dunnville, Knox (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario |
| Prescott, St. Andrew's – Spencerville, St. Andrew's (part-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario | Hamilton, Erskine (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario |
| Sherbrooke, St. Andrew's (full-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario | London, New St. James (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario |
| Aurora, St. Andrew's (part-time minister) – (Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda) CNEOB | Kenora, First (full-time minister) – Manitoba and North Western Ontario |
| Baxter, Living Faith Community (full-time minister) – CNEOB | Sylvan Lake, Memorial (full-time minister) – Alberta and the Northwest |
| | Creston, St. Stephen's (full-time minister) – British Columbia |
| | Surrey, City Centre Church (full-time minister) – British Columbia |
| | Vancouver, Kerrisdale (full-time minister) – British Columbia |

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