



Healing and Reconciliation

Jesus as Guest – A Biblical/ Theological Reflection

By the Rev. John A. Vissers
Principal at Knox College, Toronto

Jesus was always the guest. In the home of Peter and Andrew in Capernaum, where Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, Jesus was the guest. In the home of his dear friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus, Jesus was the guest. At the meal tables of the powerful and the wealthy, where he taught about the coming reign of God, and pled the cause of the poor, Jesus was the guest.

In the midst of crises and suffering, when he was called to the house of Jairus to heal a dying daughter, Jesus was the guest. Upsetting polite company, befriending isolated people, welcoming the stranger, embracing the marginalized, he was the guest. Travelling from town to town with his disciples, Jesus relied on the hospitality of others, the welcome of others, as he preached, taught and healed. He had no home of his



Participants of the Healing and Reconciliation Tour, June 12–21, 2017

own; he was always the guest. He sent his disciples out two by two to do the same, to go where they were welcomed as guests, and to move on when they weren't.¹

The image of Jesus as guest—Christ as guest—perhaps offers us a clue about how the church might understand its mission and ministry, and where, perhaps, we have often gone wrong in the past, especially in relation to Canada's Indigenous

people.

A few of my colleagues have alerted me to the work of a Nigerian theologian named Enyi Ben Udoh, and its implications for how we think about church and culture, especially in relation to colonialism. Udoh, a Presbyterian, has developed the idea of a "Guest Christology." Christology is the theological term for the study of the person and work of Jesus as the Christ, the Anointed One, the

Messiah, whom his followers name as Lord.²

Udoh talks about how Christ was introduced to the Nigerian context, the image of Jesus represented by those who brought the gospel, and he is particularly critical of the mission in Calabar:

"Christ entered the African scene as a forceful, impatient and unfriendly tyrant. He was presented as invalidating the history and institutions of a



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Reflections from the H&R Tour

By Carragh Erhardt, Healing and Reconciliation Program Assistant, Justice Ministries

From June 12 to 21, thirty-three people in The Presbyterian Church in Canada visited four ministries with Indigenous people connected to the PCC, including Winnipeg Inner-City Missions, Kenora Fellowship Centre, Mistawasis Memorial Presbyterian Church and Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry. They also visited the sites of the Presbyterian-run Cecilia Jeffrey

Residential School (Kenora, Ont., and Shoal Lake, Ont.) and Birtle Residential School (Birtle, Man.).

This powerful tour provided an opportunity to see first-hand the work ministries with Indigenous people are doing and the results of the outreach it provides. As well, a visit to the University of Manitoba's Aboriginal Business Education Partners gave them an opportunity to see the importance of education in the lives of Indigenous students.

This tour helped participants

understand issues related to the church's involvement in residential schools and to learn how Presbyterians are walking with Indigenous people toward reconciliation, and working with them to gain a better understanding of the past and the present so we can move together toward the future.

The following are reflections from three people who were involved in the tour.

The Rev. Karen Pozios is the minister

of Dixie Presbyterian Church in Mississauga, Ont. Her son, Stephen, is studying Kinesiology at York University.

Participating in the tour was something that we both wanted to do. When people heard that we were going together they would ask Stephen, "What did your mother have to do to get you here?" It seemed hard for people to understand that a nineteen-year-old would be passionate enough to give up some of his precious summer break to join 32 other people, all

older than him, and drive for days around three provinces. Even some of the tour participants were puzzled and asked this question, but not one of the people we'd met on the tour had asked. It seemed to make perfect sense to the Indigenous people we'd connected with, especially to the elders whose company we had the privilege of keeping, that the process of healing and reconciliation should be something for generations to do together.

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Jesus was always the guest

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people in order to impose his rule on them.”³

The image of Jesus presented by the missionaries and colonizers was of a Jesus who had come to conquer them. The rule of Jesus looked exactly like the rule of western Europe. The cross, rather than being seen as the place where God’s Messiah was crucified for the sin of the world, was presented as the triumphant sign of an expansionist empire. Sound familiar?

Udoh sees his work as an attempt to experience Christ differently, to lay out a different vision of Jesus, a different way of understanding how Jesus comes into our lives as Lord, a different way of understanding how Jesus moves in and across cultures. Through a biblical lens, argues Udoh, we see that Jesus comes to us as

guest. He comes to us as a friend, and enters our lives, our churches and our cultures at our invitation; to accompany, to heal, to reconcile, to save.

Revelation 3:20 sets this out powerfully in the words of Jesus to one of the seven churches in Asia Minor: “Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with them and they with me.”

Udoh suggests that the church, if it is truly the church of Jesus, should understand itself as a guest in the culture. The church in general, and our own Presbyterian Church in Canada in particular, likes to be the host. We’re a settler church; we have been part of the culture that settled in other people’s lands. We like to be in control; to plan the party, to set the invitation list, to “reserve” the place,

even to provide the food. Because if we are the hosts we can control what happens; we can control the message—the gospel. We can present Jesus on our own terms, and we can control how people respond as guests in “our” home, and exclude them if they do not conform to our image of who Jesus is and who Jesus embraces.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada, if it is going to become a truly post-colonial church, if it—if we—are going to move toward reconciliation with Canada’s Indigenous people, we may wish to rethink our identity in Canada. Perhaps we need to think of ourselves as guests in this land. Perhaps we are being called to listen to the welcome of Canada’s Indigenous people; a gracious hospitality that continues to be extended

despite the sins of the past.

Listening may also provide clues about what it will mean to be the church in a post-Christendom, post-colonial and secular age. The Jesus we proclaim as Lord was, and is, and always will be, the guest—the same yesterday, today and forever. His earthly ministry was a three-year healing and reconciliation tour. Servants are not greater than their master. Amen.

Notes

¹ The first two paragraphs are an expanded and edited version of the invitation to the Lord’s Table written and used by the Iona Community in Scotland.

² Enyi Ben Udoh, *Guest Christology: An Interpretive View of the Christological Problem in Africa*. Frankfurt

am Main: Peter Lang, 1988. I am indebted to Roland De Vries and Augustus Oku for drawing my attention to the work of Professor Udoh.

³ Ibid. pp.74–75; see also pages 14–15, where Udoh sets out the purpose of his work: “[T]his project is an attempt to lay a foundation for a solid and creative Christology for Africa. It is an effort to interject a different form of understanding of Jesus Christ in our lives in a way which might stimulate a better understanding of ourselves and of what God is doing in the world through the witness of Jesus Christ. If this work could generate such interest toward God and his Word, such a desire to welcome Jesus in as our guest, our kin, and our Lord [over time and in deepening encounter], then it would have succeeded in its purpose.”

“It is a wonderful vision. It is a vision we both want to be part of.”

Continued from page 1

It was clear to us as we visited former Presbyterian-run residential schools and current Presbyterian Native Ministries that the problems Indigenous people and settlers are facing on our journey toward reconciliation have existed for generations. While we would all love to see a miraculous quick fix, it was painfully obvious that there are years of healing and reconciliation ahead of us. So what better plan than for those alive today to work together for the benefit of those to come?

Healing and reconciliation won’t be easy. It wasn’t always easy being on the tour together. It was very emotionally draining sometimes to hear stories of children taken away from parents while we sat there, mother and child. However, on one of our early stops on the tour in Kenora, an elder named Nancy Morrison spoke to us and said how happy she was that we were there together. She spoke to Stephen about her hopes for the future and of how he and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren would work together to bring healing into reality because that is the Creator’s plan. It is a wonderful vision. It is a vision we both want to be part of. We hope and pray that others do, too.

Cathy Lindsay spent time with the tour group in Kenora, Ont. She follows the traditional ways of the Ojibwe Nation and is an activist working to address family violence and addictions issues.

Smudge lit! Prayers lifted. Sharing my truth in the spirit. First, some of us struggle with the words. I include myself as I understand what some fellow Anishinaabe² have shared with me. How does one reconcile



The Rev. Tom Billard with Binesikwe (Thunderbird Woman) Cathy Lindsay, an Indigenous elder, at Kenora Fellowship Centre in Kenora, Ont.

when there never was a union with churches in the past? An apology is an expression of regret. It is wise not to apologize on someone’s behalf, although the intent is understood. Personally, allowing the Creator to pass judgement on those who have harmed me is enough for my spirit, so that I may move forward.

Reconciliation in terms of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission means to me in the simplest of terms, to meet on common ground, to sit in council, and to accept the vision of becoming one people that was given to our Anishinaabeg long ago. I am reminded of the wisdom of Chief Dan George: “Where no one intrudes, many can live in harmony.”

Out of respect for our visitors and new friends from Presbyterian churches, I say *Chi’miigwetch*³ for travelling a great distance to seek truth from our elders, street people and the patrons of our Kenora Fellowship Centre and joining us on tour within Treaty #3 Territory and honouring our monuments and historical sites. You heard the Calls to Ac-

tion and participated willingly. Many thanks for your truths, tears, smiles and for laughing with us from time to time. We strive to live good lives while facing and trying to defeat the “demons” within us and around us. Always, there’s hope that the vision of One People will arise.

¹ Smudging is a traditional Anishinaabe way of cleansing the mind, body and spirit with the four sacred medicines: tobacco, cedar, sage and sweetgrass.

² Anishinaabeg is the Ojibwe term for all First Nations people. Anishinaabe is singular for Anishinaabeg.

³ *Chi’miigwetch* is Ojibwe, meaning “big thank you.”

Joan Smith is the Clerk of Session at St. Paul’s Presbyterian Church, Port Hope, Ont., and the Treasurer of the Women’s Missionary Society.

When The Presbyterian Church in Canada announced the Healing and Reconciliation Tour, I eagerly applied to go. I felt that it would be a culmination of the life-changing journey that I’d begun in 2012 when I had attended my first national Truth and Reconciliation Commission event. I would have the honour to once again listen to many heart-wrenching stories. I would have the opportunity to see the two memorials at the sites of Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School and the abandoned building that was once Birtle Residential School. And I would have the experience of being with others and reflecting on what we had seen and heard.

However, as we travelled, I soon realized that this was not an ending to my journey, but only the beginning. I learned that healing can only be accomplished when we say that we are

sorry and when we follow through on our actions. Reconciliation can only happen if we remember and accept in our hearts what Terry, one of the elders at Birdtail, Manitoba, said: “It

is worthwhile to reconcile!”

We must all work together to bring about reconciliation; we are responsible for making necessary changes to make sure that this happens.

Malawi Mission Trip



April 8 – 26, 2018

Led by the Rev. Joel Sherbino, PCC Malawi Liaison, this trip will:

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- ◆ Worship and fellowship with Presbyterians in Malawi
- ◆ See PWS&D’s maternal and child health programs, funded in part by the Government of Canada
- ◆ Learn how the prison ministry supported by *Presbyterians Sharing* is changing lives
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For more information go to presbyterian.ca/missiontrips or contact:

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The Presbyterian Church in Canada

A Message from the General Secretary



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

*Start with Why.
The Right to Lead.
Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive
through the Dangers of Leading.
Leaders Eat Last.*
There is no shortage of books about
leadership. Even as our neighbour to
the south—arguably the most pow-

erful force in the world—suffers
from a spectacular crisis of leader-
ship, the disastrous results of which
will be long-lasting, the worlds of
business, sports, schools, politics
and religion are focused on leader-
ship as key.

The Presbyterian Church in Can-
ada has identified “Visionary Lead-
ership” as one of the essential fo-
cuses in its strategic plan. There is
no question that the church needs
leaders. The question is, what kind?
The political horror show playing
out in the U.S.A. is a catastrophic
reminder that populist authoritative
leaders who promise easy answers
from on-high to complex issues
may be a tempting option, but they
are ultimately a feeble and danger-
ous one—and the church has not
been immune to the impulse.

The church would do better to
look for and invest in leaders who
do not offer easy answers, but
rather seek to follow the model we

have been given in Christ, who was
willing to do and say things—often
unpopular and unsettling things—
that led to the transformation of hu-
man and civil life. As Ronald Heifetz
of Harvard University has written in
Lessons in Leadership, “We should
be calling for leadership that will
challenge us to face the problems
for which there are no simple, pain-
less solutions—the problems that
require us to learn new ways.”

Visionary Leadership enables the
church to learn to live and be the
church in new ways that are fitted
for the world that is coming into fo-
cus as new realities emerge on the
horizon. But Visionary Leadership is
a multifaceted calling and cannot be
reduced to one definition any more
than leadership should be reduced to
a list of techniques. Visionary lead-
ers need to look at circumstances
and see them clearly and name them
for what they truly are, rather than
as we might like them to be; reality

testing and honesty are vital features
of Visionary Leadership. Respect—a
word that is related to vision—is also
a characteristic of leadership where
the church—to its shame—needs to
invest time thinking about and nurtur-
ing, especially at this time in its life.

In this edition of the Presbyterian
Connection, there is an article en-
titled “The Power and Intention be-
hind Leadership” by Peter Coutts, a
book review of Rabbi Sack’s book
and an interview with the Rev. Dr.
Dorcas Gordon, all of which focus
on leadership. We will feature a fo-
cus on leadership in every future
edition so that we may benefit from
a broad discussion about vision and
leadership in the church today.

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Presbyterians Sharing Packs a Punch

By Karen Plater, Associate Secretary,
Stewardship & Planned Giving

I always feel like each year has two
beginnings: the new year in Janu-
ary and the church/academic year
in September. This functional new
year begins, in part, with *Presbyte-
rian Sharing* Sunday on September
24 (although it can be moved to a
day that works for you!). It is a day
that reminds us that together we do a
surprising number of things that have
a large impact in the world. I would
even dare say that the PCC punches
well above our weight, as a little over
800 congregations across Canada
contribute over \$8 million to collec-
tively put faith into action in ways
that transform communities and lives
around the world.

Not only does *Presbyterians Shar-
ing* support the *Presbyterian Con-
nection* newspaper, but the funds are
used to:

- equip congregations, ministries
and presbyteries
- engage in evangelism, outreach
and discipleship
- embrace mission locally, nation-
ally and internationally
- empower youth
- provide tools for faithful ministry
- create and support new faith
communities
- engage in healing and reconcili-
ation
- support biblical and theological
reflection and dialogue
- discern, prepare and support vi-
sionary leadership
- pursue spiritual renewal
- live out God’s call to justice

As you flip through the pages of
this fall edition, you will learn about
a few of the things that happen be-
cause congregations and individuals
generously support *Presbyterians
Sharing*.

