



One Year After the Beirut Port Blast



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

For many years The Presbyterian Church in Canada has benefited from the relationships made with churches and service organizations in Lebanon, Syria and Palestine-Israel. We have shared our common faith with many individuals and groups in the region where Christ was born and taught. In recent years, we have welcomed partners to Canada who have addressed the General Assembly, sharing their challenges and their responses. In 2016, Dr. Bernard Sabella, Executive Director of the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR), based in East Jerusalem, received the PCC's Cutting Edge of Mission Award on behalf of the organization, and explained to the Assembly what life under occupation is like. He described illegal

human rights abuses by the Israeli occupation forces and struggles for Palestinians to access necessities, such as clean drinking water. "I'd like to say that a prophetic voice is a voice that challenges the wilderness of injustice and that is courageous in its call for a reconciliation based on respecting the rights of an oppressed and occupied people."

In 2018, Dr. George Sabra, President of the Near East School of Theology (NEST), located in the heart of Beirut, Lebanon, addressed the General Assembly. This small seminary trains women and men for ministry in congregations and as Christian educators and confers a master's degree in theology. They welcome students from the Middle East, as well as North America and Europe; however, the pandemic has hindered international attendance. When Dr. Sabra addressed the General Assembly, he

reflected on the task of Christians and advised on how to live in a context of religious extremism. More than three years later, the wisdom offered by Dr. Sabra is even more relevant today.

For years, NEST has created a space for serious discussion concerning theology and faith, inviting religious leaders—Protestant, Armenian, Assyrian, Shia and Sunni Clerics and others—to speak and to share their knowledge. NEST students were invited to attend and engage. This sounds simple enough, but it is an invitation to learn. Our partners have much to teach us.

On August 4, 2020, the city of Beirut suffered a horrendous blast in the port. It was considered the biggest non-nuclear explosion ever recorded. More than 200 people were killed, another 7,000 were injured, and the blast caused an estimated \$4.6 billion in damage. The impact of that day



also shattered an already fragile economy and pushed more than half of the population below the poverty line. A year later, the people of Lebanon observed a National Day of Mourning to mark the first anniversary.

A teacher in the synod's school used to receive a middle-class salary. Now paid in Lebanese Lira, a month's salary is worth only \$75 USD because of the devaluation. From this income she must buy food, pay rent and pay the ever-increasing bill for the generator, electricity and phone data. Basic items such as rice and milk cost 10 times more than they did in 2019. The cost of basic medicines, including insulin, aspirin and penicillin has increased more than five times in the same time period. The World Bank says that Lebanon's economic collapse is likely to rank among the world's worst financial crises since the mid-19th century. Families who were middle-class before October 2019 are now poor; families who were poor before October 2019 are now destitute.

A Human Rights report writes that senior Lebanese officials knew about the potential for the blast but "systemic problems" in Lebanon's legal and political system have allowed them to avoid accountability. The consequences of this flagrant disregard of the risk have fallen on the citizens of Beirut.

For many years, the PCC has supported the work of Sylvia Haddad of the Joint Christian Committee (JCC). Sylvia wrote: "Our politicians have systematically led the country to the bottom and sit back to blame others and give advice while they lead a good life with all they have stolen. A very sad situation—but we have to do the best we can. So, we struggle on in our personal burdens and I struggle on to keep up with the needs of all the people whom we work for and who need us badly." Sylvia works tirelessly to provide the necessities to sustain the lives of others during this extraordinarily difficult time.

Continued on page 4



PHOTO CREDITS: SCOTT PARKER, PCUSA MISSION STAFF IN BEIRUT.

Page 5...
Addressing
Harassment

Page 12...
Human Rights
for Migrants

Page 40...
Honouring
Pauline Brown

MESSAGE FROM THE MODERATOR

The Unity of the Church



By the Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott,
Moderator of the 2021 General
Assembly

language that a moderator might have called out of order (Galatians 5:12).

One of the churches that Paul started was in Corinth. In a letter to that church, he wrote of his concern that their fellowship was fractured within: some members followed Cephas, others Apollos, others Paul and others Jesus. On top of that, one member had taken legal action against another.

The fact that these conflicts are included in scripture is a testament to the Bible's integrity. It would have been tempting to gloss over these family feuds.

Throughout the history of the church, we see examples of how Christians handle controversy.

Take the Donatist Controversy in Roman North Africa, around the third century. The church, under persecution, was ordered to hand over their sacred books to be burned by the authorities. The ones who handed over their books were given the nickname, *traitores* (meaning "those who handed over"), from which we get our word *traitor*.

You can imagine how upset many Christians were that some of their own had handed over their books rather than resist. Obviously, by capitulating, they could not be considered pure Christians, and the leaders that condoned it were considered to be tainted. This reasoning led some



members to break away from the church and follow a leader by the name of Donatus.

Attempts to mend the breach were made by Cyprian of Carthage and, eventually, by Augustine of Hippo. He recognized that all Christians are sinful, and that the church, as a result, is a "mixed body" of saints and sinners. He drew support for this from the parables of the Kingdom in Mat-

thew 13 (wheat and weeds, dragnet, mustard seed and yeast).

And despite this mixed body, the Kingdom of Heaven is so attractive that it is compared to a treasure in a field or a pearl of great worth. One will want to do everything they can to get in on it.

Augustine also argued that schism and *traditio* (handing over the Christian books) are both a problem. The church, as a mixed body, will always have sin. Yet, in his mind, the greater of the two sins was schism.

The unity of the church was Augustine's top priority.

I thought of the Donatist controversy this summer when I read the biography of the Presbyterian pastor Eugene Peterson. In the book, there is mention of the time when Peterson, author of *The Message* (a paraphrased version of the Bible in contemporary English), visited Tyndale University. After giving his speech (protested by the "King James Version-Only" society), there was a question and answer period during a lunch with the faculty.

I remember one colleague's question: "The Rev. Peterson, your denom-

ination — the PCUSA — is considering changes in relation to marriage. If they do, what will you do?" His response was: "The church has sinned in the past and the church will sin in the future—and I am not saying this proposed change is sinful. Decisions that the church makes will not compel me to break the vows I made at my ordination. I will not follow a decisive course. I will stay and work for the unity of the church."

Peterson, like Augustine before him, saw the unity of the church as his primary concern.

Peterson's biographer discusses the firestorm that resulted from an interview that was given by the pastor in his declining years that suggested he was affirming of same-sex marriage. When the comment that seemed to indicate Peterson's affirming position was retracted, no one was happy. Indeed, both the traditionally and progressively minded groups were upset.

What do we do with the fact that Christians are at odds? Practice forgiveness and forbearance, for sure. But, also, make an unreserved commitment to the unity of the church.

The Guder Scholars Program Centre for Missional Leadership (CML)

at St. Andrew's Hall, Vancouver

August 2 to 4, 2022

Theme: Missional Leadership for an Online Church"



The Guder Scholars program is a new initiative of CML that provides an intensive, residential learning environment in missional leadership for a select, diverse group of church leaders. Named in honour of our Senior Fellow in Residence, Dr. Darrell Guder, this program seeks to equip, encourage and enable leaders to practice missional leadership in a changing world.

Application forms available from Mavis Ho at cml@standrews.edu - closing date of January 31, 2021. Meals, program and housing provided - travel bursaries available. More info: www.standrews.edu

Preference will be given to PCC Pastors in their first 15 years of ministry.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Sunday Worship Planners

Weekly planners include scripture readings, music suggestions, prayers, a reflection and Mission Moment.

To download or subscribe: presbyterian.ca/worship

MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY



Red paint left on the doors of Grace Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta.

The *Presbyterian Connection* is one part newspaper, one part denominational diary and one part family album. The quarterly publication provides a place to share news, exchange ideas and perspectives on mission and ministry, and record the lives of congregations and the denomination in short stories and photos. In curating submissions for the newspaper, we seek to build up the church by spotlighting stories that strengthen the church. Many of those stories are positive examples of the varied ways the church faithfully lives out its witness. Sometimes, an important part of building up the church is drawing its attention to difficult news or of the church's failings and things of which we must repent. As we affirm in *Living Faith*, "the church is in constant need of reform because of the failure and sin, which mark its life in every age." Acknowledging that too is part of our witness. In all the *Connection's* stories, the denomination's statements and documents inform the content of the newspaper, and we return to them repeatedly as the functional editorial policy of the paper.

Since the newspaper's launch, distribution has climbed to approximately 17,500 copies. The feedback we get about the newspaper is almost always extremely positive. And we have received requests for subscriptions from bodies and people beyond the denomination, and we know we have readers on at least

four continents.

