



# The Presbyterian Church in Canada

## **Highlights and Decisions Assembly Council Meeting at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre, Puslinch, Ontario March 25-26, 2019**

Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, The Presbyterian Church in Canada proclaims the love and good news of Jesus Christ through our words and actions.

The Assembly Council is responsible for ensuring that the work of the church is carried out efficiently, effectively and within the policies established by the General Assembly. It meets twice annually and is both a coordinating and prophetic body.

At this semi-annual meeting of the Assembly Council, we:

- *Received* an inspiring devotion from the Rev. Dr. Esther Acolatse, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at [Knox College](#) on the role of **servant leadership**; how Jesus embodied leadership and how that is an example for us in the PCC.
- *Heard* the report from the General Assembly Design Team around this year's [General Assembly](#), the theme of which is “**Receive the Holy Spirit**” from John 20:22. The aim is that the General Assembly will have a more relaxed schedule and atmosphere, while still accomplishing the work of the Assembly.
- *Offered suggestions* for ways to **implement a covenant of conduct** that supports the values of the Assembly and how it is embodied in thought, speech and action at General Assembly.
- *Brainstormed* ways to provide more focused leadership and resources to help congregations better **engage with the strategic plan**.
- *Acknowledged* that in 2018, congregations and individuals gave over \$6.4 million to [Presbyterians Sharing](#) to support the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Additionally, over \$739,000 was left in bequests to support various ministries. The Assembly Council is grateful to God for all of the generous contributions from Presbyterians across the country. Their generosity enables the denomination to carry on its mission and ministry throughout Canada and around the world.
- *Approved* the audited **financial report, financial statements** and **pension fund statements** for The Presbyterian Church in Canada for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2018.
- *Acknowledged* that while the wind-up solvency calculations that apply to the pension fund require that special payments be made in addition to regular filing fees, the good news was shared that on a going concern basis, the pension fund now has a \$30 million surplus. It is important to maintain this funding buffer.



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- *Affirmed* that working toward the goals [of reconciliation](#) has no time limit and that the needs and opportunities of ministry with our Indigenous brothers and sisters is both of central strategic importance and a long-term commitment of the denomination.
- *Recognized* that the year 2019 marks the [25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1994 Confession of The Presbyterian Church in Canada](#). This will be recognized at General Assembly with the attendance of members of the National Indigenous Ministries Council, Commemoration of the Confession, call for repudiation of Doctrine of Discovery and support of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's other Calls to Action.
- *Heard* the [report from the Life and Mission Agency](#) that, among other things, highlighted the continuing search for Associate Secretaries of Justice Ministries and Ministry and Church Vocation, noted upcoming [mission trips](#), and outlined new [national funding opportunities](#) available.
- *Anticipated* the presence of [Shelia Watt-Cloutier](#) as the **2019 Cutting Edge of Mission Award** recipient at General Assembly.
- *Welcomed* the Rev. Daniel Cho, Moderator of 2018 General Assembly, who **shared his experiences** visiting congregations across Canada and representing the PCC in Ottawa with other church leaders advocating for passing Bill C-262. He notes that a highlight for him has been meeting the PCC's young people and that their understanding of what it means to be a connective community encourages him. He also reflected on the guiding theme of his moderatorial year of being "the repairers of the breach" (Isaiah 58:12).
- *Welcomed* the Rev. Dr. Kristine O'Brien, Managing Director, Crieff Hills Community, who led worship and **shared Crieff's history, mission and vision** for the future.
- *Affirmed* the importance of the **Young Adult Representative program** and the valuable contribution Young Adult Representatives make to the worship, fellowship and discernment of General Assembly.
- *Heard* an update on the [Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement](#), a process that aims to bring closure to the legacy of Indian residential schools and a renewal of the relationships between Indigenous people who attended these schools, their families and communities, and all Canadians.
- *Visited* the [Woodland Cultural Centre](#) at the Six Nations Territory to learn about the territory and peoples where both the General Assembly and Assembly Council is meeting. Those who were able to make this visit after the meeting ended on Tuesday experienced a tour through the cultural centre with an excellent cultural guide and then sat in a circle with Karen Hill, a former student at the Mohawk residential school to hear her account of being a student in residential school.
- *Encouraged* one another in **prayer and song**.

The next meeting of the Assembly Council is scheduled for November 24–26, 2019, at Crieff Hills Community in Puslinch, ON.



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