You will discover how a heal-
ing and reconciliation mission trip
has continued and begun journeys
of reconciliation. The Moderator
shares his experiences meeting
Presbyterians in Taiwan and the leg-
acy that our collective work has had,
and continues to have, while Paul
McLean writes about the impact Bi-
ble translation is having on commu-
nities in Taiwan. Amy Zavitz shares
reflections on mission trips, after a
year of working in Malawi through
International Ministries with support
from *Presbyterians Sharing*. Gifts to
Presbyterians Sharing provide core
funding for Canada Youth and sup-
port our work in the Canadian Coun-
cil of Churches and World Com-
munion of Reformed Churches, and
even helps keep PWS&D’s admin-
istrative costs low. *Presbyterians
Sharing* facilitates the E.H. Johnson
committee, supports the theologi-
cal colleges and provides coaching
and empowering resources for con-
gregations on discipleship, congreg-
ational growth and development,
stewardship and planned giving.
Place of Hope Presbyterian Church
is supported through Winnipeg Inner
City Missions.

Watch for the stamps throughout
this issue to quickly see some ways
that the Presbyterian Church is at
work in the world through your gifts
to *Presbyterians Sharing*.



David Martin is the Director of Admissions at the Presbyterian Church of Ghana’s Ramseyer Lay Leader Training Centre – which has received support from *Presbyterians Sharing*.



Preaching Grace Continues to Draw an Unexpected Audience



By Tyler Williams, Communications Coordinator, Grace Presbyterian Church, Calgary, Alta.

Preaching Grace is a weekend event that began in 2016 as an opportunity to celebrate great preaching and gather clergy from Presbyterian, Lutheran, United, Anglican and other denominations together to connect, learn and compare notes. However, when Grace Presbyterian Church—an urban congregation in Calgary's Beltline community—opened the doors to that inaugural *Preaching Grace* event last year, they were surprised to find not clergy, but the public walking through the doors.

Preaching Grace is a three-day event that invites a renowned preacher to come to Grace Presbyterian Church and share something of their work and experience with attendees. The speaker that first year was the Rev. Dr. Thomas Long, who gave a presentation entitled: *The Churches at the Four Corners*, a Discussion about the Similarities and Differences in the Four Gospels. A day-long workshop followed the lecture, offering a more hands-on approach to the presentation content and giving some practical tools for a different way to approach preaching the Gospels. Dr. Long also preached the sermon on Sunday morning.

"With a topic like this, we expected to draw mostly preachers and theology students," says the Rev. Dr. Jean Morris, Associate Minister of Pastoral Care at Grace Presbyterian, "and we anticipated difficulty convincing the public to attend."

Grace worked hard to spread the word that the weekend was not just

for preachers and that the public was very welcome—and they were surprised by how people responded. That first year, the public made up most of the attendees. The second *Preaching Grace* weekend, held in May 2017 with the Rev. Dr. Anna Carter Florence, drew a similar audience proving the public's interest was not a one-time thing. Of the attendees in 2017, 80% had no experience or history as preachers.

Fittingly, Dr. Carter Florence's lecture and workshop addressed the need to engage the whole community in reading and discerning scripture—that it was not just the responsibility of the minister. Her time at Grace focussed on how groups could read the verbs and use practices found in poetry and theatre to lead to encounters of personal stories and shared experiences in passages of scripture. The workshop then provided participants with a framework to share what they discovered.

"There's hunger to know how to read, discern and talk about scripture," says Dr. Morris. "Whether people are looking to strengthen their ability to articulate their faith or seeking to bolster their confidence, they are asking for the tools to help them wade deeper into, and understand, the Bible."

That need was well met during the weekend, and participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive:

"Great insights! [This] will change the way I read the Word."

"Rich opportunity to learn and talk with others."

"Very engaging, stimulating and experiential."

"Thank you for this event/growth

experience!"

"Love hearing alternative views. Excellent, enjoyable, and informative."

The *Preaching Grace* weekend is still an opportunity to celebrate great teaching, but it has also become an opportunity for the public to pull back the curtain on preaching. The event allows people to see how preachers read, interpret and share scripture, and learn tools and strategies they can take home and apply to their reading.

"Our unexpected challenge is to encourage members of the clergy to join in the weekend, as well," says Dr. Morris. "Not only is it an opportunity to learn from one of the day's influential teachers, but it is encouraging to see the public's interest in Scripture and to hear the connections they make and the stories they tell when they read the Word. There is something about sitting beside them not as their preacher, but as a fellow learner; I was delighted by the insight and depth of reflection they shared."

Planning is already underway for *Preaching Grace* 2018 when Grace Presbyterian will welcome the Rev. Dr. Jason Byassee. The inaugural holder of the Butler Chair in Homiletics and Biblical Hermeneutics at Vancouver School of Theology, Dr. Byassee's primary vocation is to reinvigorate today's church with the best of ancient and contemporary wisdom for creatively faithful living.

To stay informed about Grace Calgary events, visit the Facebook page at facebook.com/calgarygrace, or the website at gracechurchcalgary.com

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MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

Meeting Spiritual Entrepreneurs in the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan



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

I had the privilege of representing The Presbyterian Church in Canada during the moderator's trip to Taiwan. My wife, Debbie, and I, with our guides and hosts, Paul and Mary Beth McLean, travelled much of the island meeting Presbyterians from a number of Indigenous tribes: Paiwan, Ngudradrekai, Truku, Amis, Bunun, Kavalan and Tayal. I also had the honour of preaching at a Hakka worship service and in a Taiwanese congregation. We were warmly welcomed by the graciously hospitable Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT).

"Spiritual entrepreneur" is a trendy phrase in some church circles. In Taiwan, I discovered spiritual entrepreneurs have been with us for a long time and are still doing their thing today.

George Leslie Mackay, a spiritual entrepreneur, grew up in Oxford County, Ont., and went to Taiwan as a missionary in 1871. Realizing that no ministry was taking place in northern Taiwan, he moved in 1872 to Tamsui. There he drew together a group of young men, converts to Christianity, who he disciplined in the faith and trained to be pastors. He also opened a medical clinic (the forerunner of Mackay Memorial Hospital) and started an educational ministry at Oxford College (known today as Aletheia University and the spin-off, Tamkang Middle School).

Spiritual entrepreneurs

At the end of the 1930s, few of Taiwan's Indigenous people were Christian. At the end of World War II (1945), there were 5,000 Indigenous people waiting to be baptized. This explosion in faith continued and by 1962, there were 70,000 Indigenous Christians in Taiwan. This was the work of the Holy Spirit using Indigenous people to share the good news—missionaries from overseas had little to do with this spread of the gospel.

Chi-oang, a Sediq woman who came to faith in the late 1920s, and with two years of Bible school training, became an evangelist among her people and the Truku boldly

stated what Jesus had done for her. The Sediq and Truku then shared the gospel with the Tayal and the Bunun. While in southern Taiwan, when the Paiwan heard and believed the gospel, they shared it with the Ngudradrekai—sharing the good news with neighbouring tribes that had historically been rivals.

The boldness in proclaiming the good news continues to this day. One evening, while wandering among the stores near the waterfront in Tamsui, I saw a woman in her late teens wearing a T-shirt that read "WE [heart] JESUS"—a bold statement of personal identification with Jesus in a country where only 5% of the population are Christian.

Spiritual entrepreneurs are risk takers for the Kingdom of God

From Dr. Kao, the General Secretary of the PCT in the 1970s and 1980s, who spent time in prison because of the church's commitment to justice, to the boldness it took to add and fund a palliative care unit at Mackay Memorial Hospital in a culture that does not talk about death, to the work the Amis presbyteries are doing in developing agricultural products, the PCT is risk taking.

Pastors and church leaders acted with courage during and following Typhoon Morakot. They risked their lives getting villagers to safety as landslides threatened and damaged communities. These same leaders acted with boldness to hold communities together through the re-building phase, ensuring the homes and churches that were built continued to have an indigenous identity in their architecture, rather than the communities becoming monochromely urban or suburban.

Spiritual entrepreneurs see opportunities to proclaim the good news of Jesus

Early every morning, in urban contexts, many Taiwanese seniors take to the parks to exercise. In the rural villages, seniors are a significant demographic group. The PCT regards the significant population of seniors as an opportunity and have created an Elders University, a weekly two- to three-day educational and social pro-



Ngudradrekai Youth Choir with PCC Moderator, Peter Bush, doing "It's Your Time" hand gesture. PHOTO CREDIT: DEBBIE BUSH



Bearing witness to the PCC's long history in Taiwan. (Left to right): Chia-chi and David Geddes (David is the son of Jack and Betty Geddes, PCC mission staff); Mary Beth and Paul McLean (PCC mission staff among the Hakka people until 1995, worked on translating the Hakka Bible); Bonnie and Tim McGill (Tim is the son of Clare and Grace McGill, PCC mission staff in Taiwan and translators of the New Testament); Debbie and Peter Bush (Debbie is the daughter of James and Joyce Sutherland, PCC mission staff in Taiwan). Chia-chi and David, and Bonnie and Tim live and work in Taiwan (not with the PCC). Paul is a translation consultant with the PCC.

gram for seniors. Mixing lectures on spiritual life and current issues, arts and culture, and health, along with invitations to service, the Elders University leads to seniors flourishing and is an opportunity for people to hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

A highly skilled transplant surgeon from Taiwan, who is a Presbyterian elder, is much in demand as a speaker at medical conferences. He concludes his talks with a brief statement about his faith in Jesus, and how his faith helps him in his work. The PCT understands its medical work to be Medical Evangelism.

Church leaders and ordinary lay people in the PCT live with the expectation that people will become follow-

ers of Jesus through the ministry of the church: the worship gatherings in churches and the schools it operates.

Spiritual entrepreneurship became part of the PCT's DNA by following

the example of the Canadian Presbyterian, George Leslie Mackay. May the PCC learn from the PCT to be spiritual entrepreneurs in this new time.



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LEADERSHIP

The Power of Intention Behind Leadership

By the Rev. Dr. Peter Coutts, Certified Executive Coach of the International Coach Federation. For the past four years he has been the General Presbyter for Calgary-Macleod Presbytery.

Over the past four years, I have had a coaching and consulting ministry among clergy, congregations and presbyteries. The blessing this ministry has been for me is the gift of time to reflect on and refine my thoughts about what really matters in leadership and congregational life. If I were forced to boil it all down to one single, essential generalization that provides the greatest leverage for increased vitality, effectiveness and a better future it would be this: make the shift from being people of habit to people of intention.

If you think about it, the entirety of Jesus' ministry was shaped by intentionality: in his teaching and messaging, in how he formed his disciples as people of the way, in his prayer practices and ultimately in the purpose of his incarnated life. We see it in his crossing through the gender, social, class and political boundaries of his day. A great exercise is to read John 11 through 18 with an eye to how Jesus was so very intentional about what he did in those last weeks before the crucifixion. Jesus was not simply the victim of other people's decisions sending him to the cross—he orchestrated a series of events that ultimately led to a specific event on a specific day.

The obvious intentionality of Jesus raises a question for us as people of the way: how intentional is our ministry as clergy, congregations and presbyteries? Clergy who have little intention in how they conduct their ministry tend toward maintenance ministry. Congregations of habit that simply repeat the annual calendar of activities so often suffer from entropy and diminished hope. Too many presbyteries see the cycle of their lives as reacting to emerging crises in congregations interspersed with periods of welcome respite while taking care of the administrative along the way. So what does more intentional ministry look like? Here are three stories that arise from my past four years.

I worked with a minister who wanted to improve her preaching. Her initial inclination was to read some books about preaching, watch some videos of preachers and think about places to find sermon illustrations.

I asked, "How do you structure the time of your week for sermon preparation?" It turned out that there was no intentional structure. "Things pop up every day that need my involvement and I like to be responsive to the needs of others as they arise. But I have to confess that it often means sermon writing is left until Saturday."

"Okay, I get that," I said, "but how important is the need of the congregation when it comes to their worship?" That question changed everything. Today, this minister always has three weeks of sermons in the works: outlining the sermon three weeks away, writing the initial draft of the sermon two weeks away and fine-tuning the sermon for Sunday. She also has set blocks of time each week for uninterrupted prep work. The minister didn't have to change how she preached—she just had to become more intentional about how she prepared. Congregants have been delighted by the changes, finding the sermons more meaningful and inspiring. The minister also finds preaching more fulfilling. Today she figures she spends as much time on sermon prep as she did before but the structured use of her time now helps her craft finer sermons.

A quarter of the congregants of Westminster Church in Calgary participated in a three-week workshop. It explored how societal change has led to congregational decline and why our passive approach to the attractional church model is failing us in these changing times. Through

the workshop, participants came to a conviction that their congregation's well-being will be diminished if they simply continued to do church the way they've always done it. Consequently they developed an intention to change. Westminster Church is now participating in a congregational renewal program facilitated by the Vital Churches Institute (made available through the initiative of the Life and Mission Agency). Westminster has found that it is not easy for a congregation to re-imagine itself. Nor is it easy to be a church in the transitional time between the congregation they were and the congregation they will be. Because the transitional time is unsettled, and at times uncomfortable, there is always some tug that wants to pull a congregation back to the familiar and habitual. But Westminster's will to move forward is stronger than that tug.

Several years ago the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod began to assess our habit for congregational visitations, wanting them to be more comprehensive, effective and more frequent. In other words, the presbytery wanted to become much more intentional. They came up with a strategy to do this: create a staff position for it. A part-time position was soon conceived that also included coaching and resourcing clergy, sessions and congregations, strengthening the congregation-presbytery relationship and being the "first responder" in crises. The 13 congregations of the presbytery were asked to increase



presbytery dues to cover the new \$50,000 expense, and they did. I think that over the past four years the General Presbyter has mostly fulfilled what the presbytery hoped for in the position, but I'm sure that my opinion is biased.

I recently viewed on YouTube a wonderful motivational talk given by academy award winner Denzel Washington for a group of aspiring actors. He said, "Dreams without

goals are just dreams, and they ultimately fuel disappointment. Goals, on the road to achievement, cannot be achieved without discipline and consistency." Hear his encouragement to be intentional: set goals and pursue your goals with discipline. Jesus did this and so too can clergy, congregations and presbyteries. I believe greater intentionality will improve anyone's leadership capacity, no question.