The autumn edition of the *Connection* yielded the most responses we have received about an individual issue of the newspaper so far. The last edition focused largely on the devastating news of unmarked graves on or near the grounds of former Residential Schools. Additionally, there were articles on the church's relationship with Indigenous peoples in Canada, racist beliefs, the church's collaboration in the harms of colonization and the weight of the trauma that that loss has wreaked in Indigenous communities. This is harm, in which The Presbyterian Church in Canada shared a large role and the legacy of the Residential Schools and colonialism more broadly, causes harm today. Much of the feedback we received expressed a mix of shock, gratitude, requests for more information and calls for the church to do more. We heard some say that it was the best edition of the newspaper yet. Some other feedback about the content was very negative, and a small number of people cancelled their subscriptions because they objected to the content and focus.

This time of year, we hear again the story of the birth of a vulnerable child and his family. We hear how Mary pondered in her heart the startling things she heard and saw about her son, his birth, youth and identity. "Ponder" comes from the Latin word *pondus*, meaning weight, importance and burden. To ponder means to bear

the burden of thinking about something important. The Greek word for ponder that the author of the Gospel of Luke uses in chapter 2 verse 19 is *syballousa*, which means tossing things around or throwing different things together as insights and realities land and collide.

Pondering—taking time to sit with the weight, importance and burden of things—is a vital part of the church's practice. The reality of the church's complicity in the sinfulness of Indian Residential Schools is part of our church family history. It is heart-crushing to contemplate the shameful sin that the church engaged in by abusing children and families and neglecting the worth and well-being of the children the church separated from their parents and communities. And we should not forget the families bereft of their children, in some cases forever. The truth about the church and society's assumptions and systems of thinking that led to the Indian Residential School and continue today are rightly distressing and condemning. As difficult as it may be sometimes for the church to bear this reality and to put the truth of what the church has sometimes done together with what it is called to be, it is nothing compared to the pain of those who live daily with the legacy of Residential Schools in their lives and families.

The church has much yet to learn, to ponder, to change and to act upon in the process of repentance and

reconciliation. Nothing as important and complex as this is done easily or quickly. The weight of truth must be born for a long journey. A now sainted professor who taught at King's College University in Halifax used to say to his students when they encountered something disturbing, "First, don't just do something, sit there." The wisdom being that before reacting, we might better first listen, ponder and seek guidance towards the truth. Truth pondered, given the weight it calls for, can then guide right action. In *Living Faith*, one of the documents that informs the content of the newspaper, we affirm that "The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. We pray as a church to be guided into truth knowing that such truth may disturb and judge us."

Grace Presbyterian Church in Calgary was one of almost a dozen churches that had red or orange paint splattered on its building this past July as an expression of grief, anger, lament and hurt in response to the discovery of over 1,000 unmarked graves at the sites of former Residential Schools in Canada. The decision was to let the stain on the building remain as a means of sitting with and pondering the disturbing truth of the grief and anger that people feel about the church's participation in Residential Schools, which the paint represented. Grace's witness is an example for the church.

To learn more about the PCC and Residential Schools, visit presbyterian.ca/indigenous-justice.

PRESBYTERIAN **Connection**

Presbyterian Connection is a quarterly newspaper published by the national office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Barb Summers, Editor
Sarah Curd, Managing Editor
Heather Chappell, Copy Editor

Thank you to all volunteer contributing writers. For submissions, questions and feedback, please email connection@presbyterian.ca or call 1-800-619-7301 ext. 243.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The *Presbyterian Connection* newspaper is free of charge to all members and friends of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. For address changes, to subscribe or unsubscribe, please contact the national office or go to presbyterian.ca/connection.



The Presbyterian Church in Canada

50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
1-800-619-7301
connection@presbyterian.ca
presbyterian.ca

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a community of over 800 congregations in Canada. presbyterian.ca/church-finder

Moderator of the General Assembly:

The Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott

The national office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is on the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, Petun, Seneca and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit Indigenous peoples.



Presbyterians Sharing is the national church fund that supports the overall mission and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The *Presbyterian Connection* newspaper is funded in part through gifts to Presbyterians Sharing.



PWS&D is the development and relief agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The opinions expressed, books reviewed and activities undertaken by contributing writers reflect the broad diversity of experience and opinion in the church. Their inclusion in the newspaper is not necessarily an endorsement by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

FSC LOGO HERE

FEATURE



Continued from page 1

The Rev. Elmarie Parker, a minister of the Presbyterian Church USA, based in Lebanon since 2013, shared her witness:

"There are no words to fully express the pain, frustration, sense of abandonment, injustice, and despair that envelops the communities of people living here. It is knowing they are not alone in this time of chaos and [the] unknown, that fuels their resilience—even as they live with daily questions over what the future may hold for them and their country."

It may seem futile to financially

support our colleagues in Lebanon in the current financial chaos. But is this not our calling as Christians—to show care and concern and carry the burden together, as the apostle Paul in Galatians 6 encourages us to do?

The Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott, will be visiting the Near East School of Theology in Lebanon this winter.

Special thanks to the Revs. Elmarie and Scott Parker, PCUSA mission staff in Beirut for their contributions to this article.

Presbyterians
Sharing

Gifts to Presbyterians
Sharing provide
support for the
Near East School of
Theology.

"Coming Home" in Newfoundland

By Lynne Allan, elder, St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church in Grand Falls-Windsor, N.L.

"It's like coming home."

That's how one congregation member described the first service held at St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church in Grand Falls-Windsor, N.L., since fire, smoke and water destroyed the sanctuary and badly damaged the rest of the building in 2019.

While we are often reminded that a church is not a building, for someone who has been a member of one church building for as long as they've lived, the church is a second home and the congregation is family. As another member put it: "To me, the church reopening is like seeing family after a long absence. I missed seeing everyone and it was good to be back." In the case of St. Matthew's, likening members to family is more

than a figure of speech. Almost half the congregation is related by blood or marriage.

When we gathered in St. Matthew's on October 17, it was one day short of two years since many members stood on the sidewalk and watched firefighters work to save the structure. In the following days, a small group of volunteers began tearing the interior back to the studs in preparation for restoration. Support has come from people near and far. Some have a connection to St. Matthew's, while others simply have an affection for the little white church on the hill. It has stood there since 1910. "It seemed no matter their faith, there was a genuine admiration for the rebuilding and always the question, when will it open," noted one of our elders.

As the restoration got underway, we had no idea that when the day finally came that we could gather in

our sanctuary, we would have to be masked and socially distanced as per COVID-19 public health guidelines. As different as that was from our church services of the past, we were more than willing to follow the rules, if it meant we could hold that first in-person service.

Covid limitations aside, the reopening of St. Matthew's has meant much to the congregation, which includes a member who was welcomed into our little church 40-plus years ago and later married into a St. Matthew's family: "Seeing our church restored was a wonderful, heartwarming sight. Our church family, and we are a family, will be able to get together to worship God once again. There has always been a warm feeling in our church. That feeling has been missed and it is good to get it back."

To others, the church reopening means a return to normalcy, giving life balance and the good feeling of belonging once again to a close community. "It's like a family reunion," said one long-time member.

As with any reunion, memories were at the forefront of the minds of members after the Oct. 17 service.

"I married, had my children baptized and said goodbye to many family members and friends there. It was also a place where many silent prayers were said," offered one congregant.

Said another: "I remember the day I walked into the church for our wedding, which will be 50 years ago this February. I remember all the friends and family who attended and who are mostly now deceased. The church stands out beautifully between the two bigger churches on Church Road. It definitely has a place of its own."



The congregation, masked and socially distanced, waits for the reopening service to begin. It's a seating plan we're not used to, but if following COVID-19 public health guidelines meant we could hold our first service, we were happy to do so.



The Rev. David Sturtevant demonstrates during his sermon how he had the birds eating out of his hand when on a family outing in St. John's.



Because our organ had been damaged in the fire, Aimee Doiron now accompanies the congregation on a keyboard that has organ, piano and other capacities.



When your dad is the minister and makes you laugh during children's time... The Rev. David Sturtevant was accompanied to Grand Falls-Windsor from St. John's by his wife, Michelle, and sons Orson and Oliver.

One of the senior members used the word overjoyed to describe her feeling, adding: "The church was and always will be a big part of our lives."

Most everyone describes the renovated building as being the same, only better—there having been many improvements made along the way to completion.

