



A Welcoming Home to All

By Michelle Kortinen,
Communications Office

Sunday, April 30, marked the 50th Anniversary of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Bramalea, Ontario. And it was more than a milestone—it was an extraordinary one because the congregation also welcomed over 50 new members! The goal to increase the congregation by 50 was put into motion last year as a way to celebrate the church's anniversary.

The special service was led by the Rev. Barb Molengraaf, with prayers and choir singing to pews packed full to overflowing.

Two very young people, Aiden and Amarion Mohammed, opened worship with the song "This Little Light of Mine," but they were slightly overwhelmed by the crowd, so the church coaxed them on by singing along from the pews.

From youth to seniors, 60 new members in all, by profession of faith and membership transfer, were officially welcomed into the people's church. The Profession of Faith quoted 1 Peter 2:9–10:

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

The very first service at St. Paul's was led by the Rev. Ralph Kendall 50 years ago on May 4, 1967. Both Ralph and his son, the Rev. Stephen Kendall, were present to read the scripture and give the sermon in celebration. Stephen, who was just six years old at the time, still remembers the excitement that day when his dad set off to build a new congregation.

Stephen read the scripture—Peter's letter that calls us to be living stones, with Christ as the cornerstone—to build a spiritual house and bond through the mortar of God's love.



The Rev. Barb Molengraaf and the congregation of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Bramalea, Ontario.

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"And what is a church?" Stephen asked the congregation. "Well, yes, it's a building, and one that was successfully completed in good time, and has obviously served you well. But a church is also a community of believers in Jesus Christ,

the risen Lord, called to go into the world with a message of grace and love for all people. And since that time, you have been builders of both kinds of church, and you have built up many others in faith, hope and love. Today is a wonderful testimony to that commitment to build the church—sixty new members are joining. Each one a child of God, precious in God's sight, each one another builder in God's kingdom."

The Rev. Ralph Kendall, the first minister of St. Paul's, spoke about the church's humble beginnings from its inception in the local public school to its eventual move to the high school, complete with a portable organ that had pedals to pump, a folding pulpit, and a burning bush wall insignia welded out of coat hangers. With good fortune in financ-



The Rev. Stephen Kendall and his father, the Rev. Ralph Kendall, first minister at St. Paul's.

ing, the construction of the church building began in 1969. Ralph explained how, in medieval tradition, a symbolic bird would be placed high in a rafter of a new building, echoing

Psalm 84: "even a sparrow finds a home." Pointing his hand up to the ceiling, he said, "I know it's hidden up there somewhere. May St. Paul's be a welcoming home to all."

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Believing in the Mission

By the Rev. Dr. Lonnie Atkinson,
WellSpring Presbyterian Church, PEI

Who are we? Why do we exist? What difference do we make in our community and the world?

WellSpring was faced with problems common to many congregations across the nation: declining numbers, reduced financial resources, an aging facility, lost identity in the community, underlying conflicts, poor communication, and more, challenged its future.

Now 3.5 years later, WellSpring gathers and serves in a new, accessible, flexible worship and community centre. Worship attendance, stewardship and mission engagement have measurably increased. A spirit of hospitality informs all aspects of the congregation's life.

Congregations struggling to find a future frequently ask, "How can we get more members?" "Who will pay the bills?" "Where are the young people?" There was nothing new or earth-shattering in the questions posed to the WellSpring faithful. However, the congregation's ownership of the church's ministry and mission was transformational. In the initial meetings, members reflected on what it meant to be the church, to be Presbyterian, to be WellSpring.

They affirmed that we are called to be the Body of Christ, a community of believers. We long to embody the Great Commission, to live as the Acts 2 church, informed by Romans 12 discipleship code. If this was our vocation, how could we best engage in our mission? This meant facing the barriers WellSpring experienced and prayerfully seeking a way forward.

Identity

There was no clear spiritual or practical identity for the congregation—the four uniting churches had not yet become one congregation. It became evident that the best way forward would be to find a common purpose, a clear mission, one that the community could own.

Reconnecting to the wider church was also crucial. The resources and support of the presbytery and the national church assisted WellSpring in confirming its place within the extended family.

Worship

Rapid change in the form and content of worship had left folks feeling disconnected. Challenges experienced across the national church in the past decades were mirrored at WellSpring, which had seen an exodus of some and a disheartening of many. There was no instant solution to the pain, but by applying a blended style of worship and focusing on the teaching ministry, with more frequent celebrations of the Lord's Supper in a welcoming environment, we began to break down the walls.

Community Profile

WellSpring had no name recognition in the community. People were aware Presbyterian churches had closed and been sold but did not realize a new one existed.

We invited the community to share in special events with us—for instance, we held a First Responders Sunday on the anniversary of 9/11. We also partnered with the local consolidated school. An active social media presence helped broaden our reach. Ultimately it was the building of the new church at a highly visible



The new church exterior of WellSpring Presbyterian Church, PEI.

location that confirmed to the wider community that the church existed and was committed to the future of the community.

This commitment to community is important in rural Canada, where infrastructure is eroding and residents feel abandoned. The same is surely true in inner cities, suburban and small towns across the country. WellSpring's experience has confirmed the importance of the ministry of presence.

Congregational Planning

WellSpring's planning model could have been described as ad hoc and uncoordinated. Property sales were not fully disclosed. The receiving of property for a future building site was not discussed by the congregation. Many churches fall into the cycle of endless planning, never implementing. When coupled with failure to share decision making with the congregation, ownership diminishes.

By early 2015, following the ministry and mission study stage, a

congregational meeting established a Mission Statement Writing Team and a Facilities Planning Team, each with timelines to report. Both met the deadlines and by July 2015 a Project Management Team was appointed to coordinate the building of a new church and a Filled-to-Overflowing Capital Fundraising group was formed. Eleven months later, the new facility was dedicated. Planning with intent and shared ownership can bring results.

Five other ministry priorities emphasized in the last three years include:

1. Leadership Development: WellSpring has expanded its active shared leadership team from ten elders to over forty team members serving on ministry teams.
2. Building on Strengths: The congregation's history of study and prayer ministries has been emphasized and developed with additional studies beginning, prayer shawl ministries reaching out to support the provincial

palliative care clients, and our Compassion Team's outreach broadening.

3. Personalized Information Sharing: Weekly ambassadors highlight ministry and mission news during Sunday services. The information is personal and shared by committed friends and neighbours.
4. Reconnecting with the Disconnected: Concerted efforts have gone into reconnection with former members and friends of the founding partner congregations. A Reunion Weekend in 2016 highlighted the desire to reach out and encourage rebuilding of ties, pushing past spiritual brokenness and moving forward. Mailing and personal invitations have cast the net wider.
5. Celebrating: All opportunities and occasions for celebration are highlighted and marked with the outpouring of hospitality and joyful praise.

WellSpring's renewal and revitalization has taken work and commitment. One could look at the numbers and give thanks: seven children baptized, PWS&D and Presbyterians Sharing goals exceeded, the Filled-to-Overflowing Well overflowing with \$125,000 raised, a \$200,000 Presbyterian Church Building Corporation mortgage nearly repaid, worship attendance up from 40 to 85 on an average Sunday morning, and more.

But the core truth as declared by Clerk of Session, Malcolm MacPherson, is WellSpring "Believing in the Mission!" With faith informed by love and filled with hope, the WellSpring congregation has experienced a blessing we long to share.

Recipe for Revitalizing a Church

By Hylton McAlister, St. Andrew's
Presbyterian Church, Duncan, BC

Out on the west coast, our little church has recently seen an addition. Here is the story and recipe of how we came to have a more comfortable

place for our pastor and administrator, a space more welcoming and inviting, a space where tears flow and laughter rings out, and the life of faith in community is fostered.

It is best to start with a vision. Mine came to me while attending the

Stewards by Design Conference focused on Kennon Callahan's *Twelve Keys to an Effective Church*, which took place in Orillia, Ontario, and was sponsored by The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Your vision might come to you at work, during leisure time or in the middle of the night. Mine was twofold: #1, to build an annex on our church to accommodate a new office for both our pastor and our office administrator, eliminating serious overcrowding; and #2, to repair, scrape, sand and repaint the entire exterior of the church, which sadly had fallen into disrepair.

This recipe is all about how we did it. It is not a difficult recipe, but you must be well prepared and have most of the ingredients before you begin. You will need to be able to visualize the end product, have a forward-thinking, supportive session plus a

generous congregation... and you will end up with a wonderful, warm, welcoming, functional church like St. Andrew's in Duncan, British Columbia.

PREPARATION: 2 months
BUILDING: 4 months
READY IN: 6–7 months

INGREDIENTS:

1 generous congregation
1 empowering session
1 all-purpose pastor
3–4 team members
a dozen sage subcontractors
a bunch of building materials
a bushel of money
a sprinkle of furniture
a pinch of good weather
a sprig of greenery
a dash of luck

With a vision firmly in your mind,

you will need to put your idea on paper, develop a budget and a timeline and present it to session. Do not be disappointed if your proposal is not accepted outright. They may suggest alternatives or modifications. In our case, they liked the concept but didn't like the location. I had suggested building the annex off the west side at basement level. On the "wet coast," drainage is often a problem and session felt that building off the east side at ground level would be more appropriate. So we followed their advice.

Once you have the session's nod of assent, it is most important that you get the congregation's support. It's best to delegate this to your pastor and a few trusted elders. You can, in turn, support them by having an

A Message from the General Secretary



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

The response to *Presbyterian Connection* was swift—it was overwhelmingly positive and excited. Readers were grateful to have a resource in their hands that caught them up on things happening in the denomination and that connected

them with people and places across the country.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is broad. Congregations are geographically far apart, they worship in different ways and in nearly 20 languages, they practice ministry in disparate contexts and they have varying theological approaches. Nevertheless, there is a strong desire to reach beyond local interests and sectarian commitments to connect and learn what is happening within congregations and the courts, colleges and agencies of the church.

Repeatedly, people expressed their appreciation for the positive tone and good news of the stories in the newspaper. If we are honest with ourselves—and we must be—we have exhibited a denominational tendency in the last 30 years to focus, almost to the exclusion of any other experience, on the strain that the institutional church and congre-

gations are under in this period of significant social change. There is no arguing that change and transformation are difficult and that there is much to mourn either about what has been lost or newness that we have not yet claimed. But that is not the whole story. There are good stories, strong ministries and exciting things happening that need telling and hearing exciting things happening that need telling and hearing in order to be faithful witnesses to what God is doing in and through the church.

This is only the second edition of *Presbyterian Connection*. During the year, we will experiment with new features and continue to refine the focus of the newspaper. The energetic discussions about sexuality in the church have revealed an urgent need for articles that clarify some of the realities of our fellowship (polity, church structures, the locations and uses of power, past decisions and

how we make decisions together) as well as insightful and thoughtful discussions about discipleship (education about the purpose, use and reality of the Bible, and the rich and vibrant theological heritage that has been passed on to us and how the gifts of the Bible and faith tradition inform how we live, worship, pray, treat each other, and what we decide to do with our time and resources). Room will also be made in the publication for analysis of some of the broad and complex issues the church is called to speak to in Canada and around the world. All of these features and more will make their way into the newspaper in the future. Stay connected!

Visit presbyterian.ca/connection to subscribe to the *Presbyterian Connection*, to submit an article or photo, to ask questions and offer suggestions, or to make a donation.



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Barb Summers: Editor

Thank you to all volunteer contributing writers.

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the Rev. Ian Ross-McDonald

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A dash of luck was clearly sprinkled on our church

Continued from page 2

Open House where you display what you intend to do. One special ingredient that works well is to solicit the congregation's input—that way, they are part of the solution. We did this by hosting a small outside event after one sunny Sunday service. A three-piece country band played some great foot-stomping music. The footprint of the addition was etched in the sand so people could “walk” around it and visualize the size. Colourful displays illustrated both the problem and the solution. And letting folks vote on some options pertaining to design, colours, flooring, etc., further cemented their commitment. The names of those who voted were entered in a draw for a complementary dinner, courtesy of Just Jake's.