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5. Donation tax credit (calculated at 46%)*	\$23,000	\$23,000
6. Tax on capital gain (line 4 x 46%)*	\$6,900	\$0
7. Net tax savings (line 5 – line 6)	\$16,100	\$23,000
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MISSION

What is Cutting-Edge Mission?



By the Rev. Glynis Williams, Associate Secretary, International Ministries

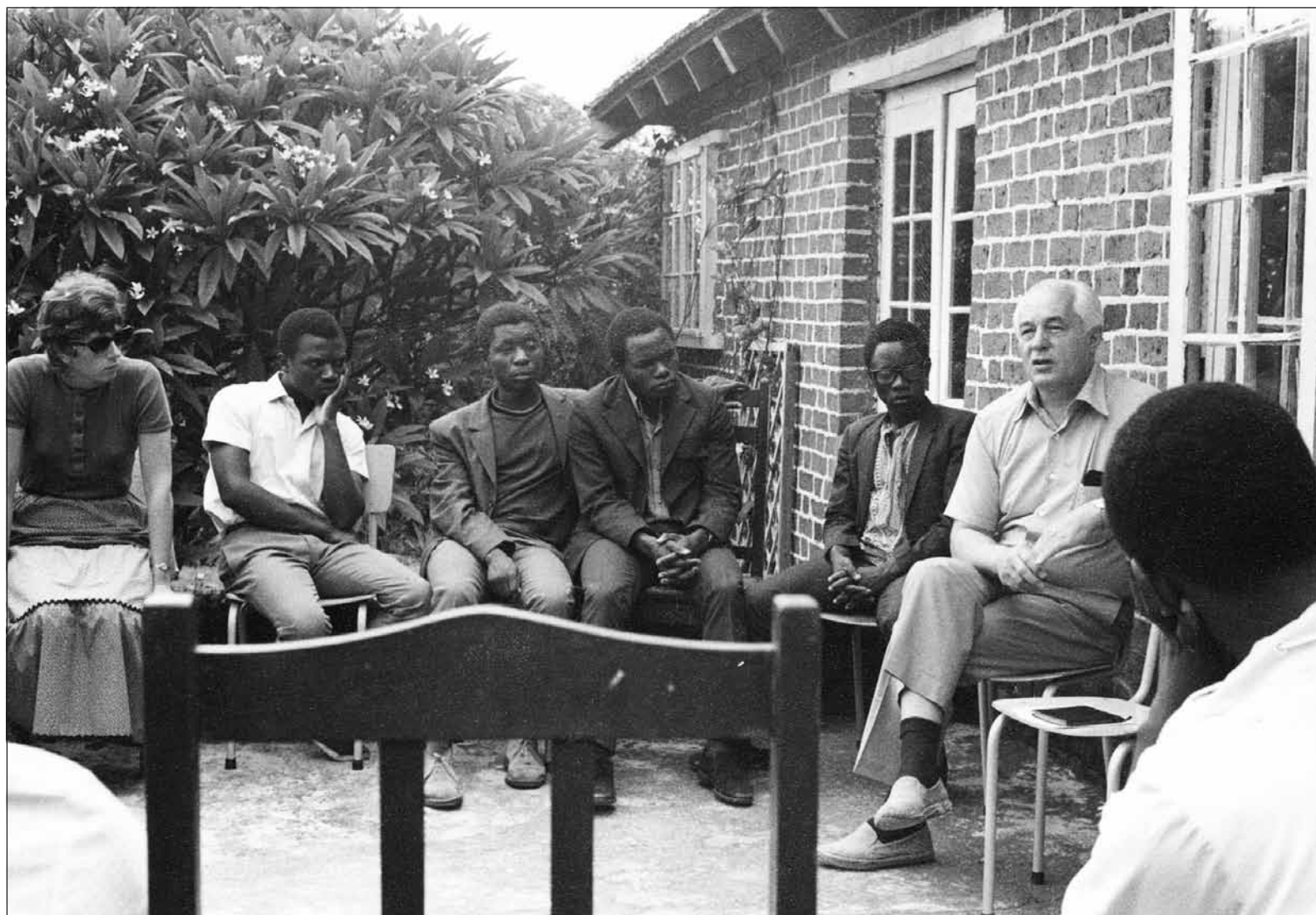
The Dr. E. H. Johnson Memorial Award was established in 1982 to recognize work on “the cutting edge of mission.” For the past 35 years, this award has been presented to an individual or an organization that has exhibited in their work the cutting edge of mission.

Many people live in ways that are faithful to what God is calling them to do. The “cutting edge of mission” award seeks to lift up people and organizations that think and act outside the box. These are the prophetic voices that call for justice and action. These women and men have a vision and passion for what is possible when others see only impossibility. In some cases, they are lone voices, speaking at great personal risk and sacrifice.

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

Emerging from the colonial era of missions, he recognized the need for international partners to have responsibility and authority for their own programs. With the backing of the Presbyterian Church, he led peace initiatives and relief aid in Biafra during the Nigerian Civil War. There are many accounts of his work in Manchuria, and his leadership is known for renewing ties with the Chinese Church under Communist rule. In the 1950s, Ted Johnson developed an interest in theological education, believing strongly that mission should be an integral part of the curriculum. This was not well received and his passionate persistence was required. In 2017, it is inconceivable that mission would be excluded from today’s curricula.

Some E. H. Johnson Award recipients are now famous names, such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1993), whose voice lifted up the scandal of apartheid in South Africa. In 1986, the Rev. Dr. C. M. Kao of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan (PCT) was the award recipient. Dr. Kao was PCT General Secretary and in 1980, along with nine others, was imprisoned by the Taiwanese government for advocating for the human rights of the Taiwanese people. In 1997, the Rev. John Fife of the Presbyterian



Dr. E. H. Johnson visited Malawi in February 1972 following visits to India, Bangladesh and Kenya. He is pictured here with students from the Polytechnic Institute, which trains people for degrees as engineers and technicians but also provides non-degree training for industrial apprentices. He shared with the students many insights into developing the political, social and religious consciousness of developing countries

Church U.S.A. received the award for his work in the Sanctuary Movement, sheltering Central American refugees. Two decades later, he remains active in refugee/migration issues and his 1997 address remains relevant today. In 2006, Ms. Karuna Roy of the Church of North India, received the award for her work in HIV/AIDS in India. Battling ignorance and prejudice, she understood her education work as God’s call, serving people who were living with the disease. In 2011, Boarding Homes Ministries, initiated by the Rev. Rodger Hunter received the award for its ministry with marginalized people in Canada.

The 2017 award marks a shift in the thinking of the E. H. Johnson Award Committee. To date, all the recipients were members of diverse Christian backgrounds and faith. The award honoured people who had links to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The recipients might have been on the margins of their churches, not always understood by their co-religionists.

In 2017, Dr. Cindy Blackstock received the award on behalf of the

First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada, where she is the Executive Director. In January 2016, at great personal cost, Dr. Blackstock, along with the Assembly of First Nations, won a landmark victory on behalf of Indigenous children. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled that successive Canadian governments have racially discriminated against First Nations children by providing less funding for child welfare services on reserves than is provided for other children living in Canada. The Canadian government has yet to follow the Tribunal’s direction to “cease the discriminatory practice and take measures to redress and prevent it.” In her powerful address to the General Assembly, Dr. Blackstock issued a challenge to all of us present to “make a difference,” to tell our federal MP that this matters to us, so that our children don’t have to apologize for our silence and inaction.

She spoke of one of her heroes, Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, a Presbyterian elder in Ottawa. Dr. Bryce was a whistleblower who raised the alarm

about the preventable deaths of children in residential schools in 1907. His survey of the health conditions of children in the schools found a startling death rate of close to 50% when he tracked the children for three years. An expert in public health, Bryce called on the federal government to provide equitable funding for tuberculosis treatment for First Nations and implement practical measures like improving ventilation in the schools. The cost of Bryce’s reforms was \$10,000 to \$15,000—a paltry sum when even then, federal budgets exceeded \$100 million per year. The government refused to pay. Bryce acted and his report appeared on the front page of the “Evening Citizen” in 1907. He hoped citizens would react with outrage and demand the government act. A few of them did but most people remained silent, while thousands of children died needlessly.

In offering the award to Dr. Blackstock, Annemarie Klassen, convener of the E. H. Johnson Committee stated that we are mindful of the church’s complicity in the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and par-

ticularly in the legacy of residential schools. The Presbyterian Church’s 1994 Confession to God and Indigenous peoples says, in part, “With God’s guidance our Church will seek opportunities to walk with Aboriginal peoples to find healing and wholeness. The presentation of this Award affirms the church’s desire to honour this commitment.”

One of the treasures of the church is this award for the Cutting Edge of Mission. It provides us with a window into the challenges faced by people around the world, and the few who respond with courage and creativity. The award includes a \$7,000 gift as an encouragement.

In 2018, we look forward to welcoming Dr. George Sabra, President of the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon. Dr. Sabra will speak on the rise and acceptance of extremism, both political and religious, as one of the more urgent matters before the church today.

For more information about Award recipients or to donate, go to presbyterian.ca/ehjohnson

MISSION

Thanking God for the Ngudradrekai Bible



By the Rev. Paul McLean,
International Mission Staff

Maelaanenge ki Twaumase! Thanks be to God!

Words repeated during the joyful three-hour thanksgiving service for the publication of the Ngudradrekai Bible on July 11 at Hau-tsa Presbyterian Church in the mountain foothills of southern Taiwan. The indigenous Ngudradrekai people now have the complete Bible in their own language.

When Peter and Debbie Bush, my wife Mary Beth and I arrived at the church, the Moderator and General Secretary of the Ngudradrekai Presbytery presented us each with a floral crown and a copy of the new Bible. Its black cover is encircled with a Ngudradrekai totem like woven cloth in traditional yellow, green and red signifying the land, the environment and human life. Diamond shapes recall the hundred pacer snake—a friend in Ngudradrekai culture with Christ-like symbolism in view of John 3:14–16.

One woman opened her new Bible and exclaimed, “I’ve waited 60 years for this Bible. Now I can die in peace!” One man said this Bible will preserve their language. A pastor commented this Bible will be a foundation stone for building a contextual Ngudradrekai Christian theology. A young person observed that the Ngudradrekai text is printed beside *Today’s Chinese Version*. This will help younger readers schooled in Mandarin-Chinese understand the Ngudradrekai text better or learn to



“Sabau!” Welcome to the thanksgiving service for the new Ngudradrekai Bible! PHOTO CREDIT: NGUDRADREKAI PRESBYTERY

read their ancestral language for the first time. A smiling translator said, “We’ve come a long way with God’s help over 30 years from handwritten draft translations to this beautifully printed Bible.”

Around 300 people attended the service, including four of us from the PCC and 40 from Young-Nak PC in Seoul, Korea. The Presbytery Young People led us in singing, “In Jesus we are all one family” using Ngudradrekai, Korean, Mandarin and English, what Peter Bush called a foretaste of heaven. The Presbytery Seniors University choir sang a song

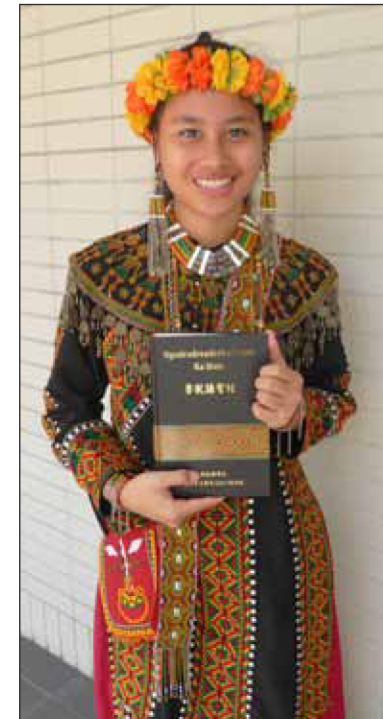
they composed, naming all 66 books of the Bible in Ngudradrekai.

The Rev. Lee (senior pastor at Young-Nak PC) preached on “Scripture Alone” and pointed out this Bible translated into the people’s own language is another fruit of the Reformation from 500 years ago.

In his tribute, Peter Bush noted the partnerships created in producing this Bible, including support from PCC congregations over the past five years. Peter quoted an elder from the Dakota people who wrote the PCC’s Board of Mission many years ago: “When we heard the message of

the Gospel in our own language, we knew it was from God.” Peter added, “May the same be true for you, that reading the Bible in your own language you will know it to be the Word of God for you.”

I shared thanksgiving for the years I served with the team as Translation Adviser. Through prayer, study, good discussions and mutual learning, we depended on God and did our best to translate God’s Word faithfully into Ngudradrekai. We pray people will use their Bibles to teach children and grandchildren, to preserve and promote their beautiful indigenous lan-



A young reader with her new Bible

guage and culture, so all may experience the joy of building their houses on the solid Rock.

At the end of the service, the Reverend Tanubake, Chair of the translation team, reported that he and the team will keep working with local churches, village schools and community centres to hold Bible reading events. Then he proclaimed in the strong voice of a much loved pastor and chief, “Translating is done, reading begins!”

For a longer report and more photos, visit Paul’s blog at presbyterian.ca/taiwan-bible

CANADA YOUTH

Stirred Not Shaken... Activated Faith

By Jo Morris,
Canada Youth Coordinator

2 Timothy 1:3–7

Every second summer, hundreds of youth, young adults and youth leaders join together from across our denomination, and with guests from around the world to celebrate their vibrant faith. CY2018 will continue that exciting tradition!

CY2018 will offer the three sensational tracks that it has become known for:

1. Youth Track—programming designed for high-school students (graduated Grade 9), celebrating their unique place as youth in our church and providing them with a landmark event in their

faith journey.

2. Discipleship Track—an opportunity for young adults (ages 19 – 25) to be themselves, discern their gifts and be empowered to be effective servants and leaders.
3. Youth Ministry Training Track—youth leaders (ages 18+)—practical, comprehensive youth ministry training with superb experts in the field.

Plus, a brand-new track is launching at CY2018, specially designed for congregational leadership:

- In keeping with the theme Stirred not Shaken, this new track will offer workshops and keynote presentations from outstanding leadership on the theme of Resiliency

- Topics will include: strategic planning and visioning, innovative worship design, resource management (all kinds of resources), engaging millennials, and the practice of hospitality.
- Two half days plus one full day (Thursday afternoon through Saturday morning).