To say we are thankful for the individuals, churches, organizations and companies that helped us reach this point is an understatement. As our interim moderator, the Rev. David Sturtevant, reminded us through prayer and his sermon, it is important to also give thanks to God. It's safe to say many prayers of thanks have been said as we have been guided for two years along the path to the reopening service, God lighting the way.

The Rev. Sturtevant wrote about his visit to St. Matthew's in the bul-

letin of his church, St. David's in St. John's. He said: "God is a restorer. The story of St. Matthew's is a parable for the work that God can do in and through each of us. Standing in the wreckage of two years ago, it seemed impossible to think that things could be even better than before. The people were sad; they had stood on the sidewalk and watched the flames through the windows of their church. Yet even after all that, they have been restored."

In his sermon to the St. Matthew's congregation, the Rev. Sturtevant spoke about an outing his family took to a lake in St. John's where they fed the many birds, only to have them fly off as soon as they were full and when all the seed was gone. Unlike the birds in the sermon, our flock is determined to remain, to say thank-you in word and action after being filled with God's goodness.

LEADERSHIP

Addressing Harassment in the Church

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

In the New Testament, the church is compared to the body of Christ and to a flock of sheep under the guidance of Christ's shepherding. John Calvin compared the church to a nurturing mother. And yet, we all know Christian communities fall short of what they aspire to be, and the church is not always an easy or safe place to be. Sadly, most of us have witnessed or experienced bullying and harassment in congregation, committees, choirs, groups and courts of the church.

This year, the General Assembly approved a policy with procedures for addressing harassment in the church that applies to members, adherents, staff and volunteers of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In short: "The policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is that harassment of any kind shall not be tolerated and will be addressed." The new policy covers both bullying and harassment.

Harassment means: physical or verbal behaviours against a member, volunteer or employee in the church that are unwelcome or should be known to be unwelcome. For example, harassment occurs when someone:

- makes unwelcome remarks and jokes or threatens and intimidates people because of race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or any other of the prohibited grounds of discrimination (which may vary from province to province); and,
- makes unwelcome physical

contact, such as touching, patting or pinching.

Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. However, serious one-time incidents can create a "poisoned environment" and be considered harassment. Harassment is like bullying because someone hurts another person through cruel, offensive and insulting behaviours. But harassment differs from bullying in that it is often a form of discrimination.

There are different types of bullying, including:

- Physical bullying: using physical force or physical aggression against others (e.g., hitting);
- Verbal bullying: using words to hurt others (e.g., name-calling);
- Social/relational bullying: seeking to intimidate or harm others by excluding them, spreading rumours or ignoring them (e.g., gossiping);
- Cyberbullying: using electronic media to threaten, embarrass, intimidate or exclude others, including seeking to damage their reputation (e.g., sending threatening text messages).

Responding promptly, carefully and appropriately to harassment of any kind helps the church become the body Christ called it to be. The policy outlines the steps and procedures that are to be taken when harassment and bullying occur. Learning about the policy and how to apply it now will help bodies in the church respond well when called upon to address a situation of harassment. To be equipped to use the policy, committees, Sessions and courts might consider:

- Hosting a workshop to review the policy (arranged through the Life and Mission Agency by contacting imcdonald@presbyterian.ca);
- Workshopping a case study and working through the policy's steps;
- Annually reviewing the policy.

The policy says that employers, Sessions and members of courts and committees of the church will not only take steps to address incidences of harassment within the church, wherever they may take place, but also take steps to prevent them. To this end, groups and individuals in the church might consider:

- Hosting or attending workshops led by teachers, social workers and others in the community who are knowledgeable about harassment/bullying;
- Reading or creating a book study on preventing and addressing harassment and bullying;
- Learning about and being intentional about nurturing healthy communities

We are all responsible for creating and maintaining safe and respectful workplaces and communities. Bullying can exist only in environments that tolerate it.

The policy and its procedures



for addressing harassment in the church are found at presbyterian.ca/leading-with-care, and will be published as part of the Leading with Care policy.

RESOURCES

Consult web pages such as the American Psychological Association (apa.org/topics/bullying) and The Red Cross (redcross.ca/how-we-help/violence-bullying-and-abuse-prevention) and redcross.ca/how-we-help/violence-bullying-and-abuse-prevention/in-the-workplace).

Review provincial government resources and programs on bullying

and harassment in the workplace.

Books that may be of interest and help, include:

Bullied: What Every Parent, Teacher, and Kid Needs to Know about Ending the Cycle of Fear by Carrie Goldman

Managing Workplace Bullying: How to Identify, Respond to and Manage Bullying Behaviour in the Workplace by Aryanne Oade

Bullying in Teams: How to Survive It and Thrive by Aryanne Oade

Working in Adversarial Relationships: Operating Effectively in Relationships Characterized by Little Trust or Support by Aryanne Oade

Reasonable Action

In the context of employment in the church, conduct is considered harassment if it creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment or unreasonably interferes with an employee's work performance. However, a "reasonable action" taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace is not workplace harassment. A staff correction or staff performance review may be an example of reasonable actions.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada already has a policy and procedures for addressing sexual harassment. Since 1993, when the Policy for Dealing with Sexual Abuse and Sexual Harassment was first approved by the General Assembly, the church has committed to following this established policy when addressing all complaints it receives of sexual abuse or sexual harassment. For this reason, whenever the alleged behaviour is of a sexual nature or pertains to an individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, as stipulated in the above definition of *sexual harassment*, the church is directed to use the policy for dealing with sexual abuse and sexual harassment. In all other cases, when the alleged behaviour does not contain elements of a sexual nature or pertain to an individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, the policy and procedures for addressing harassment in the church shall be followed.

The Sexual Abuse and Harassment Policy can be found at presbyterian.ca/sash.

OPEN ONLINE COURSES at The Presbyterian College

6 or 8-Week Online Courses.
For Individuals or Study Groups
based in congregations.

The Bible for Doubters

Prof. Karen Petersen Finch
Thursdays 7:00-8:30 (EST)
February 3 – March 24

Way of Forgiveness

Principal Roland De Vries
Thursdays 7:00-8:30 (EST)
April 21 – June 16



For details: www.pcmatl.ca

LEADERSHIP

Your Congregation Needs a Website

By Barb Summers,
Associate Secretary, Communications

On October 4, Internet users around the world were startled, annoyed and even frantic over a global service interruption to Facebook and its subsidiaries like Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp. For up to six hours, millions of users were affected by the outage, for both personal and business interactions.

The outage brought to light how much we have come to rely on social media. Recently, I've noticed that some congregations have also observed the rise in popularity of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and have decided that their congregation should have a presence on social media. I'm encouraged to see this kind of interest in new outreach activities. However, some congregations have been considering social media platforms as a potential replacement to a congregational website altogether, even going as far as to question why they should bother continuing (or would start) to pay for and maintain a congregational website when social media platforms are free and easier to maintain for those who are already familiar with them from their own personal use. I know of several businesses in my own community that have gone this route and conduct all promotional and engagement activities through Facebook. But rather than seeing social media as something to replace

a congregational website, congregations should be looking to social media as something that can extend the effectiveness of their website and overall online presence.

Whenever I give workshops on websites and social media, I often like to say that websites are *information* and social media is *conversation*. They offer different ways of connecting with people that can work well together. It's important to remember that websites and social media platforms are not the same things. They are different tools, which do different things, and have different strengths and weaknesses, and, as such, should be compared separately. It doesn't have to be an either/or decision. In fact, a great social media presence is often fuelled by a strong website and vice versa.

Before you take on the challenge of developing a social media presence for your congregation, consider your reasons for doing so. Not long ago I helped a congregation set up a Facebook page. In our discussions, I learned that they felt that being on social media would be their method for reaching and engaging with youth, believing that it would help bring more young people to their weekly worship services. I didn't know how to tell them how incorrect this thinking is. If only it was that easy!

Never mind that online engagement doesn't necessarily equate to Sunday morning parishioners, the situation on who uses social media

is changing all the time. Facebook claims they have nearly three billion active monthly users, and while it's generally considered the biggest social media network worldwide, there are strong indications that trends are shifting. In addition to anti-Facebook campaigns, like "Quit Facebook Days," that have popped up in response to a variety of concerns like how Facebook handles user data and the discouraging amount of unverified false news that circulates, recent research showed that in the 12-34-year-old age group, 32% identified Facebook as the platform they use the most. This is down considerably from the 58% reported only five years ago. In fact, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter and Snapchat were all down in primary usage, but the "Other" category was notably up (Edison Research and Triton Digital, 2020).