Don't wait until your pastor raises all the funds required to complete the job. Have faith! Funds can be added to the mix anytime. Meanwhile, complete your detailed plans, contact a structural engineer (optional), make an application for a building permit and line up your contractors. Contractors are really important. They must be hard-working, reliable, reasonably priced and the best at what they do. Select them very carefully and always ask for references and do your own due diligence.

You will now add your team members from your congregation. Perhaps a finance person, an interior decorator, a landscaper or a furniture expert? This is your team, along with your pastor, whose fundraising should be nearly complete. In our case, prior to any announcements, we met with ten households and offered them the opportunity to be

among the initial supporters. When the budget was then presented to the congregation, anxiety over the initial cost gave way to relief when they realized a significant commitment was already in hand. The congregation voted unanimously in favour.

As project manager, you are solely responsible to ensure that the construction is of the desired quality. This will require that you visit the building site every couple of days to confirm that things are proceeding well and to answer those minor and unforeseeable questions that inevitably come up from time to time. You also have the responsibility to continually track ongoing expenditures. It would be in poor taste if the budget were exceeded. And finally, you need to watch the calendar. Your congregation will lose confidence and enthusiasm if the project is delayed significantly.

You can now start building your annex, but ensure that all ingredients are added in exactly the right sequence, otherwise your church may fall flat... literally.

So, how successful were we at St. Andrew's? Fortunately, we selected our contractors well and construction was of the highest quality. The biggest challenge was the communications network. But the end result is that we now have an entirely new fully featured telephone system with a service contract, and much improved Internet service... all from one supplier.

A volunteer with a financial background from our congregation monitored the outflow and inflow of funds in a separate account. She did a great job. Our accounting was very precise



and at the end of the day we were about 5% under budget. The extra funds were placed in an account for a long-awaited kitchen renovation.

The painters needed good weather to complete the sanding, scraping and painting of the external walls of the church and annex before the end of September, otherwise the declining weather would have forced us to

postpone finishing until the following spring. The project was completed just in the nick of time as the weather turned for the worse just days later.

A dash of luck was clearly sprinkled on our church and we ended up with a quality product that came in on “thyme” and under budget. It was a true recipe for success!

Highlights from General Assembly



Voting on the various recommendations.

By Barb Summers,
Communications Office

The 2017 General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada was held at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, from June 4–7. The meeting of church representatives from across the country provided a time of fellowship, worship, discussion and discernment. The Rev. Douglas Rollwage passed the moderatorial torch to the Rev. Peter Bush, minister from Westwood Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg, during the Sunday night worship service at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Kingston. The event was livestreamed and the archived sessions are available for viewing.

More than a meeting, the Assembly is an opportunity for prayerful deliberation on the issues and challenges facing the church today. Reports

came from a variety of ministries and groups, providing valuable updates on activities and asking the Assembly to approve recommendations.

In response to the ongoing crisis of the 86 Indigenous communities without access to clean drinking water, the moderator will write the Government of Canada to inquire about their plan to provide clean and potable water in Indigenous communities. Sessions and presbyteries were also commended to write to their MPs encouraging support to provide clean and potable water in every Indigenous community.

International Affairs drew the Assembly's attention to the world's largest minority group—people with disabilities—and the moderator will write to church partners in Ghana to affirm their ministry to this vulnerable group.

The General Assembly approved the Canadian Ministries report on de-

clining ministry, which found that renewal and growth are possible in all kinds of ministries and contexts, and that visionary leadership is a crucial factor in nurturing strong, healthy and growing ministries.

One of the key issues at this year's Assembly was dealing with questions about sexuality and marriage that came from overtures submitted in recent years. (An overture is a proposal or request seeking the enactment of a law, rule or action.)

After significant debate and passionate discussion, the Assembly created a space where stories of harm to LGBTQI people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and intersex) can be told and listened to, and appropriate responses and actions regarding repentance of homophobia and hypocrisy can be considered. A number of documents that outline different theological perspectives and the implications of keeping or changing church doctrine will be studied and must be reported back to the Committee on Church Doctrine and Life and Mission Agency by January 31, 2018. These documents will be translated into Korean. The General Assembly also commended the report "The Church and People Who Are Transgender or Intersex" for study.

Ecumenical and Interfaith Guests

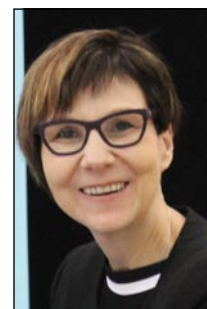
The Assembly welcomed several ecumenical and interfaith guests who spoke of their work in justice and human rights.

Ms. Alia Hogben, from the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, spoke of the organization's work to empower Muslim women. Ms. Hogben described what it is like to be a Canadian Muslim and the challenges Muslims sometimes experience because of their faith. She mentioned that there is a lot of controversy in the Muslim community about women wearing head coverings. She explained that organization believes it is not a religious requirement to wear a head covering, but they support women if they choose to wear one.

Ms. Dóra Kanizsai-Nagy is co-founder of the Kalunba Social Services Association, an organization that



Young adult representatives.



Dr. Cindy Blackstock.



The Rev. Peter Bush (right) and the Rev. Douglas Rollwage.

grew from the Refugee Ministry of the Reformed Church in Hungary, a long-time PCC partner. Ms. Kanizsai-Nagy described her organization's work to welcome refugees in Budapest and spoke to the Assembly about what they are doing to help refugees, some of the most vulnerable people in their community.

"This is our responsibility—to be good neighbors, to show love and compassion. I believe that God's face is reflected in the stranger's face. And the future of the stranger is dependent on us," Ms. Kanizsai-Nagy said.

The PCC has been active in mission work in Hungary, through International Mission staff. Currently, Jackie Bannerman is serving as a young adult intern working closely with refugees.

The Rev. André Lavergne from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada spoke of the enduring bond between Lutherans and Presbyterians, from the Reformation 500 years ago to present collaboration through the World Council of Churches, KAIROS, the World Communion of Reformed Churches and other alliances. In celebration of our shared theological history and the unity of Christ's church, he said, "There is more that unites us in all our diversity than divides us. We can lift each other up."

The moderator, the Rev. Peter Bush, will take part in the upcoming Evangelical Lutheran Church annual convention.

E.H. Johnson Memorial Fund Award

Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada and Professor at McGill University School of Social Work was awarded the Dr. E. H. Johnson Memorial Fund award for her work "on the cutting edge of mission." A member of the Gitksan First Nation, Dr. Blackstock has 25 years of social work experience in child protection and Indigenous children's rights.

Dr. Blackstock gave a powerful address advocating for the rights of children, especially Indigenous children. She challenged the Assembly and Canadians to take courageous actions. "There is no excuse for saying no to a child, that you get less, because of your race," she said. "All of us must speak out and demand the government comply with the legal orders to cease discrimination against First Nations children and their families. Let's show the children that we love them enough to stand up for them."

The Assembly thanked Dr. Blackstock with a standing ovation.

Commissioners left the Assembly having made a number of decisions that will impact the future of the church. They are tasked with further study and reflection on a number of different issues.

The 144th General Assembly of the church will take place in June 2018.

To read the summaries, view photos and access the livestream channel from the 2017 General Assembly, visit presbyterian.ca/ga2017



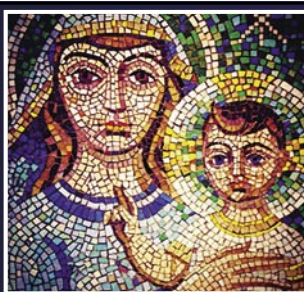
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Our Faith in Action



Karen Utech volunteers at Winnipeg Inner City Missions.

Bringing Hope

Karen Utech has both benefited from and contributed to ministry at Winnipeg Inner City Missions (WICM). An elected elder at Place of Hope Presbyterian Church and volunteer at WICM's Miracle Store and food bank, Karen first encountered the organization through the Learning & Play program led by social worker Susan Currie. Karen, a mother, foster mother and grandmother, first worked on her own healing from a tragic past. Now she is helping her girls stay in school, develop strength and confidence and discover hope for their own futures. Karen came from a dysfunctional family, but quickly bonded with Susan and, over time, came to her for advice. She shares, "Susan said I was a tough nut to crack! She made me laugh, and I started feeling really good because I felt I was at home. WICM is not a judgmental place. They don't care about outward appearance. They care about inward healing. All are welcome, all belong."

Transforming Youth

At the end of August, Jacquie Bannerman will finish an eight-month young-adult internship

with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A member of Chalmers Presbyterian Church in London and a recent graduate in International Relations from Western University, Jacquie is helping the Reformed Church in Hungary support refugees. Teaching refugees English, doing translation work and leading English activities for Roma youth have deepened Jacquie's understanding of Christ's mission in the world. She says, "I have learned a lot about the struggles and discrimination refugees and Roma people in Hungary face. And I am learning about the extreme privilege I have, simply because of where I was born and what language I grew up speaking."

Equipping Leaders

Are you looking for worship resources? Do you want to learn more about how to be an effective elder? Are you wondering how to fill out the T3010-1 annual charity return? PCC national office staff work with ministers, lay leaders, treasurers, clerks, presbyteries and synods to serve congregations across Canada. More than just an office, 50 Wynford Drive in Toronto is a

place where Presbyterians come together to plan, envision and share ideas. PCC staff and committees provide tools for growth and renewal, encourage generous giving, develop worship resources and facilitate the sharing of best practices. In 2016, PCC staff made over 175 visits to congregations, presbyteries, Women's Missionary Society and Atlantic Missionary Society groups, colleges, camps, youth groups and events.

Exchanging Ideas

In February 2016, a PCC delegation visited Indigenous communities in Taiwan for mutual learning about experiences of reconciliation. The group saw efforts the Taiwanese government has made to apologize to the Indigenous people there. They also learned about the challenges Indigenous people are facing as they attempt to reclaim their languages and culture. Participant Carragh Erhardt, the PCC's Healing and Reconciliation program assistant, reflects, "I am grateful to the people we met for sharing their experiences and I look forward to continuing this partnership." (See "Learning and Sharing in Taiwan," p. 8)



PCC national office staff.



Jacquie Bannerman (third from left) with other international volunteers with the Reformed Church in Hungary.

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Congratulations 2017 Graduates

ST. ANDREW'S HALL / VST

Congratulations to the 2017 graduates of the three Presbyterian colleges! The colleges of the church prepare ministers and scholars to help equip people for the work of ministry and the building up of the body of Christ.



Janet Taylor
M.Div.



Andrea Perrett
Certified Candidate



Shelly Chandler
Certified Candidate



Paul Chor
Certified Candidate

KNOX COLLEGE, TORONTO



Mona Scrivens
D.Min.



Heather Jane Vais
D.Min.



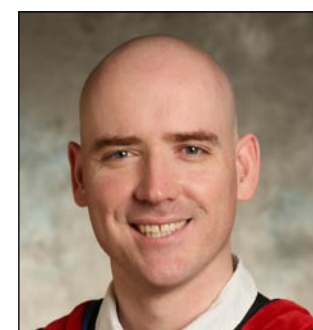
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Th.M.



Patricia Dawn Archibald
M.Div.



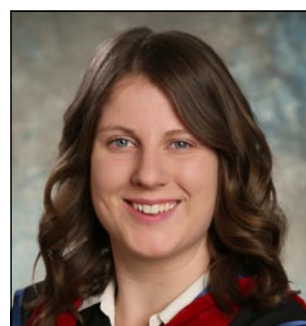
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Seaton Neil Brachmayer
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M.Div.