Please consider how you and your congregation might be helpful:

- Be an advocate for youth, youth adults and leaders to attend—this is especially important for congregations that do not have a “regularized” youth ministry program. Being the “only one” from a congregation can be frightening or overwhelming—your ongoing encouragement

and support will make a huge impact.

- Offer financial resources in the form of scholarships, travel assistance or operating fund grants.
- Identify gifted leadership within your region—there are a variety of volunteer roles that are crucial to the event (advisors, health care providers, workshop and small-group leaders, etc.).
- Become a CY champion—encourage those who have attended CY to share their story, encourage your congregation to add an annual budget-line item to support CY, speak to parents about the power and vibrancy of CY, highlighting its excellent programming and attention to safety and supervision.

- Offer regular prayer:
 - for the CY2018 Planning Team as they faithfully work to design an event that will encourage and empower
 - for the leadership of the event who will be inspired to share their time and talent
 - for the congregations who will send participants, supporting those participants before, during and after the event
 - for the CY2018 participants who will attend—that they might experience a faithful landmark in their journey of discipleship.

Canada Youth 2018 takes places at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., from July 2 to July 7, 2018



HISTORY

Roman Catholic/Presbyterian Relations in Canada Today



Bishop Don Bolan, Archbishop of Regina, and member of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity

By the Rev. Stephen Kendall, Principal Clerk, General Assembly

This is the second in a series of articles sponsored by the Committee on Church Doctrine to reflect on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in Germany.

Many years ago, just before being appointed Principal Clerk by the General Assembly, I was yearning for some time away for reflection. I chose an eight-day silent retreat at Loyola House in Guelph, Ont., a centre run by Roman Catholic Jesuits. They could not have been more welcoming and open to a Presbyterian minister! Being in a Catholic retreat setting was an important part of my Reformed spiritual nurturing.

As we commemorate 500 years since the beginning of the Reformation based in Germany, there is much to be thankful for in the relations between the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches in Canada.

In 1997, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) joined the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), after ten years of “trying out” the relationship. In his letter to the president of the CCC (who happened to be Alexandra Johnston, an elder at Rosedale Presbyterian Church and writer of the previous article in this series), Archbishop Spence prayed that “the Spirit will lead us all together in ever greater witness to that unity for which Christ prays, so that the world may believe.” The ecumenical commitment of the CCCC in Canada has been a strengthening influence for the CCC ever since. Each year I have been invited to represent The Presbyterian Church in Canada at the CCCC and I, or a designate, have always been welcomed and included in significant conversations. This past year, I was part of a panel (photo, seated on the stage) along with Bishop Susan Johnston (at the podium) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, on the ecumenical commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

If you search for “Presbyterian” on the CCCC website you will find 41 news articles that include references to our church. This is an example of the thoughtful connection between our churches.

Like members of any family, relations between our churches are not always smooth. But the personal

connections we enjoy help us to deal with any differences head-on, with respect and friendship. In 2000, the Catholic Church published *Domini- nus Iesus*. It described Protestant

A momentous step in undoing one of the most significant points of division that remained long after the Reformation

churches as “ecclesial communities” rather than churches in the fullest sense (even though Christ has “not refrained from using them as a means of salvation”).

Presbyterian eyebrows were raised. Our Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee wrote to the CCCC with our concerns and the CCCC responded with a significant meeting of ecumenical representatives with several Canadian bishops to discuss the document, and assured us of their ongoing ecumenical respect for our churches. In fact, once differences are set aside, *Domini- nus Iesus* is very helpful as a road map for evangelism and an affirmation of the centrality of Christ in the mission of the church today.

In 1999, the CCC celebrated the publication of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) by the Catholic Church’s Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Lutheran World Federation. This document represented a momentous step in undoing one of the most significant points of division that remained long after the Reformation. It means that there is essential agreement between previously divided churches on how we understand coming into a saving relationship with God. This summer in Wittenberg, Germany, the World Communion of Reformed Churches “associated” with the document, adding the theological affirmation of

80 million Reformed Christians to the agreement (see article p. 21). We will celebrate that deepening theological connection this fall here in Canada at the next CCC governing board meeting. The Rev. Amanda Currie, convener of our Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee, will be able to lead that celebration. Amanda happens to be married to Nicholas Jesson, a Roman Catholic scholar who has been working with the CCC and is the Ecumenical Officer for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. Another testament to happy Roman Catholic–Presbyterian relations in Canada!

The relations are more than theological. This summer, at the request of the CCCC, Presbyterian World Service & Development joined an interfaith appeal to end famines in South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and Yemen. Shared resources produced by the CCCC undergird this important appeal.

Locally, many Presbyterians will have attended Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) services in January of each year, perhaps in Roman Catholic Churches. These services are jointly prepared by the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, and edited for distribution in Canada by the Canadian Council of Churches weekofprayer.ca. These are often high points to getting to know each other ecumenically, for as we worship together, we experience our unity in Christ in new ways.

We have long ago discovered that there is far more that unites us as Christians than divides us as Roman Catholics and Protestants. If you look for Roman Catholic friends anywhere in Canada, you will be sure to find many!



The Rev. Stephen Kendall (centre, seated) and Bishop Susan Johnston (podium) at the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

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, Principal,
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)

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INTERVIEW

Meet the Rev. Dr. Dorcas Gordon

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

After eighteen years as the first female head of a Canadian Presbyterian seminary, the Rev. Dr. Dorcas Gordon has concluded her ministry at Knox as one of the longest serving principals of the College. She also served as the first Canadian female president of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (2012–14) and the fifth Canadian since its beginnings in 1918. During her sabbatical in the year ahead, Dorcas will lecture at seminaries in, among other places, Taiwan and Cuba.

Dorcas and I sat down to talk about ministry, theological education, leadership, and some of the issues before the church as part of a series of conversations with leaders in the church that will appear in future editions.

Dorcas' restless curiosity and energy is immediately evident as she engages in a wide range of topics. In conversation, with a rare depth of knowledge and candour, she adeptly weaves together biblical interpretation, the practice of preaching, international politics, feminism, pastoral concerns, human rights and sexuality, commenting along the way on the cultural assumptions that lie beyond the scriptures and contemporary interpretations, the organization and content of various confessions of faith, denominational differences, principles of leadership and personal struggles.

Acknowledging the challenges of leadership, Dorcas points to the value of collecting and invoking formative

stories that function almost as mantras which encourage and steady leaders in the difficult times or moments when leaders encounter new or perplexing circumstances. Reflecting on "Visionary Leadership" (one of the three core features of the denomination's strategic plan), Dorcas proposes that leaders should be bifocal: "One eye has to be on the immediate tasks and responsibilities while the other eye focuses on the distant horizon and is open to the mystery that belongs to God." It is the need to develop a sixth sense about how to read and act in a complex context.

Mystery is a word that Dorcas returns to often; she speaks of that moment of mystery when a student gains insight in the classroom, that mystery when a sermon crystalizes and is experienced as a word from God, or that instant when an idea takes shape. Dorcas names an appreciation of mystery as an important gift for leadership and the practice of ministry in the church today. Other gifts include a sense of humour, not taking oneself too seriously, curiosity of mind, insight into self and context, a strong work ethic and an ability to reflect on one's life experience as well as the realities of the world in which the church lives out its mission.

Dorcas received a Masters of Theological Studies in pastoral counselling and a Doctor of Theology in New Testament studies. But she chose history and political science as majors while studying for a Bachelor of Arts, one discipline primarily interpreting what has happened and the other focusing on what is happening. "Understanding what



happened in the past and understanding what is happening now are key," she says. And she has been putting the past in conversation with the present ever since. She does it as a student and teacher of the Bible in order to understand what the scriptures have to say to our current complex situations, and she does it when she engages in theological reflection and teaching.

Dorcas values the experiences she has had visiting and working with seminaries in other parts of the world and interacting with the global church. These opportunities have helped her gain insight into how others address similar circumstances we are facing in the PCC. Amid the church's anxiety about decline, Dorcas points to the healthy benefits that would come from looking beyond our immediate concerns and situations to encounter and understand what others are doing. "Dialogue yields insight," she says.

Understanding one's own assumptions and those of one's immediate context have been one of the central features of Dorcas' understanding of

education. "Education is not about changing minds but about exposing students to a larger picture, helping them get beyond their comfort zone to grapple with ideas, the complexity of the Bible and the context that formed it and our times and assumptions."

Dorcas becomes animated as she talks about the importance of congregations as gatherings within a larger community as ways the church could find new life. "It's important to remember that the congregation exists for the good of the community, those beyond the four walls of the church as well as within them." Quoting Jeremiah 29, Dorcas says, "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." It is a reminder that congregations do not exist solely for their own sake but that an important part of the health of congregations and the renewal of the church will be in seeking and supporting the renewal of the world in which the church exists and which God loves.

"Preaching the word is central; it is one of the most important things we do. The Bible is the one thing we can contribute to the world that has the potential to give us and it a new and fresh perspective." Dorcas believes that the goal of preaching is to set up a conversation between the Bible and the listeners' own experience and context into which the Holy Spirit speaks, providing the possibility of fresh ways of thinking and living out the gospel. "There is an important role for the preacher to challenge listeners with the fresh-

ness of the biblical message."

As for the future of Knox, Dorcas expresses great optimism. The leadership of a new principal and the appointment of two dynamic and well experienced faculty members will open new opportunities for theological education and inspire future ministers and scholars to move in exciting directions in reflecting theologically on today's world and in providing opportunity for learning in an expanded variety of contexts. More personally, Dorcas is looking forward to a year of renewed reading and research in her beloved field of New Testament studies, something she can now do not having the responsibilities of the principal's office. Among other things, she is thinking about how the church can untangle its colonial understanding, interpretations and practices. As well, the region and forces at work in Israel/Palestine are passions she shares with her husband, the Rev. Noel Gordon, who first spent over a year in Israel/Palestine in the 1960s. Together they will be spending a month doing research at a Christian institution situated between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, not far from the Separation Wall.

This next stage of her ministry, somewhat outside the centre of the institutional church, returns Dorcas to a place that feels familiar; it was from here that she carried out much of her earlier ministry. From this vantage point, where church and society meet and significant dialogue is possible, here Dorcas is looking forward to finding exciting opportunities and new insight for ministry.



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In partnership with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, PWS&D provided emergency food packages for over 2,000 families affected by flooding in Pakistan in 2015. PHOTO CREDIT: CWSA

PWS&D Celebrates 25th Anniversary With Canadian Foodgrains Bank

By Shaylyn McMabon,
Communications Assistant,
Canadian Foodgrains Bank

In 1992, when Rick Fee returned to Canada after living in Nigeria for 17 years, he was given an important task.

"I was told, 'You're now the director of Presbyterian World Service & Development... And oh, by the way, we're members of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank now,'" he remembers.

In Nigeria, Fee worked as minister for a rural parish and was the Africa liaison for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A few months before he returned home, PWS&D partnered with the Foodgrains Bank.

"I said, 'Oh, that's lovely. Whatever that is,'" says Fee, who wasn't familiar with the organization at the time.

A few months after he returned to Canada, in early 1993, Fee was not only on his way to Somalia to learn more about the Foodgrains Bank—he was a member of its board.

At the time, an intense civil war threatened the lives of tens of thousands of Somalis; the visit was a way to learn more about Soma-

lia's food security situation. After witnessing the food needs in that country, Fee saw the importance of the Foodgrains Bank's work.

His next task was to educate members of the Presbyterian Church in Canada about the Foodgrains Bank and encourage them to support PWS&D's efforts to end global hunger.

"I made Canadian Foodgrains Bank one of my major foci," he says, referring to how the trip impacted his thinking. "Every chance I got, I spoke [about] and highlighted the Foodgrains Bank."

For Fee, the partnership with the Foodgrains Bank was a godsend for Canadian Presbyterians.

"In the news were all these major famines and major wars," says Fee. "And it was constantly, 'What can we do? What can we do?'"

"This was finally an answer," he continues. "This is what we can do, and this is where we can contribute."

In 1993, a year after joining the Foodgrains Bank, Presbyterians raised \$40,000 for PWS&D's account with the Foodgrains Bank. The next year, it more than tripled that amount to \$148,000.

Fee says he wasn't surprised at

how Canadian Presbyterians took to supporting the Foodgrains Bank through PWS&D. "People wanted to do something, and this was a practical way to do that," he says.

CornShare — bringing urban and rural Presbyterians together

In the beginning, the most common way Presbyterians supported PWS&D through CFGB was through growing projects, where farmers come together to grow a crop, sell it and donate the proceeds.

"People kept saying, 'How can we help?' and I kept saying, 'A growing project,'" says Fee. "But many of these people weren't on farms. They were in the cities."

As a result, the CornShare model was born. Urban Presbyterian churches were paired with rural congregations that had access to land and were able to organize a growing project. The urban congregations would help cover the cost of inputs like insurance, seeds, fertilizer and fuel.

At harvest time, members of the urban congregations would often travel to meet their rural partners. Together, they would celebrate the

Presbyterian World Service & Development



PHOTO CREDIT: CFGB CORNSHARE



The food distributions of maize, millet, beans and oil helped to alleviate hunger and suffering in Sahel in West Africa after a severe drought in PHOTO CREDIT: CFGB

harvest before selling the crop and donating the proceeds.

"Even here in Toronto we would get a bus and drive two or three hours west of here and visit the farmers," says Fee. "It was a great twinning back and forth."

The name—CornShare—originated because corn was the most common crop harvested by the early supporters. Although the projects started with corn, Fee says each project eventually began planting whatever made sense for them, including soybeans and barley.

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Eckville, Alberta, started one of these projects.

"We've been supporting Canadian Foodgrains Bank for 25 years," says Sandra Franklin-Law, the minister of St. Paul's Presbyterian. "Ever since it partnered with PWS&D."

In 1997, Franklin-Law went on a study tour with the Foodgrains Bank to Ethiopia, Tanzania and Kenya. She says that trip was a life-changing experience, and for that reason, she's made sure that St. Paul's Presbyterian continues to support PWS&D and CFGB.

For the congregation of fewer

than 100 people, that support initially took the form of a grain drive.

Each year, members of the church would bring coffee and doughnuts to the local grain elevator during harvest and collect donations from farmers who shared part of their proceeds of that year's harvest.

After 12 years of the grain drive, a local couple in Eckville donated 30 acres of land for the church to start a growing project. Thanks to donations by more local landowners and support from the Town of Eckville, the growing project has now expanded to 130 acres.