Social media can be a fickle friend. With more and more variety in the social media scene, it becomes harder to choose which platform is best to reach your target audience. Other organizations feel this pressure as well. Even at the national office, we are active on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and Instagram, but we are always looking to expand to additional channels. It can be overwhelming.

Social media can be a wonderful way to connect with people. You can share important information, receive valuable feedback and feel a greater



sense of community. However, too frequently I see congregations take on the task of having an active, dynamic digital presence, only to have it fizzle out in a few months. With the rate of speed that things are shared online and the vast quantity of it all, you need to have a consistent, valuable presence. A social media content calendar can help keep you on track, as well as a clear mission statement and realistic goals (just watch out for getting overly focused on your stats). You need to post consistently with informative content to make it onto people's feeds.

A goal of creating a dynamic social media presence is a good one, but before any social media endeavours, I encourage congregations to build and maintain a strong website, which will form the backbone of all online activities. These days, there is often an attitude that if something doesn't have a website, it doesn't exist. Don't fall into that category.

A website should be your foundation for ensuring people know about your congregation. And I fully acknowledge that there are difficulties to building a good website. It doesn't take long for content to become outdated, arguably doing more harm than good. This is a problem I've come across many times when browsing Presbyterian websites. Remember, a website is not an archive—there is no reason to still have the picnic lunch from 2011 featured on your website's homepage. What kind of message does that convey to newcomers? The content on your site should be current, relevant and accurate.

I understand the challenges that congregations are often confronted with in maintaining their websites. Too often, there is not enough staff or volunteer power to keep a website up-to-date and maintain a strong online presence. Budget may sometimes pose a problem as well. Curating content from the appropriate people can be another hurdle.

However, if you're struggling to keep your website populated with the

latest news and events, remember that it doesn't take a lot of effort to ensure the basics are available. Websites are most useful to those who are considering visiting your church and are looking to learn a little more about its ministry. (Your regular congregants already know where your church is located, where to park and what to expect.) So, make sure your website is newcomer-friendly (so try to avoid using inaccessible church lingo!), has current information and answers general questions a new visitor may have. Yes, that will take some initial effort. But it is effort that could help someone decide whether or not to visit your church.

Now is the time to ensure you have a strong website. As more and more people engage with churches electronically, invest in sitting down and taking a careful look at your website. Do you have the following key—but far too often missing—elements on your homepage? And are they easily available to find with no clicking and very little scrolling necessary?

- **Church name and location.** Many churches fail to mention their city or town. When so many of our churches are named "St. Andrew's" or "Knox," you can see how this could be problematic for someone doing online research before visiting in person.
- **A welcome message with a welcoming photo.** Featuring a nice, high-quality photo of your church with front doors open wide, a group photo of smiling faces or a recent photo of a church event or activity is an opportunity to convey a warm and inviting presence.



PCCWeb is funded
through gifts to
Presbyterians Sharing.

LEADERSHIP



Science and Faith: Old Enemies?

By Amy Dunn Moscoso,
Communications Coordinator, Grace
Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta.

"[The] conversation between science and the big questions of existence is a far cry from popular pictures of science and faith in conflict. Simplistic presentations of Galileo and Darwin attacking the Bible or being attacked by the church may be widespread but do no justice to the complexity of the long history of the way science and faith have both enriched and questioned each other."

—The Rev Dr. David Wilkinson
Most of us are familiar with depictions of faith and science as antagonistic. Although we may not hold that view ourselves, many of us often choose to see the two as disconnected from one another.

The coming year's Preaching Grace speaker will invite us to consider a different approach. The Rev. Dr. David Wilkinson—a scientist and a Christian—wants us, instead, to see how faith and science push up against one another. Often this is done with questions that question and challenge, but in ways that enrich and expand our understanding of both.

During the Preaching Grace weekend, David Wilkinson will bring science and faith together and discuss our questions about where it all began and whether there's anyone out there. Preaching Grace 2022 will be a hybrid event. Participants may join online or take part in person at Grace Presbyterian Church. The event will be held May 27–29, 2022.

Since 2016, Preaching Grace has celebrated excellence in preaching and homiletics. Each year, the event welcomes a world-class preacher and theologian to explore important questions about Christianity and faith.

The weekend will include three separate events. The Friday evening public lecture, Saturday workshop and Sunday Worship Service will offer different approaches to discovery and engagement. Join one, two or all three events to listen to and learn from a highly regarded preacher of the Christian community.

The Rev. Dr. David Wilkinson

Dr. Wilkinson holds two PhDs. His first is in theoretical astrophysics, which he earned while studying star formation, the chemical evolution of galaxies, and terrestrial mass extinctions. He is a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. He also holds a PhD in Systematic Theology and Explored Christian Eschatology and has trained as a Methodist Minister.

In addition to these accomplishments, Dr. Wilkinson is a regular



The Rev. Dr. David Wilkinson, guest speaker for the Preaching Grace series that will take place in May 2022 at Grace Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta.

contributor to *Thought for the Day* on BBC Radio 4, and is the author of numerous books and articles. His published works explore the relationship of Christian Theology to contemporary culture. From science to pop culture, he has written about the dialogue of science and religion, especially as it impacts the physical sciences, and has even explored spirituality in contemporary cinema.

Learn more and register at PreachingGrace.ca.

• **Time of worship and how to take part.** For example, online via live stream or video recording, or in person, and if in person, whether advance registration is required.

• **Opportunities for fellowship.** While COVID-19 may have disrupted this temporarily, one of the things I rarely see online is any information about coffee hour after service. Why not take a line or two and encourage visitors to join the congregation after service for a time of fellowship? What a wonderful way to visit with someone who may be new.

• **Important details that you would want new visitors to know,** such as accessibility accommodations, front entrance, parking, activities for children, etc.

• **Contact details** and leadership names and information.

Think about your strengths and what makes your congregation unique and what you can do to highlight these features prominently online. Are you particularly mission focused? Do you have a strong community presence? Is your children's programming top-notch? Think about these things and make sure your site represents who you are as a congregation.

Now that you've created a strong website, consider how your congregation can best use social media, such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, to bolster that website. The work you've done to improve your website will serve you well by providing fodder for your activities on social media. Social media can become a very useful tool that will help share your congregation's mission and ministry with others. But is social media a replacement for a website? Definitely not.

If your congregation needs a reliable platform for hosting your website, consider PCCWeb, a free website hosting service for congregations and groups of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Learn more at presbyterian.ca/pccweb.

FAITH IN A SCIENCE DOMINATED WORLD

WITH
David Wilkinson
Astrophysicist, Theologian,
Professor, and Methodist Minister

May 27 – 29, 2022 | 1 Weekend; 3 Separate Events

Friday, May 27 **God, the Big Bang, and Stephen Hawking: The Search for God in Cosmology**
7:00 – 8:30 pm Public Lecture

Saturday, May 28 **When I Pray, What Does God Do?**
9:30 am – 2:30 pm Workshop and Lunch

Sunday, May 29 **The Cosmic Christ: The Revelations and the Universe, Christ for the World.**
10:30 am Worship Service | Everyone welcome!

Early registration opens October 1, 2021.

Find more information at www.PreachingGrace.ca.

Event hosted by



PREACHING GRACE

Advent & Christmas Resources Now Available

For worship service planning ideas, liturgies, prayers, crafts and activities, visit: presbyterian.ca/worship



LEADERSHIP

Light and Thankful Hearts in Campbellville

By the Rev. Drew Jacques, St. David's Presbyterian Church in Campbellville, Ont.

When you last heard from us at St. David's Presbyterian Church in Campbellville, Ont., we had enlisted the help of Canadian broadcast personality and Spiritual Director Ralph Benmergui to teach us about developing "spiritual tool boxes" to equip us with the necessary tools for facing times of "giant uncertainty."

At the time of writing that article, I could not report on the final outcome of these online sessions. But now, after a great deal of thought, we've come to the conclusion that we don't need "spiritual tool boxes" as much as we need "spiritual life preservers." As we move rapidly toward an

uncertain future, we realized that we need to be much more buoyant in our faith. We don't need to be weighed down with tools as much as we need to get light, so we can float.

The truth is our congregation does not need to create new tools or resources, or to look online for them. We already have all that we need. Having thankful hearts is the starting point for "getting light" in our faith.

However, this is not a given. Gratitude is an attitude adjustment.

Jesus got up every day, went to a quiet place, and began the day by giving thanks to God in his heart. Getting to that quiet space, quieting the mind, being still and opening your heart with thanksgiving requires discipline and practice.