Charmila Ireland
M.Div.



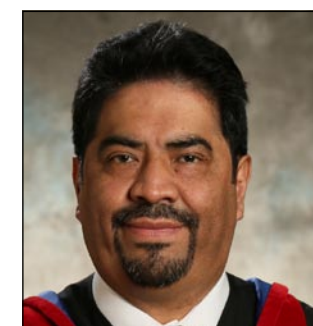
Bongchan Ko
M.Div.



Stephen Kwon
M.Div.



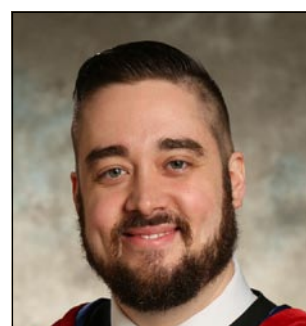
Anna Hyeyoung Lee
M.Div.



Julio César Miranda
M.Div.



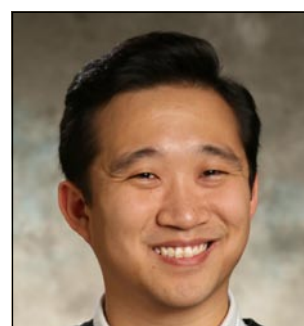
Meghan Rose Patterson
M.Div.



Noel Ramsey
M.Div.



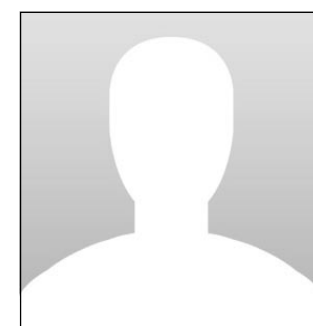
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James Joon Jae Yang
M.T.S.

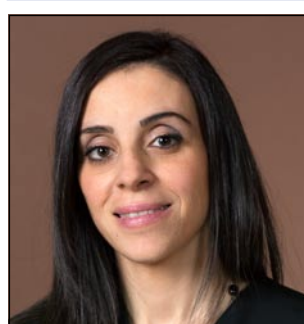


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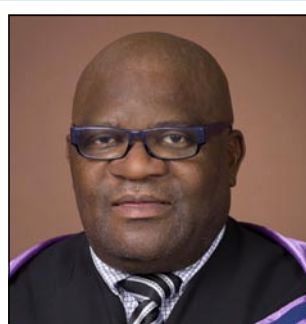


Scott Kenneth Singleton
M.T.S.

PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL



Reine Mecheal Boghos
Diploma in Ministry and Special General Assembly Certificate



Bitchoka Mbéa
M.Div.



Eok Kim
Diploma in Ministry and Special General Assembly Certificate

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Meet the Moderator

On Sunday, June 4, 2017, the Rev. Peter Bush was installed as the 143rd Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Peter is the son of missionary parents and is the minister at Westwood Church in Winnipeg. He previously served Knox Presbyterian Church in Mitchell, Ontario (1996–2007), and St. Andrew's Church in Flin Flon, Manitoba (1989–1996).

Please provide some background on your involvement in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

I have been an Interim Moderator 19 times, a member on the Committee on History, Church Doctrine, the Pension and Benefits Board, I edit Presbyterian History and am the lead for the Reformation@500 events. Together with the Rev. Dr. Christine O'Reilly I have led workshops on worship and preaching.

I started writing about the PCC and Residential Schools in 1992. I served on the planning committee for the "Remembering the Children" event in Winnipeg in March 2008, and was involved with the Church Tent at the first of the TRC's National Events in 2010.

The Presbytery of Winnipeg has started or nurtured four non-Euro-Canadian congregations, which are part of the presbytery. Recognizing the need for ongoing connection and support if such congregations are going to flourish, I serve as the Cross-Cultural Liaison for the presbytery, interpreting Canadian Presbyterianism to these congregations and these congregations to the Canadian church.

What are your earliest memories of church?

When I was four-and-a-half years old, we moved to Beirut, Lebanon, where we lived until I was nine years old. On Sunday mornings we attended an English-speaking church with the congregation sitting on folding chairs and the Sunday school space a rabbit warren of rooms above the sanctuary. I still remember a sermon illustration I heard in that church more than 45 years ago.

We lived on the third floor of an apartment building—and two floors down on the main level an Arabic-speaking church had rented an apartment as their church space (the living-room/dining room was the sanctuary, bedrooms were the minister's study, Sunday school and meeting space). Sunday nights my parents attended this service and became friends of the Arabic speaking pastor.

What three verses of scripture do you return to over and over and find especially formative?

I Peter 5:7—I was five years old when the Six-Day War happened. We had to dye the light bulbs in our house and put dark construction paper over the windows so that the bombers would not be able see any light from our apartment. We were eventually evacuated by the Canadian government. It was a scary time and this verse was very important.

Proverbs 3:5–6—The theme verses for the Christian camp that had an enormous impact on my life from age 15 to 24.

INTERVIEW



Jeremiah 29:11—This verse is often quoted with little reference to the context. Yes, God is going to bring about the restoration of Israel, but not for 70 years, not in the lifetimes of the first readers of Jeremiah's letter. Even though God's restoration seems slow in coming, it can be trusted.

What area of public life do you believe the PCC should be more involved in than it currently is?

The church in North America must find effective ways to address the toxic impact of consumerism. Consumerism is destructive of community, ridicules self-giving, undermines collective action and commitment, feeds environmental destruction and disrespects the poor. Consumerism also impacts the life of the church, moving focus away from God and shifting it to the felt-needs of the members.

A colleague highlights this challenge, saying many funerals have moved from being "To the glory of God and in memory of the deceased" to being "To the glory of the deceased and in memory of God."

Tom Bandy, a United Church pastor, was asked: "What is the one thing that all the turn-around churches you have been involved with had in common?" Bandy replied, "They were lead by

pastors who loved Jesus more than they loved their pension plans."

Addressing the destructive aspects of consumerism will lead the church into conversation about the environment, living more simply, and the affirmation of community and neighbourhood decision-making and development. All of this brings us into conversation with those in our society who feel something is wrong at the heart of present-day economic realities and are seeking an alternative voice and alternative community.

The church in North America must find effective ways to address the toxic impact of consumerism.

In your opinion, what are the most important features of faithful congregational ministry?

The church is not called to be more entertaining than Hollywood, nor is it to provide better music than Nashville, nor is it to be more exciting than watching sports. The local congre-

gation is to talk about what no other group in society is talking about—living the spiritual life by following Jesus Christ and engaging in spiritual practices that deepen that following.

Where do you see signs of hope for the world and the church?

The biggest sign of hope is the continuing rise of World Christianity. I have had the privilege of serving as the Cross-Cultural Liaison for the Presbytery of Winnipeg, giving me contact with Korean, Filipino, Indigenous and Arabic-speaking faith communities. The vibrancy of faith, the commitment to spiritual disciplines, the desire to share the good news (for these communities have not divided evangelism from social action and vice versa) has given me much hope.

This is only what we are experiencing in Winnipeg. The expansion of World Christianity is the hope for the world, because God's mission has a church and it is on the move.

What is your favourite flavour of ice cream?

Maple walnut.

To learn more, visit presbyterian.ca/moderator

**The Committee on History,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
presents**

Soli Deo Gloria
(For God's Glory Alone)

The 5th Sola of the Reformation

Keynoters:

Christine O'Reilly, Knox Presbyterian Church, Thedford, ON

John Vissers, Director of Academic Programs, Knox College

Panelists:

Jinsook Khang, Barbara Leung Lai, Ephraim Radner, Karla Wübbenhorst

October 28, 2017

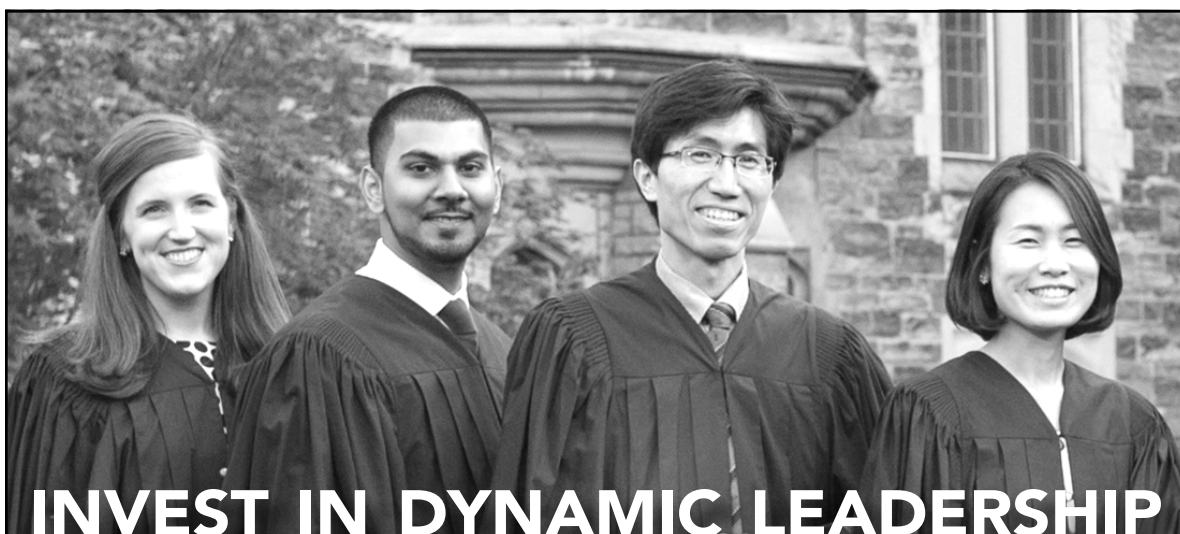
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (EDT)

Knox College, 59 St. George St., Toronto, ON

**To join via Internet,
e-mail: five.solas@live.com for instructions**

Interactive Q&A available for all participants in person or via Internet.

*This Project is supported by:
a bequest to The Presbyterian Church in Canada
and a grant from the Ewart Endowment.*



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KNOX COLLEGE

HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

Learning and Sharing in Taiwan

Written by Carragh Erhardt,
Justice Ministries

In February, 2017, I had the privilege of traveling to Taiwan as a PCC representative at The Presbyterian Church in Taiwan's (PCT) International Forum on the mission of the church in Taiwan today. I was joined by the Rev. Dianne Ollerenshaw (Director of Regional Ministries, Synod of Alberta and the Northwest) and Lori Ransom (Healing and Reconciliation Program Animator, 2006–2011). Following the forum, we spent six days with Presbyterian mission staff the Rev. Dr. Paul McLean meeting his Indigenous colleagues for an opportunity of mutual learning and sharing about our countries' approaches to reconciliation.

Approximately 2% of Taiwan's population is Indigenous; however, half of the PCT's membership is Indigenous. Consequently, the PCT and The Bible Society in Taiwan work in partnership to support Indigenous translation groups as they prepare Bibles in their languages. This work is instrumental in making the Bible available to people in their native tongues and preserving Indigenous languages. Paul has been an advisor with six Indigenous groups since 2012, although he has served as mission staff in Taiwan intermittently since 1983, supported by Presbyterians Sharing.

Over many good meals and several long car rides we got to know some of Paul's Paiwan, Drekey and Amis



Members of Wutai "Misty Plateau" Presbyterian Church, Drekey Presbytery.

colleagues. We also met a few Bunun, Pinuyumayan and Truku members of the PCT.

Our new acquaintances were very open to teaching us about the issues they face, their concerns and their hopes. In 2016, President Tsai issued an apology to Indigenous people for 400 years of violating their rights through armed invasion and land seizure. This apology is looked upon with both appreciation and scepticism since Indigenous people are concerned that President Tsai will not turn her words into action.