Staying true to Franklin-Law's vow of continued support, St. Paul's covers the cost of seeds for the growing project each year.

For Franklin-Law, having a church and community that's so committed to helping hungry people overseas is a way to see God's commandment of loving one's neighbour in action.

"When you're out in the field working with the farmers, and you hear them talking about how important it is to have a good crop so that the Foodgrains Bank can

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From the Director's Desk



By Guy Smagghe, Director of Presbyterian World Service & Development

In August 2017, I will mark 20 years of service with Presbyterian World Service & Development—twenty years of witnessing the transformational change of people rising out of poverty and disaster. Marking this anniversary has caused me to reflect on PWS&D's disaster responses over the years.

When I first started with PWS&D, food shipments worth over \$5 million a year were being sent to North Korea in partnership with Canadian Foodgrains Bank in response to enormous hunger needs. This crucial work continued for 10 years. It is important for us to always have faith that assistance will reach the intended beneficiaries, so while the needs of the poor in North Korea remain great, PWS&D is no longer able to respond there due to restric-

tions imposed by the North Korean government.

In late October 1998, I witnessed the devastation of Hurricane Mitch on communities in Central America. I remember working with partners to rebuild whole communities in Nicaragua and relocate families who lost their home along the shores of Lake Managua. We also reached out to indigenous Mayan communities on the Atlantic coast of Guatemala to provide seeds and tools so that agricultural production could be re-established. I witnessed a village association form as a result of the assistance provided—so that they could decide on the fair allocation and distribution of limited resources available.

Through the years, many other disasters took place, including the Indian Ocean tsunami on December 26, 2004. After seeing the first images on television, I immediately connected with our partners in south India.

The tsunami prompted four Canadian church denominations to collaborate on rehabilitation and reconstruction projects in India worth \$6 million of government matching funds; this was the largest Canadian government-funded tsunami project in India. I worked closely with our local partner and travelled to India every six months for three years to monitor progress.

Other disasters and government-matching fund programs prompted more church denominations to join

us. We eventually formed "Canadian Churches in Action" to jointly seek government funding to respond to disasters. We knew we were stronger together.

PWS&D also sits with 14 other denominations at Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The Foodgrains Bank is a key part of PWS&D's story over the last 25 years. With government-matching funds and resource sharing among members, we are able to maximize our reach and the value of the funds entrusted to us. Behind that story is the faithful and tireless work of farmers across Canada involved in growing projects, generating resources that enable much of our work with the Foodgrains Bank.

At this time, we are working with partners at CFGB to respond to famine situations in South Sudan and Somalia. With the latest appeal from the Canadian government, Presbyterians raised \$120,000 that will be matched by the government in its Famine Relief Fund and at Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Disasters are overwhelming for those who are directly affected and we play a small but often life-saving role in sharing resources to reach out and respond.

PWS&D continues to support those who are affected by the crisis in Syria. The humanitarian needs inside Syria and in its surrounding countries remain at an unprecedented level. Working with the ACT Alliance and Canadian Foodgrains Bank, PWS&D is able



Beneficiaries enduring famine in South Sudan sort through emergency food packages that were provided in partnership with CFGB. PHOTO CREDIT: MATTHEW SAWATZKY



Zahra Al Hussein feeds her children inside her tent in a settlement of Syrian refugees in northern Lebanon. PHOTO CREDIT: PAUL JEFFREY

to meet the needs of thousands of refugees in Jordan and Lebanon, as well as those of displaced populations within Syria. It is comforting to know that churches are being used as food distribution centres in that context.

Throughout my time at PWS&D, I have been constantly amazed at the generosity Presbyterians show in response to appeals in times of disaster. Our website WeRespond.ca bears its name well. As we look

forward, let us continue to pray for those affected by conflict and disaster, and in the comfort of our homes always find ways to share a little more with those who need a hand up at a difficult time. Thank you for making this work possible.

Guy Smagghe is the director of Presbyterian World Service & Development. Check back in every issue for news from the Director's Desk.

Community sees the value of the mission work

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get money, you can see that that's when faith is alive," she says.

Today, around 10 families continue to support the growing project in Eckville. For Ron Hopper, the growing project leader, being able to support the effort to end global hunger is encouraging.

"It gives the community a real sense of inspiration," says Hopper. "And pride that we can do it year after year."

In 2006, Hopper went to Ethiopia and Kenya on a food study tour to see first-hand how Foodgrains Bank-supported projects are making a difference for those who are hungry overseas.

"Once you actually walk in the villages and you break bread with

them and go to church services with some of the recipients, you see first-hand the impact it has on their lives," says Hopper.

Hopper also remembers meeting officials who worked for the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization on the tour.

"They were just amazed that farmers in little prairie towns in Canada would band together to support the Foodgrains Bank like they did," says Hopper.

"I think they wondered, 'Okay, so why would a farmer from Eckville, Alberta, care about what happens in Ethiopia?'" he adds. "It was a real eye opener for them that a lot of farmers from across the entire country supported

these projects so much."

Since its inception, the St. Paul's Presbyterian Church Growing Project has raised nearly \$240,000 for PWS&D's work through CFGB. When matched by Global Affairs Canada, that would be over a million dollars worth of aid for hungry people.

"Our community just really sees the value of the mission work and the food going to help people out in countries where they need it," says Hopper. "They're just really invested in helping somebody else out."

The commitment St. Paul's shows for ending hunger is mirrored in Presbyterian congregations across Canada. Over the

past 25 years, Canadian Presbyterians have donated over \$4 million to help alleviate suffering overseas through PWS&D, allocating over \$270,000 in 2016–17 alone.

For Guy Smagghe, director of PWS&D, the generosity of Presbyterians across Canada, coupled with the hunger-focused nature of the Foodgrains Bank, allows for a more just world.

"Witnessing the passionate support PWS&D supporters have for ending global hunger is inspiring," says Smagghe. "Together, PWS&D, Canadian Presbyterians and the Foodgrains Bank are helping alleviate suffering for millions of people."

Jim Cornelius, the execu-

tive director of the Foodgrains Bank, says he's grateful for the fruitful partnership between the Foodgrains Bank and PWS&D.

"We deeply value our partnership with PWS&D and look forward to many more years of working toward a world without hunger together," says Cornelius.

And for Rick Fee, looking back on the 25 years of partnership between PWS&D and CFGB, he couldn't have imagined a more rewarding outcome.

"I think it's had an impact on many people's lives, and it's very gratifying to see that Canadian Presbyterians are still responding," says Fee. "This has become a part of our DNA now."



The Climate Fund: Helping Farmers in Guatemala Adapt to Climate Change and Rise Above Hunger

By Anna Muir,
Communications Assistant

PWS&D is a member of Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a partnership of 15 churches and church agencies working together to end global hunger. Donations to this project are matched on a 3:1 basis, meaning every \$1 donated becomes \$4 of programming.

On his farm in Guatemala, Rubén Pérez works hard cultivating maize, peaches and apples to make ends meet and provide food for his family.

In the past, if a particularly dry summer threatened his crops, Rubén had no way to adapt. “I would just dedicate myself to planting and think it is God’s will if this produces or not,” he explains.

A changing climate that triggers unpredictable weather patterns and degrades soil presents a challenge for farmers like Rubén. When they can’t grow enough food to eat or sell, vulnerable families sink deeper into hunger and poverty.

Throughout the developing world, people are feeling the effects of climate change in their stomachs.

As Canadians, we recognize our own contributions to climate change and its devastating global consequences. The Climate Fund, established by Canadian Foodgrains Bank, offers a chance to respond to those impacted, by equipping small holder farmers with the means to improve their ability to feed themselves and their families.

Each year, the Foodgrains Bank selects one project among its 15 members to receive money from the Climate Fund. This year, donations to the Climate Fund will support PWS&D’s agro-ecology and food security project in Guatemala—led by the Maya-Mam Association for Research and Development (AMMID).

Rubén is grateful to be participating in this project that has helped him improve his family’s food security through better understanding of how to farm in a changing climate.

Rubén received training in sustainable farming techniques to increase maize yields despite environmental changes. He also learned to graft fruit trees, grow herbs in greenhouses, make compost and administer medicine for his cows and pigs.

At first, Rubén was apprehensive about some of the new agricultural methods. When a project leader started cutting branches from his apple trees to demonstrate pruning, the farmer was convinced he wouldn’t have any apples left to sell.

Little trace of that unease remains—the tree bloomed better than ever, yielding the sweetest fruit Rubén has ever harvested. “This motivated me to prune the rest of my trees,” he shares.

It didn’t take long for Rubén to realize that this training would improve his life and his family’s for the long-term.

“It’s just been the first year and I am so happy. I look forward to learning more in the years to come,” he reports. “Thank you so much!”

By supporting the Climate



Rubén Pérez puts his new agricultural knowledge to practice while tending to his crops. PHOTO CREDIT: AMMID



Participants of a workshop on soil conservation. PHOTO CREDIT: AMMID

Fund, Canadians can make a difference for small-scale farmers like Rubén as they work hard to adapt to the effects of climate change and help their communities get enough to eat.

Visit WeRespond.ca/climate-fund to make a donation of any amount to the Climate Fund, or make a donation based on the amount of carbon produced by you or your family each month or year. For tools to help you



Participants learn to grow fresh, nutritious vegetables locally.

calculate your carbon footprint, visit foodgrainsbank.ca/the-climate-fund

PWS&D Raises \$120,000 for Famine Relief



Vicky Akello (43) is a single mother of eight children. Since the food distributions, Akello says her children’s health has improved and her stress reduced. PHOTO CREDIT: MATTHEW SAWATZKY



Beneficiaries in South Sudan gather their food aid received through CFGF and begin the long journey home. PHOTO CREDIT: MATTHEW SAWATZKY

Thank you for your incredible generosity!

Between March 17 and June 30, 2017, PWS&D raised \$120,000 in support of our ongoing famine response. These funds will be matched 1:1 by the federal government’s Famine Relief Fund.

PWS&D is responding through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to support those affected by famine conditions by providing monthly emergency food distributions for families in South Sudan, prioritizing malnourished children, pregnant and lactating mothers, those who were unable to harvest last season, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

If a child is found with severe acute malnutrition—meaning they are so malnourished they



are close to death—they receive life-saving treatment with nutrient-rich therapeutic foods at PWS&D-supported nutrition feeding centres. Lactating mothers are also screened for malnutrition.

While the period to receive matching funds from the federal government has ended, the need remains high. PWS&D continues to accept donations in response to the ongoing crisis. Additionally, any gifts made to PWS&D’s ongoing famine response will continue to be matched up to four times through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

Sponsorship Corner

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

*Love strangers as yourself
(Leviticus 19:33-34)*

More people on the move

The figures are in. While their images have faded from our TV screens and Facebook pages, the number of people in our world who are on the move due to persecution and conflict continued to increase last year.

On June 20—World Refugee Day—the UN High Commissioner for Refugees announced that 65.6 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide at the end of 2016. Of those, 22.5 million had crossed a border looking for safe haven. It is only when someone has crossed a border that they are considered a refugee. The number of refugees worldwide is up by 1.2 million from the year before: a new post-World War II record.

A precarious situation

Peter (not his real name) is a

teenage boy that a Presbyterian congregation was planning to sponsor. Last November, Peter was kidnapped by “people smugglers” just as his application for sponsorship was being submitted. The smugglers took him to ISIS-controlled Libya. After some time, they said they would take him to Italy by boat.

On June 1, it was a great relief to hear that Peter had arrived in Italy safely! More than 1,600 migrants died crossing the Mediterranean between January and early June 2017, down from the same period in 2016, but still a terrible toll. Peter was one of the lucky ones. We are very grateful that Peter is alive, so that his sponsorship can proceed and he can rejoin his relatives.

Time leading up to arrival is decreasing

During the push to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees in Canada, application processing times plunged, but only for those cases. The fastest time from submitting an application to picking the newcomers up at the airport was nine days in February 2016! Other cases of Syrians would take weeks or months.

Processing times for refugees in other parts of the world, however, were much longer, sometimes taking up to six years.

We are pleased to report that processing times around the world are now coming down. Most cases being sponsored are currently arriving within two years of their submission and the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship has committed to bringing this down to one year by the end of 2019. We are anxious to see this happen.

Can we do more?

One of our struggles at the refugee desk is the impossibility of accommodating Presbyterians' current interest in sponsoring refugees to Canada. Annual quotas allocated by the government restrict the number of refugees that can be sponsored to Canada; in 2017, the PCC allocation is for 77 people.

This was not a problem just a few years ago, when interest in sponsorship had waned. But in 2017, we received requests to sponsor more than twice the number of spots under our quota. People who have suffered violence in their country of asylum, or who



Fatima Al Saye, a three-year-old refugee from Aleppo, Syria, lives in Jordan. Over five million people have fled Syria since 2011, seeking safety in Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and beyond. PHOTO CREDIT: PAUL JEFFREY, ACT ALLIANCE

are among the most vulnerable, or who have lived the longest as refugees are prioritized.

In June, General Assembly adopted two recommendations regarding refugee sponsorship:

- That congregations and presbyteries consider committing themselves to an ongoing refugee sponsorship ministry... recognizing that refugee sponsorship requires patience and a sustained commitment due to complex and changing policies governing the application and approval processes.
- That congregations consider contacting their Members of

Parliament and the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, to strongly urge that quotas for refugees be increased to respond to the support being offered by qualified sponsoring groups.

The will is there among Presbyterians to assist more refugees to settle in Canada. Doing so will require an increased and ongoing commitment from the Canadian government.

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

Get Moving for Moms and Babies 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 for 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 that 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.

There's still time to move with us! Visit WeRespond.ca/rideforrefuge for more information.



Victoria Banfield and her son Thomas Hillier from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Markham, Ont., about to cycle 25 km in the Ride for Refuge in Toronto



REFLECTIONS

A Glimpse of God

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

There are so many times when we feel the presence of God, and they're written about by people with more insight than myself. But I have to admit that last week I felt God's presence in the unlikelyst of places—the waiting room of a blood testing clinic.

I may not see or hear as well as I used to, but I have learned to use time to my advantage, and that morning I had lots of time to observe those around me.

Sitting with a group of strangers, facing rather intimate medical procedures, was a little intimidating for me. We all knew what we were there for—blood work and sample tests. There were a few shared smiles, proving we were a stoic bunch... And there was so much variety among us. One man must have been well over six feet tall and built like a football player. Another, much older man with a white beard and moustache and the brightest red shirt reminded me of Santa Claus. The other fellow, who wore slacks and a short-sleeved shirt, must have been a golfer (or so



I imagined). And there was a lady at the end of the row who was close to my age. We eyed each other politely, and I gave a hint of a smile.