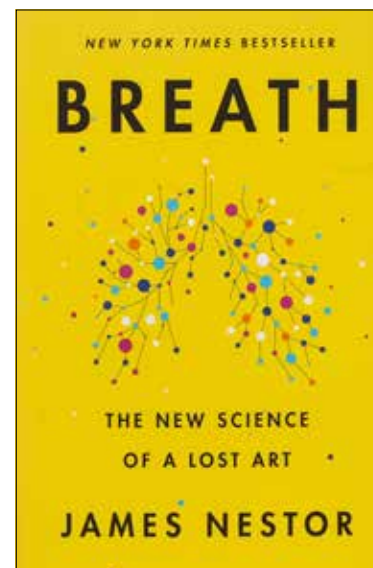
Following in Jesus' footsteps, we

initiated a daily challenge to help us practice gratitude in our everyday lives, which involved asking ourselves once each day: "How far into the day did you get before giving thanks to God? Breakfast, lunch, dinner, bedtime?"

A thankful heart is the "green light" God is waiting to see in us. It comes from understanding how much God has given us. Instead of dishing out what we deserve, God gives us mercy and grace.

Without thankful hearts, we'd all sink. To quote the lyrics of Bob Dylan: "If your time to you is worth savin', then you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone, for the times they are a-changin'."

While practicing our daily thanksgiving challenge, a book—*Breath:*



The New Science of a Lost Art by James Nestor—serendipitously came our way.

In the book, there is a passage that reads: "There is nothing more essential to our health and well-being than breathing: take in air, let it out, repeat 25,000 times a day. Yet as a species, humans have lost the ability to breathe correctly, with grave consequences."

The book goes on to say: "Modern

research is showing us that making even slight adjustments to the way we inhale and exhale can jump start athletic performance, rejuvenate internal organs, halt snoring, asthma, and autoimmune disease. None of this should be possible, but it is."

This book introduced our congregation to another means of practicing gratitude: the practice of mindful breathing. We are finding mindful breathing to be very helpful in quieting the mind and opening the heart to a thankful place. We're calling this practice "Thankful Breathing," and it is helping us at St. David's to be much more buoyant in spirit.

CORRECTION NOTICE

On page 34 of the Fall edition of the *Presbyterian Connection* (See "Spiritual Companionships in Campbellville" by the Rev. Drew Jacques), the article incorrectly stated "giant complexities" as a quote from Paul Bunyan when it should have been John Bunyan. As the Rev. Drew Jacques explained, "While Paul and John both had 'giant complexities' in their lives, they were quite different in nature."

Renewal in a Time of COVID-19 in Calgary

By Heather Bryant, Assessor Elder, Westminster Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta.

Are you familiar with the book *Love in the Time of Cholera*? The title of this novel, by Colombian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, seems especially salient during our current COVID-19 pandemic. And for us at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Calgary, we have gone through a journey that, were we to write a congregational biography, might be entitled *Renewal in the Time of COVID-19*.

Why "renewal" instead of "survive and thrive"? At the beginning of the pandemic, Westminster underwent some challenging times, and, at the end of May 2020, just weeks into the COVID-19 interventions, there was a simultaneous dissolution of pastoral ties and the Session. As you can imagine, these events would be difficult at any time, but they were especially challenging to cope with when we were unable to gather in person.

Over the next few months, as an Interim Moderator Team and assessor elders took on some of the congregational leadership, it became clear that we needed healing and some reinvention of ourselves prior to moving for-

ward. Several congregants enrolled in opportunities provided by the PCC in an effort to look outside ourselves and to find new potential paths forward: some enrolled in the Certificate Course on Missional Leadership, and others participated in conferences or in opportunities provided by Cyclical PCC and the presbytery-led church planting support initiative, Cyclical Calgary-Macleod. A few Westminster elders were eventually added to the Assessor Session, and as they began to meet and discuss, they came up with a plan to share some of this information with the congregation so that everyone could begin to look at the future with fresh eyes.

And so the SAM initiative was born. The name was a shameless "borrow" from the TED lecture series.

TED is an acronym for Technology, Entertainment and Design; we named our series SAM as an acronym for Spirituality And Mission. Over the summer of 2021, we held six SAM sessions, which were embedded into our worship services. Each Sunday, following the call to worship, prayer and scripture reading, the sermon was replaced with video clips, used with permission of the presenters, that we hoped would introduce some of the same kind of innovative thinking that is the hallmark of the TED talk series. The topics discussed included Intergenerational Faith Formation, the Missional Church, Using our Property for Missional Work, and two sessions from the Art of Gathering, featuring Casper ter Kuile (the first week, we discussed "How Millenni-



als Gather," and the second, "Choices for Churches").

After the videos, we moved into the narthex for small group discussion, all held within the COVID-19 guidelines in Alberta. This was a chance to explore the day's ideas and to brainstorm how and whether they could fit into our future congregational life. On the sixth Sunday, we gave a capsule summary of each topic and allowed people to choose the table discussing the topic in which they were most interested, and to come up with "one big idea" to share. Each session ended with prayer, a hymn and a benediction.

So what became of all this? First, the congregation had a chance to be exposed to some innovative and potentially challenging ideas, and to re-imagine a future together. There is already some movement afoot on using our property for mission, with the

placement of signs designed to welcome the families from the adjacent middle school to use our parking lot to ensure safe drop-off and pick-up of their kids. We have adopted an excellent curriculum for our Faith Formation program ("Follow Me" from PCUSA), which has great ideas on incorporating the theme units into adult studies and worship, as well as Sunday School. More participants have joined the team in the Missional Certificate Course, and together they've developed a project that will form the basis of the course's second year. And part of that project involves developing a deeper relationship with the community, which will help us rethink how we gather.

Sometime before the publication of this article, we will have elected and inducted a new Westminster Session, and we hope we will be well down the road to prayerfully developing our congregational profile as a foundation for calling a new minister. We remain grateful for so many in the PCC who made the original learning opportunities available via online seminars, and to our presbytery, who provided us with the gentle leadership needed so the congregation could find its sense of shared purpose again. We have felt the Holy Spirit moving among us, and we feel poised to embrace a new mission together. Spirituality And Mission—that's what we brought forward with the SAM talks, and we are committed to renewing a community of God's love in northwest Calgary.

Cyclical PCC is a church-planting support initiative of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in partnership with Cyclical Inc. It is designed to encourage presbyteries and individuals within the denomination to take first steps towards beginning new worshipping communities. If you are interested in learning more about this network, please contact the Rev. Jeffrey Crawford, Program Coordinator New Worshipping Communities, at jrcrawford@presbyterian.ca.

PRESBYTERIANS SHARING

Thank You for Being There



The Rev. Dr. Paul McLean with Tayal Bible Translators and friends in Taiwan.

By Karen Plater, Associate Secretary,
Stewardship & Planned Giving

Through Christ, God came to be with us. Born in a stable, raised in a family, trained as a carpenter; regarded as a heretic, a prophet, a saviour; admired, accused, crucified. God experienced life in all its fullness as Jesus Christ.

When we say we follow Christ, it means that we want to live our lives the way Jesus did. Jesus met people wherever they were at: in the temple, eating a meal, walking the road or fishing. We see that when Jesus was with people he shared their celebrations, listened to their challenges, heard their cries for help. He challenged them, laughed with them, offered wisdom and insight. Sometimes he became angry or was sad.

Jesus ministered in community. He gathered 12 disciples and many followers and made friends in different places along the road. God, too, calls us to be in community, to support and encourage one another from wherever we are at. Since the days of the early church, one of the ways of doing this has been to collect offerings to support others in their ministries, both near and far. Presbyterians Sharing is one way that Presbyterians participate in mission and ministry in communities across Canada and around the world.

Mission and ministry require being with people—loving them, sharing the good news, proclaiming justice. Through grants and programs, we are there to support congregations and mission partners as they seek new ways of being with people in a changing world. We are there when outreach ministries provide food, housing and employment services to people who are struggling. We are there when refugees are welcomed

and people on the margins are included. We are there when students graduate from theological colleges and when prisoners read the Bible. And God is there with us.

The Revs Shannon Bell and John Wyminga have spent the past 27 years ministering with the Dakelh people in the Nazko area of northern British Columbia through Cariboo Presbyterian Church. Shannon reflects that “A ministry of presence takes time—time to build trusting relationships; time to reassure and demonstrate that we are here to learn, respect and honour the culture; time to know families over generations; time to just ‘be’ rather than always ‘do’. As we walk with people through tragedies, births, illnesses, deaths, celebrations, rodeos, graduations, wildfires and floods and a pandemic, I know that what we do most effectively through the constancy of our presence is demonstrate the love of Jesus. All the programs and meetings and events that can be organized do not say *Yak’usda ‘en nek’entsi’ int’oh* (God is love) as much as the tangible presence of a follower of Jesus in good times and pain.”