There is energy to reclaim Indigenous languages and culture but communities find this challenging since many Indigenous youth tend to move to urban areas for school and work. Some Indigenous ministers are

seeking ways to support members of their community who now reside in urban areas in order to maintain a connection while acknowledging that Indigenous people face greater discrimination in urban areas.

During a meeting with the Drekey Presbytery (there are 11 Indigenous presbyteries in the PCT), the members spoke about finding ways to reintegrate some traditional spiritual practices into their church practices.

It was a blessing to be part of such open dialogue where we asked and answered one another's questions. I look forward to future opportunities to continue this mutual learning and partnership between the PCC and the PCT. Many thanks to International Ministries and to Paul McLean for coordinating this experience.

INTERNATIONAL

Meet Dr. Nicholas and Rebecca Bauman in Nepal

By Glynis Williams,
International Ministries

In February 2017, Nick and Becky Bauman and their three children exchanged the comforts—and snow—of their home in Orillia, Ontario, for a new adventure in Nepal. Inspired by the biblical story with the enticement of a God who offers new beginnings, they began six weeks of language and cultural orientation in Kathmandu.

Now based in Tansen, a city of 30,000 people in western Nepal, Nick works as a surgeon-teacher, supported by two other experienced surgeons, one Nepali, and one from the UK. He will be teaching and supporting both surgical-residents as well as general practitioner-residents. Serving a population of one million people, Tansen Hospital's motto is: We Serve, Jesus Heals. Becky has opportunities to work as an Occupational Therapist but has chosen to focus on their children as they adjust to their new life.

When asked what drew Nick to work in Nepal, he replied: "Mission remains a loaded word for me due to colonization efforts and cultural imperialism... Despite our denominational differences, the church remains universal. Mission activities are integral to maintaining our accountability to our brother and sister churches across denominational and political boundaries. Mission activities allow us to receive and be received by other Christians in our midst, to learn



Becky and Nick Bauman and their three children at Pearson International Airport in Toronto.

about inequalities between North and South, and the ways in which our calling to Jesus transcends loyalties to the State and to our own security." Nepal's Christian community, in existence since the early 1950s, is reportedly one of the fastest growing in the world.

International Ministries was pleased to appoint the Baumans to work with the United Mission to Nepal, a long-standing partner of the PCC. The family has committed to a two-year term.

Learn more about the PCC's international mission staff at pccweb.ca/missionblog

Annuities: Gifts that Keep on Giving

An annuity is one of the best investments and most impactful gifts you can make.

For donors 60 years of age and older, a charitable gift annuity allows you to give a significant gift to your congregation and/or another area of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and receive a guaranteed income at a fixed rate for life.



Benefits to you

- ▶ A higher rate of return than GICs or bonds
- ▶ Never worry about investment risk again
- ▶ Guaranteed income for life for you (and your spouse, if you wish)
- ▶ Receive an immediate one-time charitable tax receipt
- ▶ A good portion (and sometimes all) of the income is tax-exempt
- ▶ Leave a significant legacy gift to your congregation and/or another area of the church you care about after you die

Sample: for a \$50,000 annuity*

Age*	Fixed Rate for Life**	Approx. Annual Payment	Immediate One-time Charitable Tax Receipt
65	4.64%	\$2,320	\$11,521
70	5.11%	\$2,555	\$13,483
75	5.72%	\$2,860	\$15,310
80	6.53%	\$3,265	\$16,818

Note: * Minimum age of 60 years and a minimum annuity of \$5,000 is required
 ** Rate is based on a single male as of January 20, 2017, and is subject to change based on age and gender.

What to do next

Find out the rate you would receive, the charitable tax receipt you would get, and the percentage of the annual payment which is tax-exempt with a no-obligation, personal and confidential quote. Contact Michael Scheidt, Gift Administrator, Stewardship and Planned Giving at 1-800-619-7301 ext. 239 or by email at mscheidt@presbyterian.ca

ST. ANDREW'S 200 KINGSTON

All friends and former members of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Kingston, Ontario, are invited to return for a special anniversary weekend, September 16–17, 2017.

For more information, contact jasmin@standrewskingston.org or call the church office at 613-546-6316.



CREDIT: CFGB/WORLD RENEW

**Presbyterian
World Service
& Development**



CREDIT: AMANDA THORSTEINSSON, CFGB



CREDIT: CFGB/WORLD RENEW

PWS&D Responds to Food Crisis in South Sudan

By Karen Bokma, PWS&D Communications

Besta Asa vividly remembers sitting outside her home in South Sudan on a warm sunny day, breastfeeding her babies. Her older children were playing when she first heard the gunshots, but she wasn't immediately concerned. She became fearful when her husband rushed home from their farm and she learned her family had to flee. Wasting very little time, they escaped with a crowd of people—running to save their lives.

The 27-year-old mother of six remembers staying in the bush for four days. The children were irritable and hungry because they had no food or water. Her husband was only able to return to their home long enough to get food for the family.

Starting in 2013, the civil conflict in South Sudan forced Besta's family and thousands like hers to flee their homes. According to the United Nations, 1.8 million people

are displaced within South Sudan, while 1.5 million have fled to neighbouring countries.

Besta, her husband and family have now settled in a small, temporary shelter near to where her mother lives. She mourns the fact that they must be supported by other people, when she would much rather be tending her farm and planting food for her family.

In the meantime, Besta and her family are grateful for receiving a monthly food package of sorghum, oil and salt, which allowed her to worry a little less about how she would care for her family. This assistance—coming as a result of the actions of Canadian Foodgrains Bank, with support from PWS&D—has given them hope.

Besta received support through a project that distributed food packages to 2,450 households (approximately 16,000 people). With input from local partners and community leaders, the project targeted households with

children and pregnant and lactating women, those living with disabilities, elderly people, as well as those headed by women and children.

Despite the hardships her family continues to experience, Besta has hope for the future—for a time when the family of eight can return home to their farm, where they can grow their own food again and support themselves.

Ongoing Food Crisis

Famine is now a significant issue for many who have been displaced due to the ongoing conflict. PWS&D continues to respond with Canadian Foodgrains Bank in South Sudan—in collaboration with ADRA (Adventist Development Relief Agency) and World Relief Canada—by providing nutrition support to those affected by the famine.

Nutrition feeding centres will be established, where children and lactating mothers can be screened for malnutrition.. If a

child is found with severe acute malnutrition—meaning they are so malnourished they are close to death—they will receive treatment with therapeutic foods. Lactating mothers and children with moderate acute malnutrition will also be treated, and caregivers will receive education in proper hygiene and child-feeding practices. The project will benefit 42,000 people.

With support from the Government of Canada through Canadian Foodgrains Bank, donations to this project are matched 4:1. That means for every \$1 you con-

tribute, \$5 of programming takes place. Please give today.

For more information on PWS&D's South Sudan response, visit WeRespond.ca/crisis-in-south-sudan

Canada
Canadian Foodgrains Bank
A Christian Response to Hunger

“Nutrition feeding centres will be established and children and lactating mothers suffering from malnutrition will be treated. In total, 42,000 people will benefit from the project.”

From the Director's Desk



By Guy Smagghe, Director of Presbyterian World Service & Development since 2015. He is celebrating 20 years of service to the agency this year.



\$500 worth of food assistance where it is critically needed or \$500 worth of training for midwives in Afghanistan. As in the parable of the mustard seed, it is impressive how much can be done with relatively little.

Of course, PWS&D is able to have this sort of impact because of strategic alliances at the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB) and very capable partners in those countries. It is heart-warming to work with 14 other denominations at CFGB and see how teamwork brings us closer to the common goal of ending hunger in the most challenging places in the world.

This kind of multiplication also makes us think of Jesus' miracle with the loaves and fishes. It started with a leap of faith—Jesus took scarce resources and multiplied them in many ways to



Mothers and babies in Malawi and Afghanistan are living healthier lives through PWS&D's maternal health project.

feed the multitudes. Inspired by this miracle, PWS&D created its Loaves and Fishes Fund to receive gifts from estates, as well as gifts of securities, property or insurance. When funds are given, as part of an estate for example, the gift is invested and allowed to grow over a period of seven years. But each year, PWS&D also receives one-seventh of the

original gift, plus any interest earned, as revenue to support all of the work we do.

Last year, the Loaves and Fishes Fund reached over \$2.2 million in value and \$357,000 was transferred to PWS&D in support of its work. We hope that this is just the beginning and encourage you to learn more about how you can support the development and

relief work of the church through your estate.

Please feel free to contact me (1-800-619-7301, ext. 244) if you'd like more information about how you could support PWS&D in this way. Gifts like this provide a continued source of support for seven years—as we work together for a more sustainable, compassionate and just world.

Syria Crisis: Ongoing Conflict Requires Long-Term Support

*By Karen Bokma,
PWS&D Communications*

As the conflict in Syria has entered its sixth year, it's hard to look at the ongoing situation with hope for the future. Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes and their country—many of them children. People are forced to live in terrible conditions both inside Syria and as refugees in neighbouring countries.

In 2016, the United Nations identified 13.5 million Syrians who required humanitarian assistance. More than six million are internally displaced within Syria and over 4.8 million are refugees outside Syria.

Presbyterian World Service &

Development has been actively involved in responding to the Syrian crisis since 2012. In that time, your generous gifts have contributed over \$2.8 million in aid to programs assisting tens of thousands of families and individuals with emergency food and shelter, as well as those improving livelihoods, education and psychosocial support. This was made possible, in large part, due to matching funds at Canadian Foodgrains Bank—where a \$100 contribution becomes \$500 in food assistance.

Rasmiyah, her husband, Owsama, and their children fled Syria and took shelter in Lebanon. They share stories about their life in Syria, where they owned their

own home. They were forced to leave their home behind and now live in a small rented apartment that they struggle to afford. This is made more difficult by the fact that Owsama—a metal worker in Syria—isn't allowed to work in Lebanon.

Their family depends on the support they receive from PWS&D, through CFGB and Mennonite Central Committee. Every month, the family receives food vouchers that allow them to buy staples such as rice, sugar, cooking oil and tea.

Rasmiyah shares that "...life is difficult. The vouchers help us to eat. It's the only way we can survive. There is no other way to get food." When asked what they



Mamon Al-Hariri and his wife Huda, along with their children, inside their tent in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan. The family fled Syria in 2013.
CREDIT: PAUL JEFFREY, ACT

would like to share with Canadians who support this assistance, she says, "Thank you for the help. And please pray the war will end."

Until the day that those displaced by the conflict can return home, families continue to need the kind of assistance that Rasmiyah and Owsama depend

on. Your support is necessary to sustain the assistance required by families affected by the Syria crisis. A gift of \$100 can feed a family of five for one month.

To make a donation and learn more about PWS&D's work in Syria, visit WeRespond.ca/conflict-syria

PWS&D Partner Spotlight



Mae Managbanag is the associate director of the disaster management program at Community World Service Asia (CWSA), a long-time partner of PWS&D. Based in Kabul, Afghanistan, Mae helps carry out PWS&D-supported programs in Afghanistan and Pakistan that are improving maternal and child health, food security and access to education for all. Mae also helped coordinate a PWS&D-funded response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

Growing up in the Philippines, Mae Managbanag had a thirst for adventure. She learned to ride a motorcycle by age 13, accompanied her grandfather on visits to his tobacco plantation and scaled trees to collect fruit from lofty branches. She also made time to volunteer with civic organizations like the Red Cross Youth. That same courage and compassion has been a driving force throughout Mae's career—from handling large-scale disasters with the Philippine Red Cross to leading life-saving interventions after Typhoon Haiyan with CWSA.