But it was the young lady across from me that filled my vision. She was about four months' pregnant and had a little nine-month-old baby on her knee. He was as cute as a button—all dressed in blue jeans, his eyes big as saucers and little arms flailing. The mother held him gently but firmly and you could feel her love for him reach right across the

room. She kissed him on his nearly bald head and settled him on her lap. When she picked up his little hand and kissed his tiny fingers, I thought my heart was going to leap out of my chest. Even as I type this I feel tears springing to my eyes. Such love—such tender love!

It brought to my mind something we talked about in our recent Max Lucado Bible study. Max spoke of God seeing us at our worst—first thing in the morning!—yet still loving us so deeply. I thought of this

little boy, who well could be sitting in messed diapers with burped-up bits on his T-shirt, but his mother didn't see that. All she saw was her little boy reaching up to her with a big grin.

I'm glad God sees us that way, too. With Christ's hand in mine, I can go to the Father and know that he sees not my failures of the past, present or future. Like the loving Father that he is, he sees me with a heart full of love for him and the promise that I will be his child forever and ever.

Graveside Birthday

*By Vivian Ketchum, originating
from Wauzhushk Onigum Nation of
Northern Ontario and now a member
of Place of Hope Presbyterian Church
in Winnipeg, Man.*

My late son's birthday would have been July 30. He would have been 31 years old, if he had lived. My late son's journey was filled with possibilities, his future looked bright until his life was cut short by an unknown brain tumour in 2011.

I had been advised by other grieving parents that the first year would be very difficult. The first Mother's Day, my birthday, and all the other holidays without my son that first year without him. My son's birthday was especially difficult for me, it brought back cherished memories of his birth. Memories of hearing his heart beat at nine weeks. The first time I got to hold him in my arms. Touching the soft blackness of his hair. The overwhelming sense of love for my newborn son that I couldn't hold back. Yes, the first year without my son was difficult, but so were the following years. The grieving lessens, but the ache of loss was present at certain times of the year. Like his birthday.

Before my son died, he told me that I was not to grieve too long for him and to move on with my life. That I was not to set any special memorial events for him. That was my son always looking after me even after he was gone. I did honour his request. The only thing I did so was get a

simple headstone for his grave. That was his birthday present one year. I wasn't planning on getting a headstone for him, but it made it easier for me to find his grave.

That was where I would go on his birthday. I would get a simple birthday card and his favourite lunch. Greasy chicken from his favourite place. My son didn't like flowers, so having lunch by his grave was what I would do and spend time lost in memories. I would play his favourite music with my cell phone. There I would sit with my back against his gravestone. Share what was happening in our family.

It was not easy getting to the cemetery to where my son was resting. I don't have a vehicle, so I would take the bus. The bus would only take me so far, then it would be a 30-minute walk to the cemetery. My health lately hasn't been the greatest, so it made walking even more challenging. Still I am determined to visit my son's resting place on his birthday.

Celebrating my son's birthday is done a bit differently. No birthday parties of the past with family and friends. No colourful cake with candles or presents. It was a time for me to reflect on my most cherished moments of my son...in private. At a place where we parted ways. I sit by his headstone. To cry. To share. To grieve openly. I even allow myself to get angry. Oddly enough I am strengthened by my actions and able to move on. Maybe that is my birthday present to my son.

Marked by Involuntary Sin

*By Joshua Weresch, member of
Central Presbyterian Church in
Hamilton, Ont., Haudenosaunee and
Anishinaabeg Nations' land*

It doesn't take very long for company policies to get in the way of Jesus' footprints. I spend 7.5 hours each week at a local long-term care home as the chaplain and it was there that I heard the policy try to muffle the pain. I'd not been there very long, from the first of March until now, so I am always getting the lay of the land. The lay included bedbugs and I was implicitly told not to visit those residents whose rooms had bedbugs as there was a chance they'd be brought back to the recreation therapists' office—which I shared—if not one's home. Moral distress ensued; oil of lavender was liberally applied to my colleagues; and the question of pastoral care resounded. The question was simple: Do I visit those residents who are isolated to their floors by the presence of bedbugs, or not? They could not eat in the common dining room with everyone else; regardless

of the friendships they had forged, they were isolated, without choice. *How long, O Lord, will you hide your face? Will you cast us off forever?*

Bedbugs and their presence, or even potential presence, have become, I am convinced, the modern-day mark of the various skin diseases that so concerned the Hebrew Scriptures' editors. Unless people were radically restored to full community, they banded together to form their own colonies and communities, alike in grief, collectors of small denizens. As it was, I met those residents on the edges of their days, in liminal spaces between room and hall. It seemed to suffice, but what does love look like to those who have been marked by involuntary sin?

The presence of bedbugs, the isolation of those whose rooms and things have been infested, led me toward Presbyterianism and, more, the poor. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is suffering, according to the report by Gordon Haynes in 2011, for "despairing lethargy." What needs to be asked is whether

we continue to maintain the church as an institution, as an extremely expensive building to heat and cool, or if followers of Jesus continue to find rest and peace in smaller, home-based congregations, surrounded by "lovely prayers"—perhaps written and spoken by local warm-hearted clergy—favoured hymns sung in four-part harmony, and a deeper witness of the Church of the poor, *The Benedict Option's* push for walkable churches.

Gustavo Gutiérrez reminds us, "So you say you love the poor? Then name them." The poor are those in South Korea whose lives and human rights as people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer are demolished by our Presbyterian brothers and sisters who marched against them, chanting slogans of homophobia. The poor are those here on Turtle Island, precariously employed in ministry/service-sector jobs. Whether bedbugs in a nursing home or the poor whose lives are crushed by indifferent wealth, systems must be named and then disarmed by love.

GATHERINGS



The congregation of St. Andrew's Memorial Presbyterian Church in Port Credit, Ont., celebrates Canada's 150th birthday.



Linda Charlton, a member of Dorchester Presbyterian Church, Ont., was on a boat tour to see wildlife and the surrounding islands of Woody Island, N.L., and saw an unexpected vision of communion. "We had stopped over in a rustic harbour shelter for warmth from the wind and rain; for lunch and fun with our group of hardy travellers, and new-found friends."



During the annual Memorial Service on July 16 at St. Andrew's in Lancaster, Ont., a special memorial plaque was dedicated in memory of Lucy Margaret Baker, a Presbyterian lay missionary born near Lancaster in 1836 who served in Prince Albert, Sask., for 31 years. The plaque was presented jointly by the Brockville Presbyterial of the WMS and the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry. From left, the Rev. Fred Rennie, the Rev. Marianne Emig Carr, the Rev. Dr. Cheryl Gaver, Shannon McCuaig, Janet Jones, Donna McIlveen and the Rev. Ian McMillan.



In the last issue, we had the ladies of New St. James Presbyterian Church in London, Ont., wearing their Easter bonnets. A "match" to that photo, with the Rev. Andrew Reid, are the men of New St. James Presbyterian Church, wearing their bow ties to celebrate Father's Day.



Members of Knox, Centre Road Presbyterian Church in Stratroy, Ont., gathered around their minister, the Rev. Dan Roushorne, for a group photo following a special Canada Day worship service on July 2, 2017.



The new members of Leaside Presbyterian Church, Toronto, were received on Palm Sunday. From left: Rob Jackson and Pam Salo with their son, Hunter, Jessica Lockhart, Matthew Dallard, the Rev. Nick Athanasiadis, Jonathan Van Dusen, the Rev. Angela J. Cluney, Ray White, Kathryn Whaley, Neal Armstrong, Padma Naraine, Carol Anne Armstrong, Sun Bee Lee, and Clerk of Session, Beth McKay. (Missing: Katherine Allen.)



Located just blocks from Parliament Hill, Canada Day has been a good time for St. Andrew's Ottawa to welcome visitors. This year, we welcomed over 1,500 people. It's quite wonderful to see people waiting in line to get into church. Also this year, along with an exhibit celebrating the life of Peter Bryce, we had a long-time elder (Noral Rebin) who particularly enjoys Canada Day with a flourish.



From left, are Music Director Jenn Harris, Pastor Matthew Ruttan and Youth Coordinator Julie Cunha of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Barrie, Ont., about to participate in a Pie-in-the-Face Challenge at July's Free Community BBQ for the neighbourhood. Usually the one with the most funds raised gets a pie in the face, but donations exceeded expectations this year so all three received a pie in the face, much to the delight of the 200 people who attended the event!



The Rev. Dr. Teresa Charlton and member Herman Stamp take a closer look at the recently dedicated Memorial Wall in the back garden of Knox Presbyterian Church in Vernon, B.C. A pooling of seed money, a grant from the Jack Smith Fund (Synod of B.C.) and a successful rummage sale allowed for the design of a patio area in the backyard and Memorial Wall. Future plans include raised flower beds and a vegetable garden.

GATHERINGS



On Mission Awareness Sunday, Westminster Presbyterian Church in Ottawa and the Rev. William Ball welcomed two special guests: Emmeline Untaran-Managbagnag (centre) from Community World Service Pakistan-Asia and Anna Muir (far right) from PWS&D who presented on girls education and food security. Pictured along with Mae and Anna are Barb Gibson, Don Gibson (Chairman of the Mission Team), Debbie Jones (Book Sales for Mission) and Bill Rankin (past Chairman).



The session of Knox Church in Conn, Ont., from left to right: Howard Widdis, Helen Widdis, Janice Kerr (session clerk), Bruce McNeish, Janet de Groot, Art Widdis, Penny Renken and the Rev. Mike Burns (missing: Larry Kavelmann). Art Widdis was honoured for his dedicated service of over 40 years on the Board of Managers and as a Trustee, having recently missed only his second annual meeting since 1947!



St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, in Thornbury, Ont., held an intergenerational Mother's Day service, which was led by the children and youth in the church. Afterwards, a photo was taken that was later used in a Globe & Mail ad encouraging people to check out the Presbyterian congregation in their community.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Understand Why People Give and What You Can Do



By Janice Meighan, Development Manager, Stewardship and Planned Giving

Not Your Parents' Offering Plate: A New Vision for Financial Stewardship Written by Dr. J. Clif Christopher, 120 pages, Abingdon Press, second edition, 2015

As a fundraising professional for many years, I have seen that the reasons people give have changed, and that many congregations have failed to adapt to this reality and make changes to the way they ask for and receive gifts.

A useful resource for congregations wanting to explore these changes is *Not Your Parents' Offering Plate*, by Dr. J. Clif Christopher. Dr. Christopher has his M.Div., is a Certified Fundraising Executive and is the CEO of his own successful fundraising company. Through real-world experiences, Dr. Christopher outlines how the "who, what, where and when" of generous giving has been changing for the last decade and continues to shift.

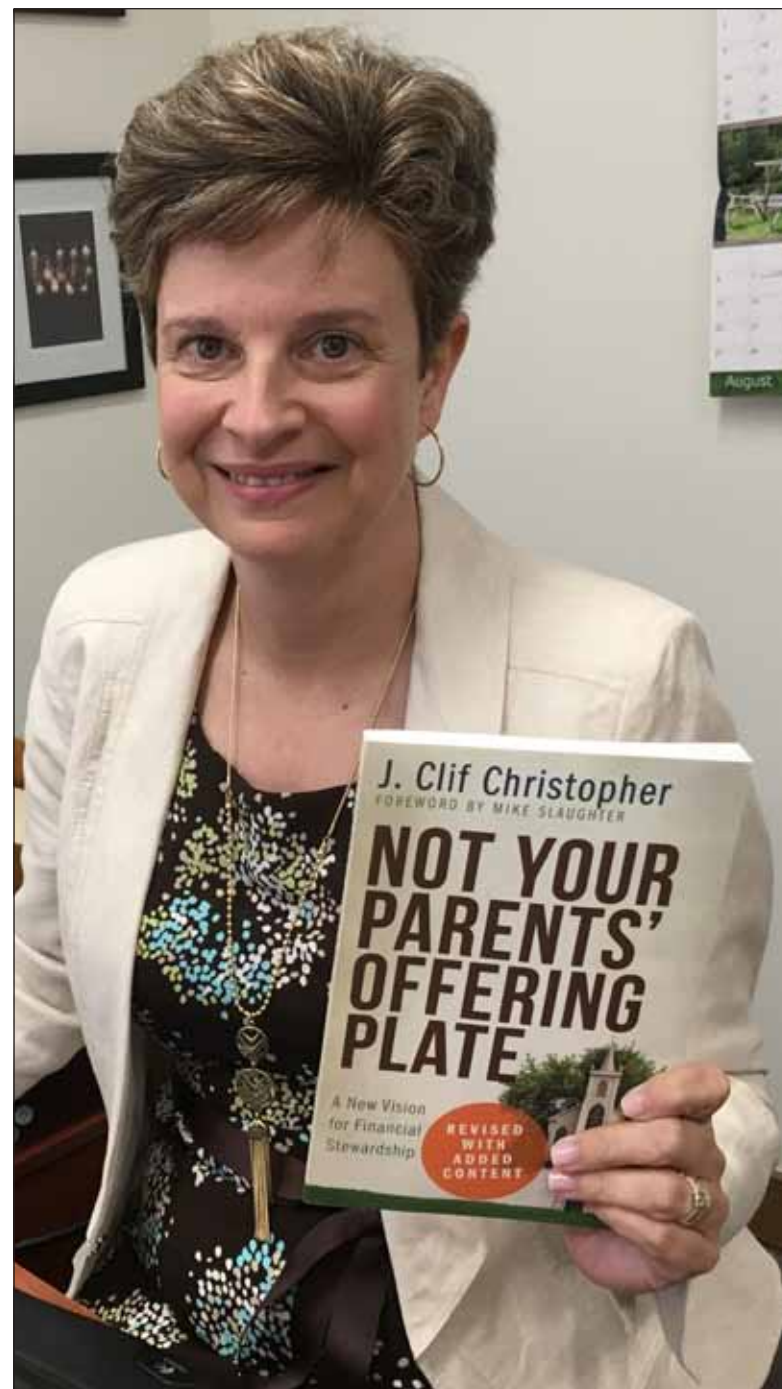
Christopher's book shares a per-

sonal story as a call to action. When scanning his local newspaper, he saw an intriguing headline: one of his friends had made a multimillion-dollar gift to the local university. A devoted church member of over 40 years, this friend had made several gifts of a few thousand dollars to his church each year. When Christopher asks his friend why he chose to split his giving as he had, he heard the following, "Clif, I do not want you to think that I do not care for the church. I do. ... I just do not want what my wife and I worked so hard for to be wasted going forward, and the president [of the university] convinced me of its [my donation's] life-changing value at the university." This gentleman wanted to see that his gift would have an impact and felt that the university's plan to shape and transform lives far exceeded that of his church.