The Rev. Dr. Paul McLean is able to support and be *present* with 12 different Indigenous Bible translation teams in Taiwan, even from Canada.

Using translation software, as well as his knowledge of Taiwanese, Chinese, Hakka, English, Greek and Hebrew, and his more than 30 years in Bible translation, Paul supports Indigenous teams as they translate the Bible, even into languages he doesn’t understand. Paul shares, “Indigenous languages in Taiwan, as in Canada, are all under the threat of language loss. By translating the Bible we hope to preserve these languages and to help churches promote them as an evangelism tool in their communities, as we proclaim the good news of God’s love for the whole world through our common faith in Jesus Christ.”

During the past year, congregations, mission partners and individuals have rediscovered the importance of being present together. Even as we’ve found new ways of doing ministry during a pandemic—virtual meals, online worship, porch visits and outdoor activities—we are seeing that we can still bring people together to share in the love and healing presence of God.

When we give to Presbyterians Sharing, we choose to be there, to be present as a church expressing Christ’s love together, for people across Canada and around the world.

Thank you for being there.



Shannon Bell (right), Cariboo Presbyterian Church, and friends at Nazko and Area Dakelh Outreach, B.C.



Presbyterians
Sharing



Proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ

Your gifts put faith into action
in Canada and around the world.

Donate through your congregation
or online at presbyterian.ca/donate

YES, I WANT TO SUPPORT Presbyterians Sharing

- As a monthly donor for \$ _____ /month
- With a one-time donation of \$ _____

Please provide the following credit card information:

Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐

Credit card #: _____

Expiry date: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, ON M3C 1J7 • 1-800-619-7301



The Presbyterian Church in Canada
presbyterian.ca

ECUMENICAL

Celebrate the Light!



PHOTO CREDIT: THE REV. JEFF MURRAY, ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SACKVILLE, N.B.

By the Rev. Kenn Stright, member of the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee, West Peteswick, N.S.

"Great Spirit who comes out of the East, come to us with the power of the East. We are thankful for the light of the rising sun. Let there be light on the path we walk. Let us remember always to be thankful that you give the gift of a new day."

—Traditional Indigenous prayer to the four directions

Light is important in many religions and festivals throughout the world. It is most often the symbol of the divine who brings light into the world... "Let

there be light!" (Genesis 1:3). Being such a religiously diverse and multicultural nation, Canada and Canadians have many wonderful opportunities to "celebrate the light."

God is the Light of the heavens and earth. His Light is like this: there is a niche, and in it a lamp, the lamp inside a glass, a glass like a glittering star, fuelled from a blessed olive tree from neither east nor west, whose oil almost gives light even when no fire touches it—light upon light—God guides whoever He will to his Light; God draws such comparisons for people; God has full knowledge of everything—shining out in houses of worship. —Qur'an 24:35–6

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. (John 1:5)

The "Where are you going?" questions below are to let people know they can go and celebrate these festivals of light regardless of faith background and all of them are found here in Canada, maybe just around the corner.

Where are you going?

To celebrate Diwali. It's Diwali, come and see the lights! This is the festival of lights, celebrated by millions of Hindus, Sikhs and Jains across the world with each candle symbolizing the power of light to conquer darkness. Hindus also take advantage of

this period to contemplate and dispel the darkness of ignorance.

The Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal reflected, "Diwali reminded me of my days growing up in Trinidad when we would go from one friend's house to another, shaping bamboo to make decorative stands for the diyas (oil lamps)."¹

Where are you going?

To celebrate Hanukkah. A festival celebrated in Judaism. It is observed for a period of eight nights and days anywhere between the end of November and December. It all starts with lighting candles. The blessings are said, the Menorah is lit, and light enters the world. Rabbi David reminds us that latkes go well with Hanukkah!

Where are you going?

To celebrate Christmas. Come to a Christmas tree lighting, but not just any Christmas tree. The Boston Christmas Tree has come from the forests of Nova Scotia and stands tall in the Boston Commons in Boston, Massachusetts. It is a symbol of thanksgiving for the generosity of the city of Boston as the people of that city reached out to the victims of the Halifax explosion on December 6, 1917.

Or maybe Le Réveillon is for you: Le Réveillon is a festival celebrated in four Canadian provinces (Quebec, Manitoba, Ontario and New Brunswick). This holiday is similar to Christmas in that it celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. On Christmas Eve, a large candle is lit symbolizing Christ, Light of the World. This candle is left to burn throughout the night.

Where are you going?

To the Sacred Fire. The fire is one of the ways to start a ceremony or any sacred event. The light of the fire is a spiritual doorway that opens to a spiritual realm. The sacred fire is never left alone, it is watched and attended to by a Fire Keeper. People gather around the fire for ceremony and conversation. Indigenous societies have numerous ceremonies for the transitions of the seasons, like the full moon ceremonies incorporating the sacred fire.

Vivian Ketchum speaks of lighting a candle to guide someone who has died to help them on their journey.²

Where are you going?

To celebrate the Lantern festival. Celebrated on the 15th day of the Lunar year, which falls anywhere be-

tween late February and March. The festival is highlighted with many lanterns floating in local bodies of water. Many think this Chinese festival of lantern lights originated in Buddhism.

Where are you going?

To celebrate Kwanzaa. Kwanzaa (first fruits) is an African American celebration that isn't religious in origin yet incorporates practices of ancient spirituality from Africa and elsewhere. Light is used in this celebration as a symbol of seven principles* where each principle is symbolized with a candle. A kinara is the candle holder that holds the seven candles. Each night a candle is lit, and families talk about one of the seven principles. This is done each night until all the candles are lit.

These principles are:

1. Unity
2. Self-Determination
3. Collective Work and Responsibility
4. Cooperative Economics
5. Purpose
6. Creativity
7. Faith

The Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Committee of The Presbyterian Church in Canada has an extensive and diverse mandate. Part of that mandate is to promote and encourage peace, respect and understanding between ourselves and those of other faiths...to encourage Presbyterians to acknowledge, understand and appreciate other faith traditions, and to help Presbyterians to live in good relationship with persons who belong to other religions.

As we celebrate the light, especially in the darkest months of the year, we realize that we all cherish this gift of creation.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. (Isaiah 60:1)

The most precious light is the one that visits you in your darkest hour!

—Mehmet Murat ildan

REFERENCES

- 1 The Rev. Shalini Rajack-Sankarlal is the minister at University Community Church in Windsor, Ont.
- 2 Vivian Ketchum originates from Wauzhushk Onigum Nation of Northern Ontario and is a member of Place of Hope Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is a former member of the Life and Mission Agency Committee.

"Waazakonenjigen [Ojibwe]—Light, is sacred. Light is brought into the darkness first by the One who created us all. We were all in darkness at one time. There is a beautiful story about how Raven was able to trick Grandfather Sky so that he could bring light into this world.

"There are many, many light stories centring around Sun, Moon, Stars and Fire. There are 13 moons, each with their own meaning, sunrise ceremonies, Sacred Fires, and Solstice ceremonies. The stories vary from community to community and from one storyteller to another. Each of these stories can teach a different lesson each time they are heard. When these stories are shared, people will have different responses and perspectives. It is about your experience, your personal growth, and what learnings you need from the story. The Stories are given to us by the Creator and are meant to be shared. The Sacred Fire is one way we keep our relationship to God strong. In the Indigenous way, fire is a living being. It is considered an aspect or relative of the sun, sometimes referred to as a 'Ray of the Sun'—the People pray at the Fire to 'the One who lives beyond the Sun,' not to the sun itself. Sacred Fires are lit at dawn and burn continuously for the length of the gathering. Often, they burn for four days."

—The Rev. Margaret Mullin, retired director of Winnipeg Inner City Missions and minister at Place of Hope Indigenous Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She lives in Treaty One Territory, homeland of the Cree, Anishinaabe and Dakota Peoples and homeland of the Métis Nation.

ECUMENICAL

Ecumenical Chaplaincy at Brock University

By the Rev. Krista Hilton,
ecumenical chaplain.