Today, as associate director of the disaster management pro-

gram, Mae is working to support disaster responses that restore livelihoods, homes and hope. Her work is also fundamental to the sustainable development of remote communities in Afghanistan, where Mae oversees projects that are improving maternal, newborn and child health and providing better access to education for girls and women. In Pakistan, Mae is helping to execute an agricultural project that ensures vulnerable, rural families get the tools and training they need to restore their land so they are better able to cope with environmental changes and droughts that affect the area.

What do you love most about your work?

I most enjoy working closely with people and being engaged with communities. After Typhoon Haiyan, seeing the plight of my countrymen in the Philippines, I felt a commitment to my work for them. I find that, at the end of the day, when I see that people are happy, I feel proud that I was able to listen to them and support them.

What has been a particularly memorable moment for you in your career?

Typhoon Haiyan was a life-turning event. Working in disaster management, you work with people in the midst of loss and destruction. You have feelings beyond explanation when you see the suffering that people are facing. But you can also really feel the resilience of the people. After Typhoon Haiyan struck in November 2013, families were welcoming us and singing Christmas carols. A disaster is not a reason to stop living your life.

Can you describe any particular challenges you've experienced working in the field?

When you see that there is an enormous amount of need and there is no way you can address it all, it becomes frustrating. You want to help everyone, but you have limited resources to offer. How can you help without causing any disparity? Aid should bring people together, not bring people apart.

How do you work around these challenges?

We try to solve this problem by putting our focus on the ground and helping with community preparation. We give families the opportunity to talk about their views and opinions. In that way, we treat people as individuals, not just as recipients of aid. No one wants to line up in a queue to sign a form and receive a bag of rice. We need to put ourselves in their shoes and emphasize humanity.

Do you ever feel nervous living and working in Afghanistan?

You cannot disregard the fact that anything can happen. You cannot be complacent. Sometimes people die because they're simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. But when I leave my home to meet with people, my driver doesn't leave until he knows I'm inside the gate or back safely in my apartment.

You've done quite a bit of travelling in your career. What is your favourite place you've travelled to?

I liked Thailand because I enjoyed the variety of food and I like the shopping. But there's no place better than home. When people



Children in Badin, Pakistan are excited to receive tree saplings as part of a food security project Community World Service Asia implements with support from PWS&D. CREDIT: CWSA



Mae helped lead the implementation of a PWS&D-supported livelihood recovery program in the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan. CREDIT: CWSA

ask, where would you travel if you could go anywhere in the world, I always say I'd like to be with my family in the Philippines.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

I never travel without bringing my own pillows!

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

I like to shop, cook and watch TV. With all the limitations I encounter in my travels, I always ask for a TV, an Internet connection and facilities for cooking. With these things, I am happy.



Girl students are empowered to go to school through Community World Service Asia. CREDIT: CWSA

To learn more about the work Mae supports in Afghanistan, visit WeRespond.ca/afghanistan

Spotlight on the Syria crisis:

- As many as 470,000 dead
- 4.6 million people have fled the country as refugees
- 6.6 million are displaced within Syria
- 13.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance

Get Moving for Maternal Health with PWS&D

On Saturday, September 30, join PWS&D in the Ride for Refuge—a Canada-wide cycling and walking fundraiser—in support of PWS&D's maternal health projects in Malawi and Afghanistan.

For the second year in a row, PWS&D is participating in Ride for Refuge to make a difference to

vulnerable women and their newborns living in remote communities in Malawi and Afghanistan. With the dollars raised by participants across Canada, PWS&D can continue to build the skills of health workers, ensure facilities have the right medical tools, empower women to take control of

their reproductive health and deliver healthy futures for newborns. Funds raised through this initiative will be matched 4:1 through support from the Government of Canada.

Visit WeRespond.ca/rideforrefuge for more information.



Sponsorship Corner

By Rob Shropshire, PWS&D's Refugee Sponsorship and Special Projects Program Coordinator. Rob works with Michelle Ball and Biniam Goitom as they provide accompaniment and support to congregations and groups involved in refugee sponsorship.

*Love strangers as yourself
(Leviticus 19:34)*

Fast facts on refugees

Who are refugees? Refugees are people who had to flee their home country because of persecution, war or massive abuse of human rights. There are nearly 25 million refugees in the world today—more than five million of them are from Syria, but refugees are from many countries.

What is refugee sponsorship?

Sponsorship is usually a one-year commitment (sometimes two) to provide orientation, financial and emotional support to people who have been recognized as refugees

by the government. Those who are sponsored become landed immigrants upon arrival at the airport. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has sponsorship agreements with both the Canadian and the Quebec governments.

What help is available to us if we sponsor? Staff at the national office guide sponsors through the application process—providing information and support, as well as referrals to training and local resources. For groups sponsoring refugees referred by the government under the Blended Visa Office Referred Refugee Program, the government will contribute six months of income support.

A big year for sponsorship

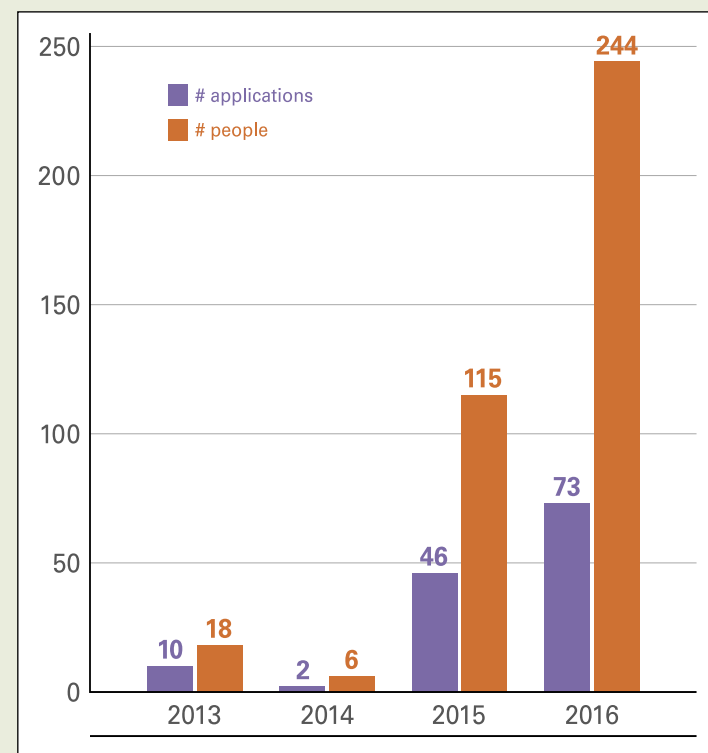
The sponsorship program has been around since the late 1970s; 2016 was one of the biggest years ever for Presbyterian participation. Sponsorships were in progress (i.e., the applications were being processed or the refu-

gees had arrived) for 118 cases and 337 people (up from 57 cases and 160 people in 2015). In all, 73 applications had been filed for 244 people over the course of the year, and churches were participating, anywhere from Newfoundland and Labrador to British Columbia.

Syrian refugees topped the list of people that Presbyterians sought to sponsor in 2016. However, applications were also under way for refugees from Burma (Myanmar), Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Liberia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan and Venezuela.

Progress this year

Staff are busily sorting through requests received in 2017 to sponsor refugees. The PCC government-issued quota for the year is for 77 people—while Presbyterian groups across the country have asked to double that number. Meanwhile, four refugee



families have been matched with sponsoring groups so far.

Making a difference

In a world where so many are searching for a new home in a safe place for themselves and their families, the sponsorship program is one way we can reach out to

our global neighbours and make a difference in their lives. Please keep refugees, and their Canadian sponsors, in your prayers.

For more information about refugee sponsorship, please visit WeRespond.ca/refugee-sponsorship

Presbyterians in Action

Presbyterians across Canada are taking action and demonstrating that by working together, pooling our resources and setting goals, we have the power to make a difference. Here's how Presbyterians are sharing God's love with those in need!

We want to hear from you! Please send your stories and photos to Anna Muir at amuir@presbyterian.ca or mail them to the church office.



"BEATS AND SWEETS"

Members of the congregation at Knox Presbyterian Church in Woodstock, ON, hosted a special evening of music and desserts in support of PWS&D. "Beats and Sweets" was the name of the fundraiser, which featured a concert with performances by local musicians followed by dessert, coffee and fellowship. The congregation raised \$500 for PWS&D in an effort to help communities across the globe overcome poverty and experience life in its fullest abundance.



YOUTH IN ACTION TO END HUNGER

The compassionate Grade 4–6 Sunday School class at St. Andrew's Hespeler Presbyterian Church in Cambridge, ON, held a bake sale at the church to raise money for the Farming for the Future Sunday School Challenge. The class made \$350 in sales on top of the \$400 they had already raised through the collection of pop cans! The children donated the total proceeds to PWS&D with the hope of helping vulnerable families in Guatemala get the seeds, tools and training they need to have food for the future.

HISTORY

The Reformation and the Late Medieval Church

By Dr. Alexandra Johnston,
elder at Rosedale Presbyterian Church,
Toronto

Most of us have been taught that the Western church had to be reformed because positions not based on scripture had become doctrine and many of the administrative practices of the Roman Catholic Church in the 15th and early 16th centuries had become corrupt.

This year, 2017, marks the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in western Europe. The teachings of the reformers—Martin Luther and John Calvin and their followers in particular—not only created Protestantism but they also caused a major reform within the Catholic church itself: the Counter Reformation (1545–63). The thinking behind the Counter Reformation was highly influenced by Humanists, such as Erasmus of Rotterdam, who were critical of the church but, unlike Luther, chose to remain within it.

Theologians had hotly debated doctrine since the early church without creating the political and social upheavals of the 16th and early 17th centuries. Why did it happen then? The answer lies in the late medieval church itself. From the 13th century on, there were three intertwined movements that engaged the laity through personal involvement and understanding of their faith.

The first movement was what has come to be called “affective piety.”

This was an approach to Christianity first made popular by Bonaventure, a late-13th century Italian friar in his treatise in Latin called *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, which emphasized the humanity and suffering of Jesus. Widespread interest in this movement grew over the next two centuries and found its most eloquent expression in English in a translation of *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* by an English monk, Nicholas Love, who died in 1424. The Mirror urges the reader to imagine being present throughout the life of Christ and especially at the Crucifixion. Love presents Christ’s physical suffering in imagined detail to enable simple people to come to an emotional understanding of their faith through the contemplation of the suffering body of God.

The second movement—new directions in art and literature—was in some ways related to affective piety. The decoration of every place of worship, from tiny pariah churches to great cathedrals, was encouraged by the hierarchy. The stories of the faith from creation to doomsday were depicted in stained-glass windows, wall paintings and sculpture. For the wealthy, there were religious books in the vernacular—Books of Hours, poems, prose narratives, stories of the saints—all illustrated with beautiful illuminations. In parishes, towns and cities throughout western Europe, plays were performed by lay people that dramatized seminal episodes in the Old Testament, the Nativity, the



Ministry of Christ, the Passion story, the Resurrection and post-Resurrection episodes from the Gospels and plays of the Last Judgment based on Matthew 25. There were also plays based on the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostles Creed. European Christians of the late Middle Ages were not ignorant about their faith.

The third movement had the interest of many of the learned in translating the gospels into the vernacular languages of Europe. The work of Jan Hus in Bohemia and John Wycliffe in England in the late-14th century sparked movements that had wide support and interest among ordinary Christians in the 15th century to the extent that the church tried to stamp the movement as it took on political overtones. Jan Hus and John Wycliffe are considered early reformers and their interest in scripture is at the root of the contention of the 16th century—especially among



Calvinists—that scripture is the sole source of faith.

A century-and-a-half before 1517, within the Roman Catholic Church itself, the laity had an intellectual and emotional commitment to their faith. The first two movements discussed above were supported and encouraged by the church itself. The Reformation would not have happened had lay people—especially lay people in positions of power—not supported the Reformers. Their support was there because they understood their faith and were committed to it.