Canadian church members would do well to read and understand the trends Christopher is putting before each reader. At the end of each chapter he provides a list of questions and at least two suggestions of what can be done to remedy a particular challenge.

In chapter two—"Reasons People Give"—Christopher outlines why a strong mission and vision are key drivers in fundraising, followed by regard for leadership and fiscal responsibility (none of these are new to fundraisers outside the church context). The questions are: How well are you telling your members/donors about what you're doing to impact and change lives? How can your leadership relate better to donors? Does your leadership even know who and what people are giving? Are people always being asked to shore up the annual budget alone? Do you inadvertently do things that communicate that the church is not fiscally sound? Do people talk openly about their giving to others, reflecting a culture of open discussion about money? (pg. 24). Once you've answered all of his questions, he provides options for going forward.

Giving and givers are changing and there is hope to be found in Christopher's book. I recommend *Not Your Parents' Offering Plate* to those who are looking to make a difference in the area of fundraising as ministry in your congregation or group.



Called to Lead

by Emily Hill, Education Program Coordinator, Canadian Ministries

Lessons in Leadership: A Weekly Reading of the Jewish Bible Written by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, 311 pages, Maggid Books, 2015

The vision of leadership that Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, former chief Rabbi of Great Britain, presents in *Lessons in Leadership: A Weekly Reading of the Jewish Bible* is one that invites all people of faith to "take responsibility for creating the conditions through which God's purposes can be fulfilled" (25–26).

Refreshingly unique in his approach, Sacks argues that what distinguishes a leader from a non-leader is not status, power, authority or office, but a willingness to become God's partner in the ongoing work of creation. Becoming a leader is, therefore, a calling for all of us.

Using the characters and stories of the first five books of the Old Testament, Sacks explores leadership as a process of learning and becoming rather than an innate ability or secret formula gifted only to select people. The stories are divided into short, but deeply rich, weekly readings about how the forefathers and foremothers of Abrahamic faith learned to become agents of God's purpose.

For many of the figures that Sacks analyzes, this process involved ups and downs as well as misunderstandings and missteps. Yet, they remained committed to pursuing God's will for their lives and communities. As Sacks so aptly describes in his analysis of Jacob: "To try, to fall, to fear, and yet to keep going: that is what it takes to be a leader" (34).

Inspiring courageous and visionary leadership, even from those who seem like unlikely leaders, is at the heart of *Lessons in Leadership*. In

his introduction, Sacks writes, "The Jewish people right now need leaders, people unafraid to face the challenges of today and build for tomorrow instead of, as so often happens, fighting the battles of yesterday" (xxviii).

The same can be said of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Now more than ever, to fulfill our calling in a changing world, we need visionary leadership from the bottom up. God has a plan for us, but, as Sacks puts it, "we have to act" (25). We are each called to assume responsibility for leading our churches and ministries to a place where God's plan can unfold and flourish.

As Christians, we become agents of God's purpose by following Christ's example. Many of Jesus' leadership qualities were rooted in the values of his Jewish faith and exemplified by the key figures of the Abrahamic tradition that Sacks writes about so beautifully. The stories of struggles of these great leaders will inspire you to pursue God's calling in your life and ministry with

increased vigour.

Lessons in Leadership offers an important reminder that leadership is a shared calling that requires us to live our lives in active mode. For Jewish and Christian people alike, this means regularly dialoguing with

the Word of God, taking responsibility for community well-being, committing to collective rather than individual success, responding to injustice, critiquing oppressive systems of power and helping those in need.



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YOUTH

Critically Thinking About Mission Trips



By Amy Zavitz an MA candidate in Global Governance at the Balsillie School of International Affairs in Waterloo, Ont. In 2015–16, Amy served as a Young Adult Intern with the Livingstonia Synod AIDS Program in northern Malawi. Amy grew up in Listowel, attending Knox Church, and now worships in Knox Church Waterloo.

I want to take a moment to reflect on overseas mission trips.

Growing up in a Christian context, I frequently heard about mission trips. These trips were intended to “do good in the world” and “help the less fortunate.” As I continued through elementary and secondary school, the ideology of these trips permeated secular society. I continued to hear about three-week trips to countries like Kenya or Ecuador to build a school, or to volunteer in an orphanage, while experiencing a new culture. As a youth interested in the world, I was sold on this ideology.

When I was in high school, I became passionate about participating in one of these trips. However, I had not yet begun to think critically about what these experiences were promoting, and was blind to the impact they would have. I had not considered asking myself: What is my true motivation for wanting to participate in a trip like this? If I am being honest with myself, who is benefiting from this trip? I was consumed by the emotional experience that I anticipated receiving, succumbing to unknowingly participating in an uninformed and often damaging Western intervention.

I did not step back to consider the impact of a partially constructed school, built by a group of exceptionally unqualified teenagers. I did not do any research into whether there was a partnership with the local community, or whether a new school would actually contribute to increased education. I never inquired into systemic challenges—such as food insecurity,

gender discrimination or poverty—that prevented children from attending school. I did not consider whether the education system had the financial means to hire qualified teachers, or whether the school had access to clean water and sanitation facilities. I never wondered how it felt for the local children to have a new group of strangers constantly cycle through their community and take their picture. Building a new school might be easy; however, improving an education system in a sustainable and ethical way is not.

When I first began to critically think about international experiences, I transitioned through feelings of discomfort, defensiveness and embarrassment about the way I viewed the world. The idea of mission or development through partnership was not a concept that I was familiar with.

Through this article, I don’t mean to imply that all international experience is negative or damaging, or that we must play a purely passive role in the world. But I’ve been discover-

There is very little we can do, or should do, without first learning

ing that there is very little we can do, or should do, without first learning. If we do not fully understand the context we are working in, if we are not working in partnership with local organizations, if we are attempting to do work that we are unqualified for, will the work achieve the desired outcome?

Engaging in global experiences can be worthwhile, but we have a responsibility to understand the im-



Amy helped to facilitate the PCC mission trip to Malawi in 2016



Amy and Mphatso, director of Livingstonia Synod AIDS Program, Malawi



Amy Zavitz in Malawi, 2016

pact of *how* we are engaging globally and ask ourselves why we are participating. We need to think about the motivations behind the work we are doing and we need to understand when we are causing harm. Investing in ourselves, whether through experience or education, allows us to think critically, enabling us to offer something of value. But more importantly, education and experience helps us to learn from those we are working in partnership with through authentic dialogue. Critical thinking allows us to begin to ask the right questions of the world’s biggest challenges and shows us that the answers need to be developed in a collaborative and respectful way. Moreover, it might tell us that we don’t have the answers at all. Working in partnership is the active, responsible and humble way we can engage with the world and be empowered to see challenges and address them in their specific context.

Many of us are privileged in that we have the opportunity to learn about and experience the world. But with privilege comes responsibility. That responsibility is to be good stewards of our resources, to simply acknowledge that we do not have all the answers, and to reflect on ourselves and our places in this world.

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NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Partnering with Prisons

By Barb Summers,
Communications Office

Prison work crews... While images of a chain gang may be the first thing that comes to mind, the reality is much more dynamic and exciting. Picture several inmates and the correctional officers who labour alongside them, working in partnership with local churches to complete a variety of maintenance needs.

Knox Presbyterian Church in Milton, Ont., is one of the beneficiaries of the Maplehurst Correctional Complex community work program, where work crews are helping solidify the church structure by removing the clay that is compromising the stability of the building. The Rev. Brad Shoemaker, minister in association at Knox Presbyterian Church, serves as chaplain.

The program provides a way for inmates to give back to the community. It's a chance for them to find purpose and to thrive in meaningful work, and to make a difference.

Doug Bowerman, the correctional officer who runs the program, says the inmates take a sense of pride in their work, and they are able to complete projects as well as any professional company.



As Pastor Howard Sullivan explains, beyond the physical accomplishments of the projects, "something much more valuable has been learned and shared through this experience."

Earlier this year, the church

hosted the crew for a meal that also included special guests from the church and community, like the mayor. It's been a time of fellowship that has brought diverse groups of people together in a shared space of

camaraderie.

In terms of social justice, the benefits to inmates have been invaluable, and some participants are learning new skills that will assist them in finding employment once they are re-

leased. This is a program that has potential for other communities across the country. It cuts costs for churches and connects the church to a prison in a meaningful way that benefits both parties.

Knox College Update



There have been several changes to the staff at Knox College in Toronto. To learn more, visit knox.utoronto.ca

The Rev. Dr. John Vissers, Principal (formerly Director of Academic Programs at Knox): Raised in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Dr. Vissers was ordained by the Presbytery of West Toronto on May 24, 1981. He has been an active and supportive Presbyterian, holding many offices and serving on many committees, both at the presbytery and national level. In the year 2012–13, he was Moderator of the 138th General Assembly. He has also served the church as senior minister at Knox Presbyterian Church in Toronto and as professor and Principal of Presbyterian College, Montreal. Currently, he is a full professor (Historical Theology) at Knox College and the Toronto School

of Theology, and he is the Director of Academic Programs at Knox College.

Dr. Angela Schmidt, Director of Experiential & Innovative Learning and Assistant Professor of Leadership: In this role, Dr. Schmidt will oversee and administer the contextual learning components required in Knox's basic degree programs. Dr. Schmidt brings us: experience in spiritual care management in healthcare facilities; broad teaching, learning and experience in areas critical for Knox students' pastoral education; and a commitment to ongoing learning.

The Rev. Dr. Esther Acolatse, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Intercultural Studies:

Dr. Acolatse has been Assistant Professor of the Practice of Pastoral Theology and World Christianity at



Duke Divinity School (Durham, N.C.), since 2010. At Knox College, Dr. Acolatse will equip students to serve the church through specialized areas of pastoral ministries, spiritual care/therapy and social service. She will focus on integrating Christian life and practice with theological insight and spiritual depth, preparing students to be leaders in lay and diaconal ministries in faith communities, preparing them to pursue careers in the non-profit sector, and to work as institutional chaplains, spiritual care practitioners, psycho-spiritual therapists and com-

munity workers.

The Rev. Dr. Dong-Ha Kim, Interim Director of Academic Programs and Director of the Centre for Asian-Canadian Theology and Ministry:

From 2009 to 2017, Dr. Kim served as Minister of Word and Sacrament at First Presbyterian Church in Brandon, Man. As Interim Director of Academic Programs (80%), Dr. Kim will administer the College's academic programs to ensure academic excellence, ministerial skill and spiritual development, and to meet the require-

ments of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Toronto School of Theology. As part-time (20%) Director of the Asian-Canadian Centre for Theology and Ministry, he will build relationships with Asian-Canadian and Asian churches, and will research the future of Asian-Canadian churches.

Also as of July 1, **Professor Stuart Macdonald** (Knox Faculty member since 1996) is serving as Knox's Vice-Principal and Director of Graduate Degree Studies for a one-year term, to assist with the many transitions.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Left to right: Zander Dunn, Nancy Dunn, Claudette Singh, Tulsi Singh

Berbice High School Teachers Honoured

By the Rev. Zander Dunn,
former Presbyterian minister

On Saturday, June 10, 2017, at the Sheraton Gateway Hotel in Toronto, my wife, Nancy, and I attended a gathering of Guyanese who had been students and teachers of Berbice High School in Guyana (formerly British Guiana), South America.

We were invited because my father, the Rev. Dr. James Dunn, had been the Principal of that institution from 1936 to 40. My natal string lies buried in the county of Berbice where I lived until I was four. Nancy and I and our three sons had lived in Guyana from 1967 to 70 and I subsequently wrote the History of the Guyana Presbyterian Church from 1885 to 1967. I had also been able to give some information about Berbice High School to Dr. Tulsi Singh who was the top scholar at the school when he was a student there in the late 1960s and is now a medical doctor in Texas. Dr. Singh was writing a history of the Principals of Berbice High School but lacked references to several of those who served before and after my father. The beautiful book Dr. Singh produced, printed in Guyana in 2016 to mark the school's centenary anniversary, was entitled, *Accolades to Berbice High School*.

The book is more than a collection of historical facts. It is full of powerful stories, excellent pictures and colourful memorabilia of several Berbice High School reunions in Canada, Britain, the U.S.A. and Guyana. When Dr. Singh sent me a copy, I read it without stopping. Guyanese politicians, sports heroes and musicians joined teachers and students to remember and celebrate the good times they enjoyed at Berbice High School. The pictures show, and the people I met on June 10 prove, that the graduates of "good old B.H.S." have prospered because of the British education they received at the high school they revere and love. We met two British teachers who guided their students through the mysteries of "O" and "A" levels, leading to university studies.

This year's reunion, organized by Bobby Gocool, Tulsi Singh and his brother Puran Singh, was different from those in the past because 14 of the school's beloved teachers were honoured by their students. Not all the teachers invited could attend. In another year we hope more of those teachers will be available to receive the recognition they deserve. Each teacher was introduced by a former student and was awarded a special pin to mark the occasion. I was

amused and amazed by the things that were said. The students making the presentations recalled special ways in which the teachers had had a positive influence on them. The teachers, in their acceptance speeches, lauded the school, laughed about various events, poked fun at some of the students and thanked the group for recognizing their work in such meaningful ways.

It was an emotional experience for all concerned. Although I did not know the teachers or students before this reunion, I had seen pictures of some of them; I had heard stories about them; I had written about the history of the school they love. It struck me, as I listened to the accolades from teachers and students, that the Presbyterian Church had done much better in Guyana than it had done among the residential schools for Indigenous children in Canada. Every time these Guyanese characters get together (and they are characters) they remind our church that we did both well and good through the Berbice High School. This is a success story we should not forget but should celebrate with all those who gather to praise Berbice High School, which continues to enjoy a reputation for excellence in Guyana and abroad.

Overcoming Divisions Between Protestants and Catholics



By Barb Summers,
Communications Office

The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) formally signed an initiative with Roman Catholics, Lutherans and Methodists aimed at overcoming divisions between Protestants and Roman Catholics, which have existed from the time of the Protestant Reformation.