"We have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, as you bear fruit in every good work and as you grow in the knowledge of God." Colossians 1: 9b-10

It is my pleasure to introduce myself as the new ecumenical chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., jointly supported by the Anglican, Presbyterian and United churches. I began in the position on April 1, 2021, and I've been settling into the role these recent months. Due to Covid restrictions, September marked the first time I was able to physically be present on campus.

Chaplaincy at a university provides spiritual and pastoral care to students

and staff via a ministry of presence, outreach and faith exploration. I now have the privilege of walking with university students as they discern the pathways for their future and learn to listen to how God is guiding them. Entering university is both an exciting and scary time for many of them. It is often a time of budding independence, exploring new ideas and ways of being in the world. This can be challenging, confusing and mind-broadening all at the same time. A university chaplain provides a ministry of presence: a person who will walk alongside and provide a safe space for wrestling with new concepts, light bulb moments and even discovering new identities.

Given the challenges we've all faced during the pandemic, I decided to offer a program this fall that examines the intersection of faith and mental health. The program is called "The Sanctuary Course," and it's an online, ecumenical pro-



The Rev. Krista Hilton, ecumenical chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

gram that explores the topic from a psychological, social and theological perspective. Additionally, each session is accompanied by a compelling film featuring the story of an individual who has journeyed through mental health challenges as a person of faith. This course was created to raise awareness and start conversations about mental health in the church, and it combines clinical research, theological practice and lived experience. The program

helps to reduce stigma, support mental health and promote mental well-being. It is a very user-friendly program and is suitable for congregations. I would highly recommend it! More information can be found at sanctuarymentalhealth.org.

Since I'm new to the position of chaplain, I'm beginning my role by making connections with local churches; for example, I'm glad to facilitate shared ministries between local congregations and Brock

University students, who are often looking for volunteer opportunities. Much of the role as chaplain involves building bridges and creating liaison opportunities. I encourage students at all educational institutions to reach out to the campus chaplain as a resource for support, encouragement and spiritual guidance. Lastly, I welcome prayers for all campus ministries, that they may be a place of welcome and acceptance for everyone.

Resources for the
Season
presbyterian.ca/worship



You can help to heal our hurting world. By giving to Knox College, you're training leaders to be well-equipped and compassionate
—God's love in action.



KNOX COLLEGE
knox.utoronto.ca/give

Will you equip more leaders to be God's love in action?
Give today at knox.utoronto.ca/give.

JUSTICE

Human Rights for People Who are Migrants

By Justice Ministries

December 18 is International Migrants Day and marks the date in 1990 when the United Nations adopted the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

Canada draws temporary migrant workers through programs like the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program and the Temporary Foreign Workers Program (TFWP) to fill labour shortages. In 2019, there were approximately 470,000 foreign national workers registered in the TFWP. Temporary employment is found in agriculture, domestic care, recreation, hospitality services, retail, food and manufacturing industries.

Many migrant workers fill essential work positions in low-paying service and labour jobs. They often rely

solely on their employer for housing, access to health care and community services. Documented complaints demonstrate gruelling work and long hours. Other documented issues include no access to water for agricultural workers, no days off, expanded duties for domestic workers. Many face exploitation and abuse without a clear path for remedy, and fear job loss or even deportation if they do complain. Few provinces have legislation to safeguard the rights of workers. Without this, migrant workers are vulnerable.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges. A report from the Caregivers' Action Centre, a grassroots organization made up of former caregivers, outlines these circumstances:

"There are approximately 25,000 migrant care workers in Canada today, almost all of whom live in

employer homes. Many of us kept working during the pandemic. With schools closed and our employers working from home, our work intensified immensely. But we did not get paid for all of the extra hours we worked. Some employers also refused to allow migrant workers to leave their homes. Employers were free to come and go but their employees were not. Migrant care workers, the overwhelming majority of whom are racialized women, were cut off from social and personal support networks, unable to even send remittances home to families abroad in need."

Church partner KAIROS, with funding from the Government of Canada, is collaborating with local support groups to provide assistance and help for migrant workers, including personal support, language translation and information about workers' rights. You can learn about this program at kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/migrant-justice/etfw.

As a church we believe that all people are beloved of God and deserving of dignity and respect. Yet not every person has access to physical, social, psychological and spiritual resources that are needed for human flourishing. This can challenge our understanding, and our expectations, of how different people experience God's love and justice. What do we do, as people of faith, when confronted by the brokenness of the world? What are we called to do when confronted with lived experiences of inequality, poverty, conflict, racism, misogyny and systemic barriers to health, safety, education, livelihood and participation in community life and decision making? There are connections between the factors needed for human flourishing and the principles articulated by human rights. This is why it is so important to talk about human rights as we make sense of the calling to "do justice" (Micah 6:8).

While some migrants move because they feel "pulled" to a new place by circumstance or when seeking opportunity, many are pushed. In 2020, according to the UN Refugee Agency, there were 281 million international migrants (those who have crossed international borders); 82.4 million were forcibly displaced because of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing the public order—40 % of these displaced are children. Forty-

eight million people are internally displaced within their own country but forced out of their homes, and 26.4 million are refugees with special protections under United Nations conventions, while 4.1 million were asylum seekers. Only 107,800 refugees were resettled into new permanent homes in 2019. That number dropped to 34,500 in 2020 because of pandemic travel restrictions.

One particular "push" factor is climate change. Rising ocean levels are forcing people of Pacific Island Nations to face the disappearance of their entire country. Where will they go? Some have sought pathways to citizenship in neighbouring regions and have been denied. What responsibilities do we have toward people whose homes are becoming uninhabitable because of climate change?

Human rights conventions cannot answer all these questions, but they give us a framework for the minimum standards for the protection of human dignity and well-being. When human rights are violated or neglected, human flourishing is diminished. Canada has not signed or ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. As a community of faith, we can support our partners like KAIROS who provide direct assistance to migrant workers and advocate that government programs meet the standards of the Migrant Workers' Convention.

This article summarizes sections of the International Affairs Committee Report adopted by the 2021 General Assembly. The complete report is online at presbyterian.ca/gao/jac. Additional information about church statements and human rights are at the Social Action Hub at presbyterian.ca/justice/social-action.



PULPIT VACANCY

Trinity Presbyterian Church Amherstview, Ontario

Trinity Presbyterian Church is waiting for someone God has called to lead us as pastor, preacher and visionary.

Our community-focused congregation is hard working, music loving and welcoming to creative expansions.

Full details about this position are available at:



presbyterian.ca/trinity-amherstview

613-279-2679

JUSTICE

What Kind of World Do We Live In?

*By the Rev. Meg Patterson,
St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church
in Ottawa, Ont.*

Before I was a minister in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, I worked as a mechanical engineer, specializing in energy efficient building design. I entered that field in my 20s because I wanted to help others treat our planet a little more kindly through my work as an engineer.

My 13-year history of working in sustainable design came with me as I transitioned to professional ministry and took my first call at St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Ottawa, Ont. One of the first things I encountered was the complexities of making environmental changes at a church. Significant change often involves significant capital investment and/or volunteer investment. Often we have to critically look at the way things have "always been done" and ask if there is a more sustainable way to approach the task. Many times, the changes we could implement feel small. There are times when I have wondered if these little changes we are making have any meaningful impact. Is this what God had in mind when he made us stewards over the earth?

So, I was delighted when, in Spring 2020, it was announced that our next synod conference would be entitled "Climate Change: What Can I Do? Christian Caring for Creation." When the conference got delayed for a year, it gave me the chance to get involved in organizing the climate panel and

in hosting the event. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Norman Wirzba, Professor of Theology at Duke Divinity School. Dr. Wirzba has a passion for connecting our faith in God with our view of the created world and how we care for it. He has a gentle and grace-filled way of challenging people's assumptions about what the world was created to be and how we interact with it. This was evident in all of the sessions I attended.

The online conference consisted of four sessions between 90 minutes and two hours in length. Three of the sessions were led by Dr. Wirzba. The fourth session was a panel discussion on climate change moderated by The Honourable Thomas Mulcair and included Dr. Wirzba, Mr. David Hurstel (former Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change in the provincial government for Quebec), Dr. Jessica Moerman (Senior Director for Science and Policy at the Evangelical Environmental Network), and Dr. Caroline Begg (Faculty Lecturer in the Department of Plant Science at McGill University in Montreal). The first two sessions focused on the theology of creation care, transitioning into more practical applications through the panel and the final session on food. Throughout the conference, there were opportunities for delegates to ask questions and share ideas, resulting in a number of practical suggestions for where we could go from here.

As we kicked things off Thursday night, I really appreciated how Dr.