The Presbyterian Church and Confederation

By Barb Summers,
Communications Office

At the time of Canadian Confederation, 150 years ago, Presbyterianism was already well established. There were four branches of the church: The Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Maritime Provinces, the Canada Presbyterian Church, and the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. Only a few years after confederation, these four branches would merge to form The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1875.

In *Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada*, Dr. John S. Moir devotes a section on Canadian Confederation. He writes:

“Although a union of the British North American colonies had been discussed spasmodically for generations, it was not until 1864 that the Confederation movements began in

earnest. Maritime union was already being considered when the cultural, religious and economic conflicts between Upper and Lower Canada reached a crisis in the political deadlock of June, 1864. Fear of war with the United States, the loss of reciprocity agreement with the Americans, threats and hostile actions by American members of the Fenians, an Irish national group, indirect pressures from railway promoters, and finally the urgings and intervention of the British Colonial Office—all played their part in bringing about the confederation of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the province of Canada on 1 July, 1867” (p. 134).

According to Dr. Moir, Canadian Confederation was an important stimulus in bringing about Presbyterian union. “A united Canada needed, even demanded, one Presbyterian church from sea to sea... This urge toward a ‘national’ Presbyterian church was reinforced by the Confederation movement... The



The Moderator, the Rev. John Cook,
June 15, 1875.

spirit of union was in the very air of Canada and the vision of church extension into the Canadian West and to foreign fields demanded that practical responses replace pious expressions of Presbyterian brotherhood” (p. 135).

The church is always called upon to find new ways of being faithful and relevant in a changing and political environment, in a country—and a world—that has changed significantly and continues to change more and more each day.



The First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

To read the full electronic copy of *Enduring Witness*, visit the **Presbyterian Church Archives website at presbyterianarchives.ca**. A new online exhibit this

summer will feature the **PCC and Confederation** and include a full copy of the 1867 edition of the **Presbyterian Record** magazine.

GATHERINGS



The ladies of New St. James Presbyterian Church in London, ON, wearing their “Easter bonnets” to church on Easter Sunday to surprise the Rev. Andrew Reid.



Celebration of new members joining the congregation of St. Andrew's-Chalmers, Uxbridge, ON, in April. From left to right, Dave Ramsingh, Nicholas Ramsingh, Elaine Cao, Kim Ramsingh, Bev O'Hearn, Jeffery Ross.



Ms. Adelaide Kyei-Boahen (left), Sunday School teacher at Livingstone Presbyterian Church in Montreal, presented the call to the presbytery in March for the congregation's new minister, the Rev. Sybil Mosley.



Honouring the Rev. Doug Blaikie on his retirement at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Fredericton, NB, in February.



Summerside Presbyterian Church in PEI celebrated Easter with an intergenerational, joy-filled worship service amidst the excitement of balloons and hallelujahs!



On a Sunday evening in April, Reine Boghos, Ministry Student at Knox Presbyterian Church in Iroquois, ON, prepared a Syrian meal for an enthusiastic and hungry group coming together from various congregations in the Presbytery of Seaway-Glen-garry. The proceeds from the meal and evening were used to support the presbytery's Syrian Refugee Sponsorship program.



Living Faith Community Presbyterian Church in Baxter, ON, began the process four years ago with Rob Shropshire of PWS&D of sponsoring two young men from a Zimbabwean Refugee Camp. Patrick Byamungu from the Democratic Republic of Congo arrived on December 14, 2016, and Gonzague Ntakiyicav from Burundi arrived on February 8, 2017. From left: Patrick and Gonzague with John Malnick, the Rev. Heather Malnick, Eline Mpaliwra, Pascal Mpaliwra and Shelly Sawden.



On Earth Day (April 22), a team of youth and adults from First Presbyterian Church in Brockville, ON, gathered on a damp, drizzly day to clean up one of the Brockville parks—part of a community-wide effort to make a difference in our world.



Don Baird officially resigned as treasurer of St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church in Grand Falls-Windsor, NL, in April after more than thirty years in the position. Some of the congregation posed with Don to mark the occasion. Front row (l-r): Betty Baird-Cross, Louise Baird, the Rev. Dr. Ian Wishart, Don Baird, Debbie Hynes and Margaret Scott. Back row (l-r): Bob Thompson, Cathy Simpson, John Baird and Christine Burden.



St. Andrew's in Picton, ON, established its “Labyrinth on the Green” in 2016 and invites people from all faiths to bring lanterns and walk the labyrinth as a commitment to expanding the Light in our world.



The quarterly "Birthday Sunday" for those who celebrated this past January, February and March at Faith Presbyterian Church in Fort McMurray, AB. A wonderful time was enjoyed by all who gathered for worship, fellowship and the post-worship potluck brunch!



Five Elders were ordained at Alexandra Presbyterian Church in Brantford, ON, in April 2017. From left, the Rev. Doug Scott with Jane Ross, Angelina Vandertuin, Dara Christie, Betty Andrews and Angela Brock.



First Presbyterian Church in Port Colborne, ON, held a Gospel Nite with the Guitar Boyz & Friends—an evening of great music and laughter!

GATHERINGS



At St. James Presbyterian Church in Beersville, NB, the Christmas season ends with a candlelight service on Olde Christmas Day (January 6). This special time is for families too busy throughout the "Gregorian" Christmas, so they may remember the joy of the season away from all the stress.



Music Director Brenda Bowden's retirement party in March at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Westville, NS. With Brenda is the Rev. Bonnie Wynn who will be retiring in October. Looking forward to the next party!



The prayer shawl groups from Knox PC in Holstein, Amos PC in Dromore and Knox PC in Normanby, ON, celebrated their 500th prayer shawl since their beginning in October 2008. Yarn is donated by community and church members. Each shawl and lap quilt is blessed with prayers between the stitches and a special group hands-on blessing when completed. Each shawl is given away with love to celebrate, to encourage, to bless and to comfort the recipient, whomever they might be. From left, front row: Hilda Echlin, Geri English, the Rev. Jan MacInnes, Terry Walker, Dee Castaldi. Back row: Brenda Calder, Dianne Orr, Lori Charlton, Velma Morrison.



The Christmas pageant at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Clairville, NB.

REFLECTIONS

Becoming a Multi-Ethnic, Multi-Cultural Church



By the Rev. Peter Bush, Moderator of the 143rd General Assembly

The first Sunday in June marked the opening of General Assembly. But far more importantly, June 4, 2017, was Pentecost Sunday. On the day of Pentecost the church was born; born as a multi-lingual, multi-cultural

entity. Jews, from regions throughout the Middle East, North Africa and Europe, heard the good news about Jesus Christ in their own languages. While sharing Jewish ethnicity, they spoke different languages and had different cultural patterns. On that Pentecost Sunday, 3,000 persons joined the other followers of Jesus in declaring that Jesus is Lord. The church was born.

From conversations with Filipino pastors on how to start new churches, to preaching in an Indigenous congregation, to supporting a Korean congregation in finding its place within the Presbyterian church, to teaching theology to African pastors, to being the interim moderator of an Arabic-speaking congregation, to mentoring first-generation immi-

grant clergy serving Euro-Canadian congregations, I have been privileged to experience some of what it means to be part of the multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic church.

I am asked, "Won't being a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural church change the church?" The answer being: "Yes, it will change the church." Often the church is seen as being made up of people like us, people who share with us a common cultural background, a common socio-economic place in society and a common educational background. When the church is defined as being made up of people who share common characteristics, the church is being described as a bounded set. People who share certain common characteristics make up the church. Bounded set churches

say to newcomers, "Become like us and join the church."

The multi-ethnic, multi-cultural church, which I believe we are called to be, is not held together by the common backgrounds of its members. The church is not to be a bounded set; the church is called to be a centred set. All who share commitment to making Jesus Christ the centre of their lives are part of the church. In our collective desire to make Jesus the centre of the church we find our unity, a unity which transcends language, culture and ethnicity. In centred set churches cultural differences remain as Tagalog speakers and Arabic speakers, Hutu and Tutsi, Indigenous persons and Settlers find a unity built on their shared confession: "Jesus Christ is Lord." Centred

set churches say, "Centre your life on Jesus and join the church."

I had the privilege of visiting a store-front church in Ankara, Turkey, and hearing the Sunday School of Kurdish refugee children, Palestinian children and children from Europe and North America singing "Jesus loves me" in Arabic, Turkish and English simultaneously.

"After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in the hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb'" (Revelation 7:9-10).

REFLECTIONS

Candles, Poster Board and Fear



From the Missing and Murdered Women Monument at the Forks, Winnipeg.



By Vivian Ketchum, originating from Wauzbusbk Onigum Nation of Northern Ontario and now a member of Place of Hope Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg, MB

Another vigil, another woman killed due to violence in Winnipeg. In one week, there were two women shot and killed in the city.

Members of the grass roots community are beginning to feel the stress of what is happening in the city. The increased level of violence towards Indigenous women left us shaken. One woman activist even began to prepare a vigil box with supplies for the next vigil. The supply box was made up of candles, poster board and markers.

I began to read on Facebook posts of women questioning if they would be next. If they would be the next one to have a vigil planned for them. Vigils usually take time to organize within

the community. Now, it only takes a couple of days for one to be planned. Sadly, the community has gotten too much practice at doing vigils.

The call out would be posted on Facebook for drummers and singers. Tobacco, sage and other plants required for the Smudge bowl. Prayers to be offered for healing that never seem to come for the families of missing and murdered women.

The families would request a vigil in honour of their loved ones. The community and all the other activists would gather at the place where the vigil was going to be held. Usually, near where the woman or person had died. Rather informal with no set schedule of events. Family members or friends would place flowers or pictures of their loved one on the ground. Posters would be made with touching words such as sister, mother or daughter to describe their loved one.

The Indigenous drummers would begin the vigil with songs. There would be sharing from family members or from other people that gathered at the vigil. No political agenda or anger words are allowed. The vigil is for healing and to be supportive for the family. The smell of sage and tobacco is strong as the Smudge bowl comes around. Candles are lit and, in the fading evening light, you can hear soft sobs from within the crowd.

The media are also in attendance. They come with their bright lights and microphones. The reporters stand at the outer edges of the group waiting for their turn to get a story or a picture of the vigil. Everybody attending the vigil seems to know their roles. Like actors in a play that doesn't need rehearsing.

Again, the vigil ends without a set time or agenda. It is the Indigenous drummers that set the tone of when it will end. People begin to leave slowly and the crowd thins. The vigil box is packed up with the items not used, like spare candles that were not lit, and markers are returned. The flowers and colourful signs are left behind to honour memories of a loved one.

The vigil community that is made of drummers and supporters want to leave behind the tragedy and move on the healing. Healing that is so needed within the Indigenous community. Yet they know they will be gathering again.

The vigil box will be needed. Again.

A National Crisis

The number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada is disproportionately high, though the exact numbers are in dispute. Some claim as many as 1,100 Indigenous women have gone missing or been murdered in the last few decades.

According to the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC), Aboriginal women and girls represent approximately 10% of all female homicides in Canada, while Aboriginal women make up only 3% of the overall population. But the data doesn't tell the full story. Many cases have never been resolved and many have gone undocumented or the findings are in dispute.

National Inquiry

The Government of Canada initiated an independent national inquiry into the status of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada. The commissioners are required to examine and report on the systemic causes behind the violence that Indigenous women and girls experience, and their greater vulnerability to violence.

The inquiry has gotten off to a rocky start. Critics are frustrated by what they call slow progress of work, lack of responsiveness and failure to demonstrate how funds are being used.