On July 5, 2017, in Wittenburg, Germany, at a church where Martin Luther preached, a special service was held to mark the event. The Rev. Mary Fontaine, Director of Hummingbird Ministries in Vancouver, and serving as a representative from The Presbyterian Church in Canada, assisted in leading the service.

The WCRC is comprised of more than 225 Protestant churches around the globe, including The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The signing of the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification acknowledges a consensus in basic truths and states that mutual condemnations marked by

the Reformation do not apply to current teachings on justification.

"Today is a historic day," said Jerry Pillay, president of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. "The documents we are signing today are significant and symbolic of the road we are to travel."

Pope Francis sent a message that described the ceremony as "an eloquent sign of our commitment to walking together, as brothers and sisters in Christ, on a journey from conflict to communion, from division to reconciliation."

The ceremony took place in the year marking the 500th anniversary of Luther's denunciation of church corruption in his 95 Theses, an event that helped set in motion the Reformation and centuries of division between Protestants and Catholics. The ceremony took place during the WCRC General Council, which gathered approximately 1,000 participants, including PCC representatives Hilary Hagar, Robert Murray and the Rev. Stephen Kendall.

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NEWS

150 Years on the Main Street



By Dawn Livingstone, Knox Presbyterian Church in Georgetown, Ont.

2017 marks a special anniversary in the life of Knox Presbyterian Church in downtown Georgetown, Ont., on the corner of Main and Church Streets. For 150 years now, the congregation has worshipped from their church on this corner—a “corner stone” for the downtown.

Although established as a congregation in 1860, it was not until 1867 that a small brick church was first built on property that had formerly housed a blacksmith shop. This was the first church to be built of brick in Halton County. In less than 20 years, the building was much too small for the congregation, and they worked together to replace it with the beautiful stone church that is still well used today. The original bricks were sold and used to build “Pine Cottage,” a large house on the corner of Park and

Charles at the entrance to the well-used Georgetown Park.

Recently, to celebrate this special anniversary, Knox held a “Doors Open Day,” displaying a magnificent array of quilts in the sanctuary. Fifty-three quilts, many of them antique, were draped over the pews, each giving a little information of its origin, if known. It was indeed a beautiful display. A short video ran, and historical facts were interspersed on signs and plaques posted throughout the sanctuary. Downstairs, honouring Canada’s 150th anniversary, a very patriotic and welcoming hall attracted people to sit and enjoy a serving of delicious strawberry shortcake. A great many people did just that.

The day was extremely well received by the public, and the congregation of Knox was much appreciative of the participation of the people. It was indeed a great success and a wonderful way to honour our ancestors.

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JUST WONDERING...



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When we recite the Apostles Creed, why do we say we believe in the “holy catholic church”? We’re Presbyterians!

It does seem odd, doesn’t it? In the midst of a Presbyterian worship service, it sounds like we solemnly declare our belief in the friendly Roman Catholic Church around the corner and the Vatican across the sea.

An explanation for this phrase hinges on a correct understanding of the word catholic. In the creed, catholic means universal. That means the creed refers to the universal church in which Christians are “united with all the other members under Christ our head” as Jean Calvin expressed it. The church is made holy by God and is for people everywhere in every time. Understood in these terms, it’s a joy to express faith in God’s holy and catholic church.

My minister uses the “New Revised Standard Version” of the Bible in all scripture readings. Do you know why we use that version? Is it better than other ones?

The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) (1989) is an update of the Revised Standard Version (1952), which is an update of the American Standard Version (1901), which is an update of the King James Version (1611).

What kind of updates does the NRSV make? Well, it replaces archaic forms of speech like “Thou wast” with “your were.” It changes words whose meaning has shifted over time. For example, the RSV’s translation of 2 Corinthians 11:25 suggests the Apostle Paul was once “stoned.” The NRSV paints a different picture. It also alters gender language. For instance the NRSV broadens “Man shall not live by bread alone...” to “One does not live by bread alone...” (Matthew 4:4)

The NRSV is also an ecumenical Bible. The translation committee was made up of 30, male and female, Protestant, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox scholars who were assisted by a committee member that helped translate the Old Testament.

Evidently the NRSV is accurately rooted in the past while remaining relevant for today. Does that make NRSV the best modern translation for your minister or for you? I guess that’s for you to decide.

Why is the logo of the PCC a bush that’s on fire?

According to The Church of Scotland website, the burning bush appeared as an unofficial symbol of that denomination as early as 1691. Even then, the symbol was accompanied by the Latin phrase, *Nec Tamen Consumebatur*. That expresses what the bemused Moses observed when he stood before the blazing shrub in Exodus 3:2. It burned “...yet it was not consumed.” This symbol and motto did not become the official mark of The Church of Scotland until a decision was made at its 1958 General Assembly.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada inherited much from The Church of Scotland, including this image and statement. To the surprise of many, the Committee on Church History reported to our own General Assembly in 2013 that The Presbyterian Church in Canada had never adopted these symbols as their own. Who knew? Well, I guess the committee did. Anyway, during the ensuing year, Presbyterians were invited to suggest a “symbol and motto for the denomination.” We must have been comfortable with the familiar, because at the 2014 Assembly, the church officially adopted the burning bush and *Nec Tamen Consumebatur* as the symbol and motto.

It is worth noting that The Church of Scotland website claims the emblem echoes the teachings of 16th century reformer, John Calvin, who saw the burning bush as representative of the Church that can suffer in any age or place but against which not even the gates of Hell can prevail.

PULPIT VACANCIES

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Miramichi (Chatham), Calvin; Black River Bridge, St. Paul’s; Kouchibouguac, Knox (full-time minister) – Atlantic Provinces
Ottawa, St. Stephen’s (full-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario

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

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

Renfrew (full-time minister) – Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Burk’s Falls, St. Andrew’s – Magnetawan, Knox – Sundridge, Knox (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda (CNOB)

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

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Mosa, Burns (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

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

Calgary, Grace (full-time minister) – Alberta and the North West

West Vancouver (full-time minister) – British Columbia

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

Kelowna, St. David’s (full-time minister) – British Columbia

OBITUARIES

Read full obituaries online at presbyterian.ca

Elizabeth Margaret Beaton

Wife of the Rev. Gordon Beaton, retired minister from Trinity York Mills Presbyterian Church, Toronto. Deceased July 25, 2017.

The Rev. Robert Murray Pollock

Retired minister and active member of Central Presbyterian Church, Vancouver. Deceased July 11, 2017.

The Rev. Maj. Gary Tonks

Former minister father and grandfather from New Glasgow. Deceased July 8, 2017.

Mary Johnston

Former teacher in Waterloo, Ont., elder at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church and active WMS member. Deceased July 7, 2017.

The Rev. Gordon Blackwell

Retired minister, born in Chatham, Ont. Deceased July 6, 2017.

Flora McKinley

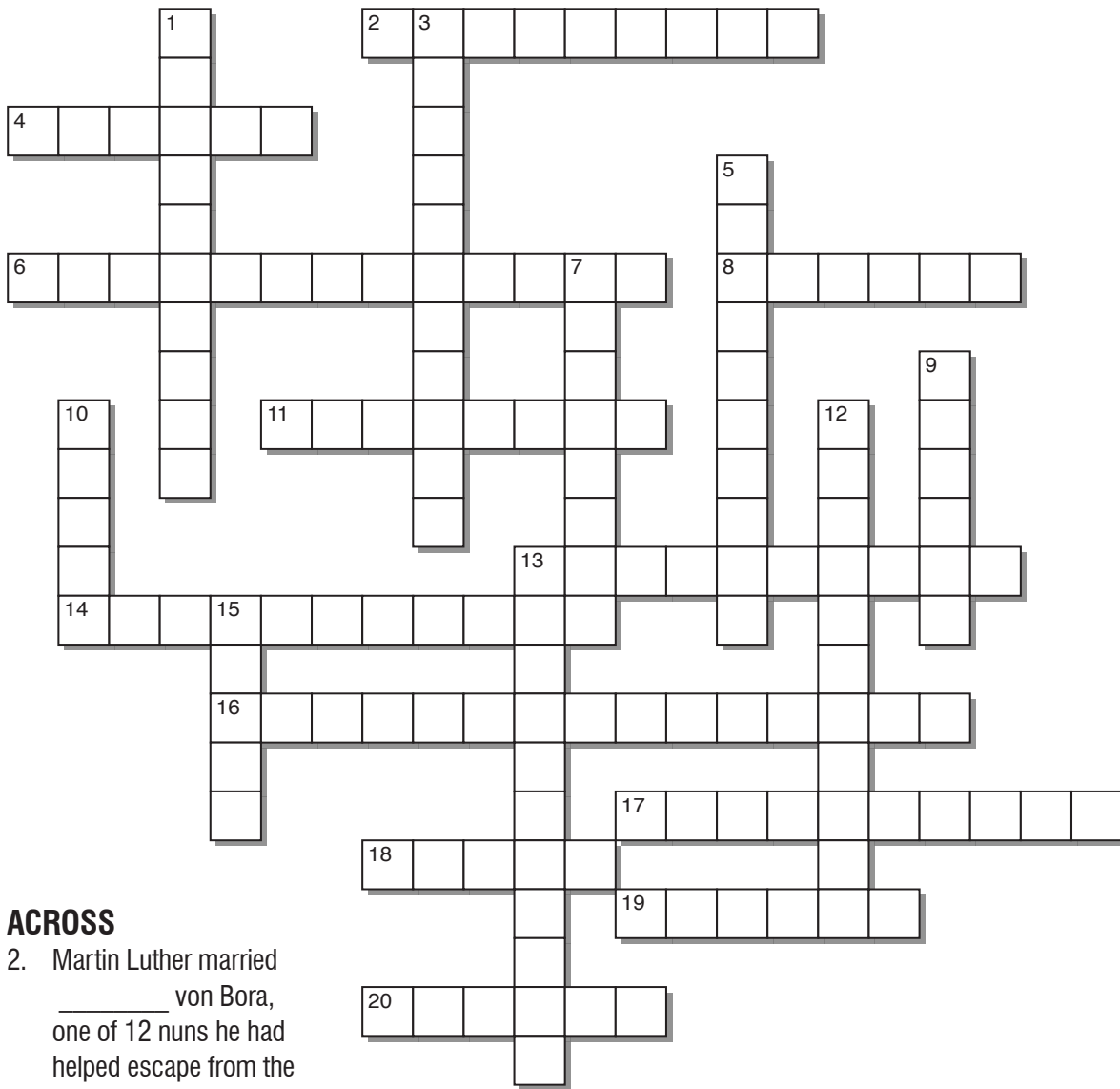
Active church leader from Guildwood, Toronto. Predeceased in 2014 by her husband, the Rev. Dr. Ed McKinlay. Deceased July 4, 2017.

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SMILES

Crossword

It's been 500 years since the start of the Protestant Reformation, when there was a break from the Roman Catholic Church in Europe. Test your knowledge on this period of church renewal with the clues below.



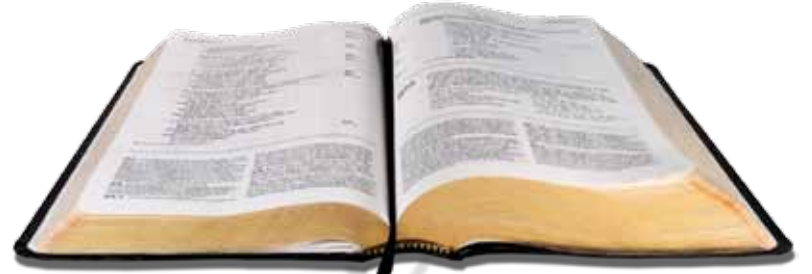
ACROSS

2. Martin Luther married _____ von Bora, one of 12 nuns he had helped escape from the Nimbschen Cistercian convent.
4. Five phrases have been collected to typify the values of the Reformation: *sola* _____, *sola fides*, *sola Scriptura*, *solus Christus*, and *solus Deo Gloria*.
6. The spread of Gutenberg's _____ provided the means for religious materials to quickly and more easily become part of everyday life.
8. To protect him from this fate, Prince Frederick III of _____ hid Luther in Wartburg Castle.
11. The German _____ War took place in German-speaking areas of Central Europe from 1524 to 1525.
13. "The _____ of the Christian Religion" was written by John Calvin.
14. Huldrych Zwingli was a leader of the Reformation in the country of _____.
16. Martin Luther's refusal to renounce all of his writings at the demand of Pope Leo X and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V resulted in his _____.
17. John Knox helped create The First Book of _____ in 1560, which set out a system of Presbyterian polity for The Church of Scotland.
18. The word "Presbyterian" comes from a Greek word meaning _____.
19. The first thesis in Luther's 95 Theses states, "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, '_____', he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."
20. John Knox encountered John Calvin when he took refuge in the city of _____.

DOWN

1. Legend has it that Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door of All Saints' Church in _____, Germany.
3. The name of Protestants who believe in baptizing only those who are old enough to decide they wish to be.
5. The Peace of _____ in 1648 is generally considered the conclusion of the Protestant Reformation initiated by Luther.
7. John Knox led the Protestant Reformation in the country of _____.
9. Martin Luther's 95 _____ were presented to the Archbishop of Mainz.
10. The Diet of _____ was an assembly convened in 1521 to condemn Martin Luther.
12. Martin Luther was a friar in the _____ order.
13. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther wrote to Albert of Mainz, his bishop, protesting the sale of _____.
15. The Council of _____, a meeting of Roman Catholic leaders called by Pope Paul III to matters of concern in the Church.

Quotation Location: Hope



Draw a line connecting the scripture reference with the correct quotation, then check your answers in the Bible.
(NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION)

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| I Corinthians 15:57 | I cry aloud to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy hill. |
| Job 5:16 | So the poor have hope, and injustice shuts its mouth. |
| Psalms 3:4 | ... and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. |
| Romans 5:5 | The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. |
| Zephaniah 3:17 | But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. |

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Trent | 16. Excommunication | 14. Switzerland |
| 3. Anabaptists | 17. Discipline | 13. Institutes |
| 5. Weshphalia | 18. Elder | 11. Peasants |
| 7. Scotland | 19. Repent | 8. Saxony |
| 9. Theses | 20. Geneva | 6. Printing press |
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| 12. Augustinian | | 2. Katharina |
| 13. Indulgences | | |
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