A Troubling Legacy

Statistics cannot account for the long-term impact these tragedies are having on the children and families of the missing and murdered women. As well, nearly half of the murder cases in the NWAC database remain unsolved, resulting in families unable to seek justice or closure.

*To learn more about the
Native Women's Association of Canada, visit nwac.ca*

Building Bridges and Transforming Lives



By Christopher Fischer, Pastoral Musician at Knox Presbyterian Church, Guelph, ON

I have come to know the transformative power of music as a sign of God's loving and abiding presence in the church. Through the song of God's people assembled we feel God's presence. Reformed theologians have understood that, through Scripture, God's people are commanded to sing God's praise. Music is uniquely placed among the arts—linked as it is with both language and

emotions—to be a special conduit for the transmission of God's Word.

Music is part of God's plan for the building up of the kingdom; as such, it is essential in the life of the church. Karl Barth, in Church Dogmatics, put it this way: "The Christian church sings... (The) church which does not sing is not the church." For far too long, church leaders have viewed music with suspicion, equating music with performance and not with prayer or proclamation. And we musicians have not done enough to alter this perception; we have neglected our role in worship to enable and empower people (as outlined by John Bell in The Singing Thing: A Case for Congregational Song) to create identity, to tell our story, to connect us with our past and shape our future, to enable work and the exercise of creativity, and to give of ourselves.

Music is most incarnational, pointing to the living, moving breath of God's Holy Spirit in our midst, when it is communicated and experienced

by the voices of all, not just some of God's children. There is a role for instruments and choirs to support but not dominate this communication and experience.

Careful and creative work is required by those entrusted with the responsibility for planning worship to select music: that resonates with worshippers of many generations and cultural backgrounds; that is reflective of greater diversity of musical styles; that builds bridges to the global Body of Christ by singing the songs of the whole church and not just the ones that we are familiar with; and ultimately, that will free people in congregations to hear their own voices and sing from their hearts.

My dream is that The Presbyterian Church in Canada will allow the song of its people to lead it into renewal and revitalization and that we will hear and feel God's promptings moving us toward one another, enabling us to worship God more fully in Spirit and in truth.

A Gift of Joy

By Patricia Schneider, Elder at Forbes Presbyterian Church, Grande Prairie, AB

She looked up and smiled. Suddenly the room seemed full of light.

My friend has defied all odds by continuing to live with terminal cancer. Initially, she had been given only a few months to live. She had refused chemo, but did finally take some radiation and now manages with a little pain medication. She has two types of cancer, which have metastasized, yet she continues on.

"How do you do it?" I ask.

"It's joy," she replies, "my life is full of joy."

She has always had a deep faith and now that same faith was leading her down this pathway. She has responded with an attitude that is different from most. There was no anxiety, no fear, anger or depression, and her only tears shed were of compassion for her family, who has been devastated by the news of her cancer. As Christ wept in compassion at Lazarus's death, she too was much touched by the sorrow her family was experiencing. But she had had many good years and her heart was full of thanks.

It is overwhelming to be in the presence of a miracle. Here was a lady who, against all odds, is continuing to live. Oh yes, she rests more now, but her waking moments are

filled with joy. You can feel it in the room when you visit her. She has not moved away from life but into life, filling her time with the things she loves; faith, family, friends and music.

"What about death?" I am brave enough to ask, and she replies she has no fear of death. It is obvious that God still has need of her so she carries on. She says God walks with her and gives her strength for every day. She knows that heaven is her final destination.

At the Care Centre where she is staying, she is the official "welcoming committee," greeting all the new residents with so much enthusiasm that they feel like they have come home.

Her doctors consider her a "walking miracle." She has shared with them her beliefs and they have shaken their heads, amazed. She firmly believes that her faith is keeping her alive.

All these things she spoke to me of as her eyes sparkled and her smiles continued. She has the grace to make each person feel special for having visited her.

Before I left I took her hand and prayed with her, then gave her a gentle hug and kissed her soft cheek. I thanked God for this special lady who is a much-loved part of our church family. Our "walking miracle" as she is fondly called, is daily witnessing and proclaiming God's gracious gift of joy.

MENTORSHIP

Building Social Ministries

By Alexandra Belaskie,
Community Manager of
the Social Mentor Network

Social Ministries are ministries built on one of the core values of Christian faith: loving our neighbours by serving our communities. They are diverse in vision and practice, focused on tackling issues as wide ranging as poverty and homelessness to environmental destruction and food insecurity. Although they respond to different needs in our communities, social ministries share the common purpose of putting Jesus' message of caring for our neighbours, especially those who are marginalized, into action.

Recognizing that social ministries are critical to our ability as a denomination to respond directly to Christ's call to serve those on the margins, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, through Canadian Ministries, partnered with the United Church of Canada to co-create the Social Mentor Network (SMN). The Social Mentor Network is an ecumenical ministry designed to provide mentorship and support to grant-receiving social ministries from both denominations.

Why mentorship?

According to the University of Warwick, the purpose of mentorship is "to enable the mentee to develop their own skills, strategies and capability so that they are enabled to tackle the next hurdle more effectively with or without the mentor's presence" (Warwick, 2015). This is also the underlying philosophy of the SMN.

The one-on-one mentorship relationships in the SMN are meant to provide skills-based support to ministries and social initiatives. This support ranges in scope but includes things like helping ministries improve their social media activity, undertake new projects and strengthen leadership.

NewScoop YYC, an initiative associated with the United Church of Canada and run by Sarah Arthurs, wanted help improving their digital presence. The Social Mentor Net-

work partnered Arthurs with Michele Petick, a webmaster and social media guru in Toronto, who helped her learn to navigate the digital world on her own. Arthurs attributes a newfound confidence to her mentorship experience: "I have improved my confidence in that realm... The tech is not a barrier anymore, because if I get stuck, I can try, then ask Michele and she can help."

Mentors help ministries overcome barriers, learn new skills and develop as leaders. They do so by acting as listeners and guides, providing feedback and sharing their expertise. In

"They are the people who are changing the world, and I am so privileged to listen to them and learn so many things I otherwise would never have been exposed to."

The connections that the SMN are making are providing a useful service to support the organizational backbone of ministries. Rapport said, "I have grown and strengthened my leadership capabilities through this process. I have been blessed and encouraged by the coaching, guidance and wisdom of my mentor."

In addition to one-on-one mentorship connections, the SMN provides

These connections are providing
a useful service to support the
organizational backbone
of ministries.

return, mentors receive the blessing of being part of a ministry that is expanding its reach and positively impacting the community.

Mark Fornasiero, a mentor to Deb Rapport at ARISE Ministry—an organization that advocates for the rights, goals, and dreams of women, youth and children who have become victims of sex-trafficking—describes mentorship as a co-learning experience. "This was a great learning experience for me personally," said Fornasiero. "I was able to use a lot of methods and frameworks that I have, to date, only used in a commercial setting to help Deb at ARISE. I was really excited to see how some of the commercial frameworks translated to the non-profit world."

Like Fornasiero, Petick also describes the mentorship relationship as a rich experience for both the mentor and mentee. Concerning her work with NewScoop YYC, Petick raves,

support to ministries by inviting them to be part of an online community and providing access to e-learning resources. As of April 2017, the SMN is working with 122 social ministries and social enterprises and has over 300 members.

The Social Mentor Network is always looking for volunteers with experience in finance, project management, administration and social media to serve as mentors. For more information on how the Social Mentor Network works, or to learn how to get involved as a mentor, contact socialmentornetwork@gmail.com.

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WORSHIP

The Words We Use in Worship

By Canadian Ministries

*God, the sculptor of the mountains,
God, the miller of the sand,
God, the jeweler of the heavens,
God, the potter of the land:
You are womb of all creation.
We are formless; shape us now.*
— "God the Sculptor of the Mountains" by John Thornburg

What would it be like if we used language more intentionally and creatively in worship? In the days prior to General Assembly, this was the question before Worship Words conference participants as they gathered to learn about the expressions we use to build our services.

Our Bible is abundant with stories, images and metaphors. What we learned at the conference is that, through thoughtful selection, our word choices can help us to understand God more fully and with a deeper experience. Think about some of the common metaphors we use to illustrate the building blocks of faith: sin and salvation, the Kingdom of God, the heavenly realms... Now, take a closer look at the first one. Consider the many ways that people experience *sin and salvation*

in the world and their lives. Try to fill in the blanks:

Sin is like _____
Salvation is like _____

Out of this exercise, conference participants discovered new and vivid images to describe the ways we experience sin and salvation: out of tune/harmony, drowning/lifesaver, frenzy/rest, anxiety/contentment, addiction/recovery, lost/found, injustice/justice. This practice of uncovering new images to describe God and our faith helps us create meaningful and moving worship services.

From this exercise, conference participants discovered new and vivid ways to convey how we experience sin and salvation: out of tune/harmony, drowning/lifesaver, frenzy/rest, anxiety/contentment, addiction/recovery, lost/found, injustice/justice. This practice of uncovering new narrations to describe God and our faith helps us create more meaningful and moving worship services.

This was one of many helpful exercises that keynote speaker the Rev. Ron Rienstra led participants through. To learn more about how to use language more selectively in worship, read Ron and Debra Rienstra's book, *Worship Words: Discipling Language for Faithful Ministry*.

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Letter to the Prime Minister

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Anglican Church of Canada and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops have written a letter to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, requesting more aid and attention to the famine situation and human rights violations happening in South Sudan.

The churches hope the government will bring additional support to the United Nations mission in South Sudan, more humanitarian assistance, and will assist in restoring the rule of law and protecting human rights. As well, the letter asks that the Prime Minister work diligently with Canadian businesses both at home and abroad, as well as with the international community, to prevent weapons and other military-grade

material from reaching South Sudan.

"Mr. Prime Minister, if the violence continues unabated, the ethnic tribes in South Sudan risk becoming further alienated from one another, making the governing of this young country more difficult and complex when eventually there is a cessation to the violence. The deep social scars which will inevitably follow this civil war could put South Sudan into a perpetual state of volatility with the outbreak of further societal ills ever present. We already witness this tragic state of affairs in other regions of the world. The international community cannot allow this to be repeated in South Sudan."

Read the full letter online at presbyterian.ca

National Presbyterian Women's Gathering

By Judith Farris, member of Paterson Memorial Presbyterian Church in Sarnia, ON

Faith is formed in community: friends talking over coffee, a family sharing a meal, neighbours offering help, a congregation joining in worship and, occasionally, hundreds of women coming together to share a unique long weekend. This kind of community was formed at the third National Presbyterian Women's Gathering, "Rooted in Love," held in Richmond Hill, Ontario, from May 19–22, 2017.

The four eventful days were filled with worship, reflection, challenge and connection shared by women from across Canada and international guests from countries including Hungary, Taiwan, Nigeria, Ghana and Malawi. A variety of speakers and preachers invited the nearly 500 women gathered to find rest in the deep love of God and to share that love with others.

Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada,

gave the keynote address on Saturday evening. She expressed the need for equal services for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in Canada: "Equality for children is not something that should come a teaspoon at a time." She urged attendees to pay attention and speak up for the well-being of Aboriginal children, saying, "We know better. We can do better."

The event created many opportunities recounting stories and for bringing women together to share what God is doing in their lives and in the world. Participants listened to the testimonies of three women relaying how they have experienced God's love in the community of the local church and in the Women's Missionary Society. Following this time, Tori Smit, the M.C. of the Women's Gathering, said, "We are all called to testimony, which is merely to tell our stories, to share our love of Jesus and how Jesus has transformed our lives."

The next Women's Gathering will take place in 2020. Visit womensgathering.ca to learn more.

JUST WONDERING...



Have a question you need answered? Submit them to connection@presbyterian.ca

I was just wondering...Is the Presbyterian Church system democratic? One of the foundational principles of our denomination is that we make decisions by praying, listening, discussing and voting. Sometimes we reach decisions by consensus. "Democracy" finds its root in the Greek word *dēmokratia* (*dēmos* 'the people' and *-kratia* 'power, rule'). Presbyterians are people who rule by way of making decisions. We must be a democratic church, right?

Believe it or not, our church government is not entirely democratic. Surprised? In a paper on Presbyterian governance, the late Dr. Tony Plomp, a long-time Clerk of the General Assembly, explains it like this: "... a critical New Testament insight is that the Church is not ruled from below by its members. It is ruled from above by Christ. It is a 'Christocracy,' and not primarily a representative democracy."

Have a look at Ephesians 1:20–23. We believe God's spirit speaks to the church when we are informed by scripture and share ideas in faith, hope and love. Whenever the church meets, we are called to seek the mind of Christ. We echo the prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane "... not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

I was just wondering...I wasn't baptized. Can I still join a Presbyterian church? Probably the majority of Presbyterians were baptized as infants. Family folklore claims that I, as an infant in arms, kicked and screamed throughout the sacrament. Maybe I objected to the flowing white gown in which I was clothed—the same one my grandmother wore at her baptism... So last century.

Be that as it may, infant baptism is a marvelous expression of God's amazing love. Before we can know ourselves, the sacrament of baptism claims we are loved by God and included in God's covenant of grace. Infant baptism is not, however, a prerequisite for membership in Presbyterian congregations. In an all-in-one ceremony, unbaptized people can profess their faith, be baptized as adults and, in doing so, become members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Some of the most mov-

ing celebrations in the life of a congregation happen when adults stand in the company of God's people, trickling with baptism water while declaring faith in the triune God. And with adults, you can almost guarantee there won't be any kicking or screaming.

I was just wondering...I'm on my church's worship committee and another woman on the same committee—let's call her "Debbie"—wears too much perfume. I don't want to go to meetings because it gives me a headache and I feel like it gets on my clothes. What can I do? Let's think about "Debbie" for a moment. No doubt she has given some thought to her choice of perfume and finds the aroma pleasing. She may have no idea how it affects you and possibly others. To question her choice of fragrance, or her choice to wear it, is obviously a delicate matter.

The Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety website claims that scented products have been blamed for adversely affecting a person's health when some or all of the following symptoms occur: headache, dizziness, light-headedness, nausea, fatigue, weakness, insomnia, malaise, confusion, loss of appetite, depression, anxiety, numbness, upper respiratory symptoms, shortness of breath, difficulty with concentration, skin irritation, and for allergic and asthmatic patients, certain odours can trigger an attack. Good grief! So...you're not alone in your discomfort and there is scientific data to support your concern.

May I suggest you speak to "Debbie" privately, avoid using words like "disgusting, repulsive, ghastly," and gently explain to her how perfume adversely affects your health. You could mention how much you value her work on the committee (hopefully you do) and ask that she refrain from wearing a fragrance at worship committee meetings so that you can both continue to use your gifts in this ministry.

It is also possible to suggest to the session that the congregation be encouraged to make the church a scent-free space. I'm told that that could even mean no lilies in the sanctuary at Easter, but it could address the problem for all those who suffer in silence.

PULPIT VACANCIES

To see all job openings and pulpit vacancies, visit presbyterian.ca/vacancies

Truro, St. James (full-time minister) – Atlantic Provinces

Miramichi (Chatham, NB), Calvin, Black River Bridge, St. Paul's, **Kouchibouguac**, Knox (full-time) – Atlantic Provinces

Pincourt, Île Perrot, (full-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Howick, Georgetown (part-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Ottawa, St. Stephen's (full-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Norval (part-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda (CNEOB)

Huntsville, St. Andrew's (full-time minister) – CNEOB

Oshawa, Knox (full-time minister) – CNEOB

Mississauga, White Oak (part-time minister) – CNEOB

Hagersville, St. Andrew's (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

Harrington, Knox (half-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

Ridgetown, Mount Zion (half-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

Grenfell, Trinity (full-time minister) – Saskatchewan

Regina, First (full-time minister) – Saskatchewan

Medicine Hat, St. John's (full-time minister) – Alberta and the Northwest

Calgary, Centennial (full-time minister) – Alberta and the Northwest

Vancouver, Kerrisdale (full-time minister) – British Columbia

Nanaimo, St. Andrew's (full-time minister) – British Columbia

Salmon Arm, St. Andrew's (part-time minister) – British Columbia

OBITUARIES

Read full obituaries online at presbyterian.ca

The Rev. Donald Bruce Hanley
Former minister, father, grandfather and great grandfather, deceased April 28, 2017.

The Rev. Rodger Hunter
Founder and chaplain of Boarding Home Ministries, a former recipient of the E.H. Johnson Award for service on the cutting edge of mission, and a minister in association at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, King Street, Toronto. Deceased April 4, 2017.

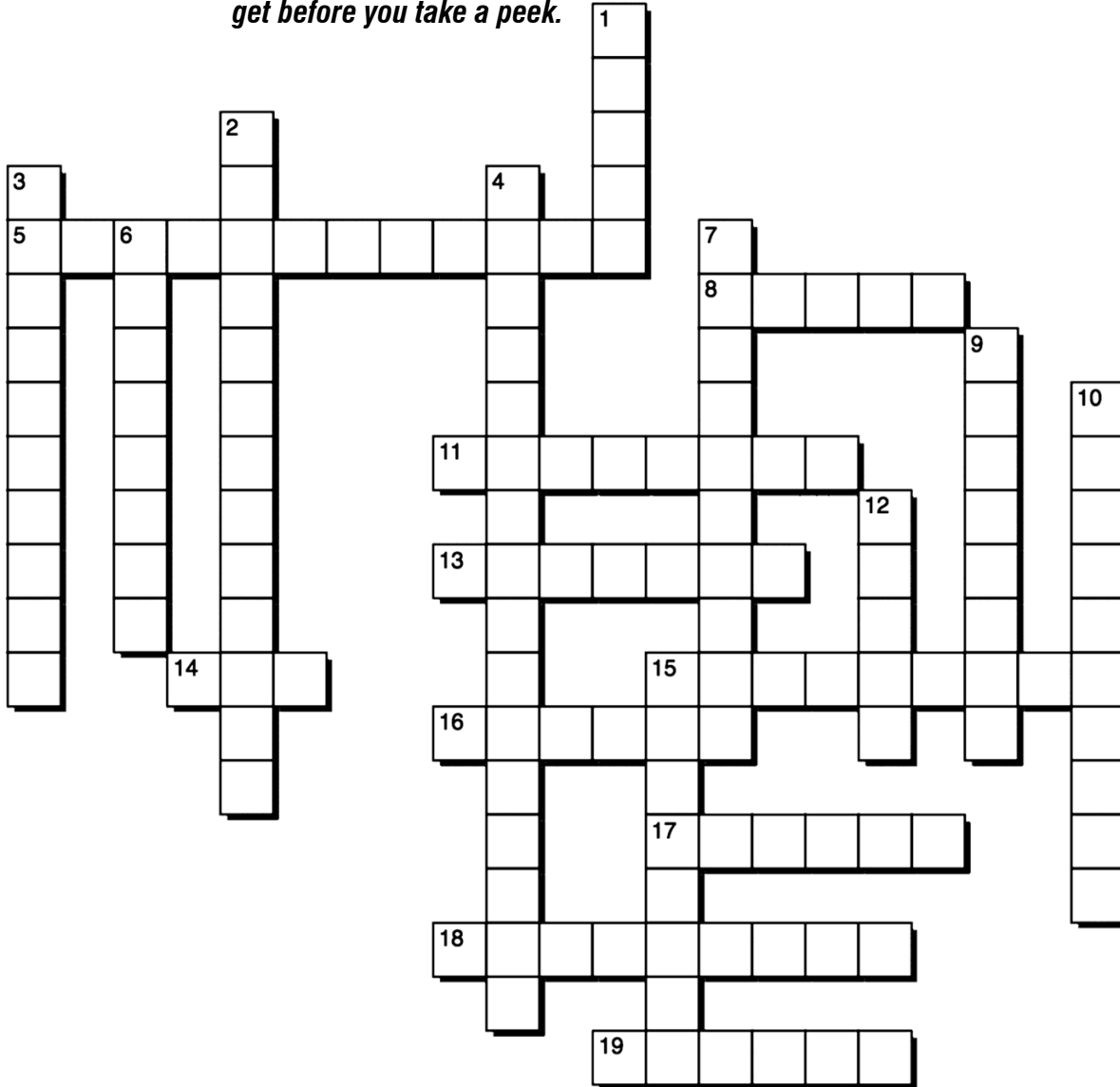
Mrs. Laura June MacInnis
Wife of the late Rev. Calvin MacInnis, retired Presbyterian minister of Miramichi, NB, deceased April 16, 2017.

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SMILES

Crossword

How sharp is your knowledge about Presbyterians and Canada? Test yourself below. Answers are provided—see how far you can get before you take a peek.



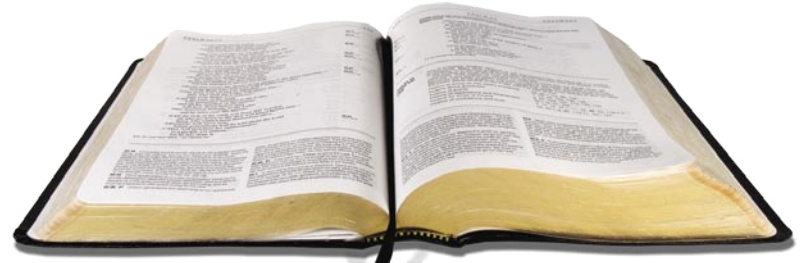
ACROSS

5. Name of the Canadian Presbyterian minister's wife whose books have sold over 50 million copies.
8. Number of oceans that border Canada.
11. The first capital of the province of Canada (1841) and the city where General Assembly 2017 took place.
13. The international development and emergency relief agency of the PCC is Presbyterian World _____ & Development.
14. Canada stretches across _____ time zones.
15. The Aboriginal language most widely spoken in Nunavut is _____.
16. The city that Anamiewigummig ministry with Indigenous people is located in.
17. The first province to adopt its own flag (1948).
18. Last name of Canada's first Prime Minister.
19. Canada's motto, "From sea to sea," comes from which book of the Bible?

DOWN

1. There are over _____ Indigenous languages spoken in Canada.
2. The _____ Bridge is the longest bridge in the world to cross ice-covered water.
3. This year, the E.H. Johnson Memorial Fund Award recognizing work on the cutting edge of mission was awarded to Dr. Cindy _____.
4. In 2017, Canada marks the _____ of Canadian Confederation.
6. The Canadian city where the first organized game of hockey was played.
7. Lord _____, co-founder of the Canadian Pacific Railway and originally known as Donald Smith, drove the last spike in 1885.
9. What is the last name of the Canadian in #10 Down?
10. Which sport did a Canadian Presbyterian invent in 1891?
12. Three Presbyterian women were recognized this year with a Presbyterian Woman of _____ Award.
15. The word "Canada" was derived from the language of the _____ people.

Quotation Location: Food and Drink



Connect the scripture reference with the correct quotation.
(NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION)

Acts 2:46-47a

God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food."

Genesis 1:29

A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water.

John 6:35

Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.

Proverbs 11:25

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.

Revelation 3:20

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS

- | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Sixty | 2. Confederation | 3. Blackstock | 4. Sesquicentennial |
| 5. L. M. Montgomery | 6. Montreal | 7. Stratcona | 8. Three |
| 9. Naismith | 10. Basketball | 11. Faith | 12. Iroquois |
| 13. Service | 14. Six | 15. Inuktitut | 16. Kenora |
| 17. Quebec | 18. Macdonald | 19. Psalms (72:8) | |

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