Wirzba started with the question, "What kind of world are we in?" He argued that how we understand the world affects how we view solutions to climate change. For most people in North America, the world is a place of resources, almost like a giant grocery store, and we are consumers in it. When we are consumers, success means accumulating as much stuff as possible, and our solutions start with an ethos of possession. Instead, Dr. Wirzba argued that all of creation is an expression of God's love. How we treat the land, sea, air, animals, plants and fellow humans then becomes our response to God's love, manifest in our physical surroundings. With this perspective, our solutions become radically different. Dr. Wirzba pointed to our Indigenous siblings as examples of how this type of thinking can be lived out.

Dr. Wirzba built on this initial theology of creation with questions like "What is the point of the world?", "How is Sabbath-keeping connected to climate change?" and "How can



faith communities lead the way in advocating for a better food system?" I think my favourite line of the conference came in the final session on food when Dr. Wirzba said, "Food is God's love made delicious." Both on Friday night during the panel and on Saturday morning, we spoke a lot about how agriculture impacts climate change, both positively and negatively. Many of the practical suggestions that came out of the conference were rooted in food choices and advocacy.

Sometimes the climate crisis can feel too big for any one individual or church to do anything meaningful about it. And to some extent that is true: the climate crisis has a global impact, and any solutions to limit the devastating effects of pollution and global warming need to be implemented at a country or global level. It is also true that we live in a democracy, and our past shows that when the will of the people is strong enough, it is possible to demand meaningful change through our elected officials. As such, one of the most impactful things we can do as Christians is provide opportunities for education about the realities of the climate crisis



Dr. Norman Wirzba, Professor of Theology at Duke Divinity School.

and advocate for real, meaningful change at all levels of government. In the past, churches have been on the front lines for health care, schooling, and providing food and care for vulnerable people. If we put our collective energy behind fighting for environmental protection, just imagine what we could do!

A playback of the full conference is available on YouTube.

Please visit presbyterian.ca/geosynod/synod2021.html for the link or email geosynod.pcc@gmail.com for more information.



(Clockwise from top left) Dr. Norman Wirzba, the Honourable Thomas Mulcair, Mr. David Hurstel, Dr. Caroline Begg, Dr. Jessica Moerman.



Images and Videos for Worship

Download for visual presentations during worship services, announcements and church gatherings, and use on your congregation's website and social media channels.

Visit presbyterian.ca/worship-images



RECONCILIATION

Journeying to Reconcili-action at Grace Calgary



By Amy Dunn Moscoso,
Communications Coordinator, Grace
Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta.

Early morning on Thursday, July 1, 2021, two sets of doors at the top of the steps at Grace Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta., had red paint splattered on them as an act of protest and expression of grief regarding the recent discoveries of numerous unmarked graves at the sites of former Residential Schools in Kamloops, Cowessess, Cranbrook, as well as in other places in Canada.

Grace's ministers began sitting on the church steps and spoke to those who passed by, which led to the realization that Grace needed to build relationships with Indigenous people. Eight conversations were held on the front steps of Grace about truth,

healing and reconciliation from Tuesday, July 20 to Saturday, July 24. The conversations were meaningful and meaning-filled with members from Grace and the community engaging and listening to one another. Grace was grateful to Indigenous leaders Tony Snow, Gloria Snow and Ken Levae for their wisdom, care and presence in four of the conversations.

To continue the conversation, Grace formed a Truth, Healing and Reconciliation Committee. The committee is building plans toward truth, healing and reconciliation that will go deeper than a response to the red paint, that will last far beyond September 30, Canada's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Orange Shirt Day), and that will build meaningful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

On Sunday, Sept. 26, Grace held the congregational and community event *7 Generations: Stories and Our Lament*, on the front steps. The community, congregation and wider church community were all invited to attend. To incorporate the members of Grace's neighbourhood, the urban, inner-city Beltline in Calgary, the street was blocked off. Many walking by stopped to chat and take part in the event.

Speeches, a smudge ceremony, and songs were shared by a number of people and groups, including:



- Tony Snow, Indigenous Lead at Hillhurst United Church and Indigenous Minister, Chinook Winds Region, United Church of Canada
- Gloria Snow, Stoney Nakoda Student Minister, studying in the Master of Divinity Program at the Vancouver School of Theology
- Shirley Shingoose Dufour, Elder, Social Worker, Residential School Survivor, Member of the National Healing and Reconciliation Advisory Committee
- Kyle Logan Standingready-Snow, Traditional Stoney Nakoda Knowledge Keeper who shared music and drumming
- Mayor Naheed Nenshi
- The Grace Choir
- Ministers at Grace: the Rev. Jake Van Pernis, the Rev. Maren McLean Persaud and the Rev. Christian Persaud

Interest in Calgary was high with three TV stations—Global TV, CTV Calgary and CBC Television—covering the event. Grace is creating a series of videos from this event and will share these on YouTube in the future. Watch highlights of the event on Grace's YouTube channel here: youtube.com/watch?v=FD985bxEAM

Though Orange Shirt Day has passed, the journey continues. The next steps include a land acknowledgement, to be spoken in Worship, in meetings, and incorporated online and in documents as well as shared activities.

The Grace Quilters will be working with Gloria Snow to do beading and create ribbon skirts—all ceremonies and activities that Indigenous people were once prevented from carrying out. Grace will be working to not only provide opportunities to take part, but also to become educated on the significance of ceremonies and rituals.

On Sunday, Nov. 28, Grace held a KAIROS Blanket Exercise. The goal of the Blanket Exercise is to build understanding about our shared history as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada by walking through pre-contact, treaty-making, colonization and resistance.

Grace is planning a book study, in January, to be led by the Rev. John Snow, Jr., on his father's book *These Mountains Are Our Sacred Places: The Story of the Stoney People*. This will be online, and all are welcome.

At this time, discussions about the red paint on the doors are being held by Grace with the congregation, community, City of Calgary, Indigenous Elders and Indigenous artists—with a vision of incorporating the paint into a mural. Stay tuned!

For more information about Grace's Truth, Healing and Reconciliation journey, please visit gracechurchcalgary.com/redpainteddoors.

Recognizing Orange Shirt Day in Uxbridge

By David Phillips, St. Andrew's-
Chalmers Presbyterian Church in
Uxbridge, Ont.

As we have over the past few years, Trinity United Church, St. Paul's Anglican Church and St. Andrew's-Chalmers Presbyterian Church worked together for Orange Shirt Day. We were fortunate to have the Township of Uxbridge Council and staff supporting

our endeavour. With Covid protocols in place, we still wanted to have some form of expression from the citizens of the Township of Uxbridge on our journey to reconciliation.

Josh Musgrave led with Indigenous singing, dancing and drumming to open the gathering. Many gathered and were very moved and deeply appreciative of the presentation. There was a very important land acknowl-



edgement statement made before we started our walk from the Uxbridge Arena to the township office. Along the way, our walkers in orange shirts discussed reconciliation efforts. At the township office, Pearl Gabona spoke to us about the situation in Uxbridge, and across the country, addressing issues Indigenous people

experience that have roots in the past and still shape the present. Pearl is a Métis elder and counsellor. The evening closed with prayer.

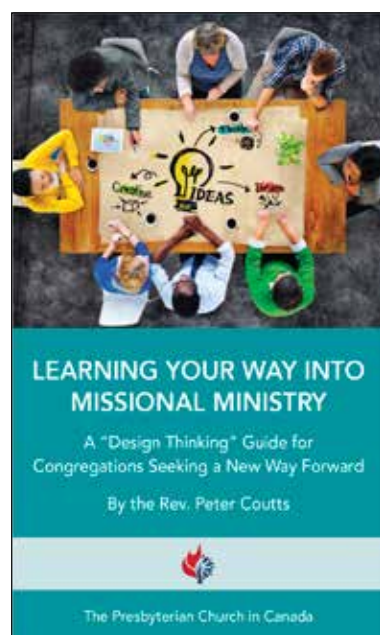
The singing and dancing at the start of the celebration, along with Pearl's challenge to us, brought us another step along the journey that we need to take toward reconciliation.

RESOURCES

New Resources from the PCC

Learning Your Way into Missional Ministry

A "Design Thinking" Guide for Congregations Seeking a New Way Forward



Many congregations have a sense that God is calling them to connect with their neighbours and community in new ways but are unsure how to do it. Often, we want to demonstrate love for neighbours in a tangible way, or think outside the box, or follow God's will for our church, but indecision is a quandary that impedes movement. Simply ratcheting up the sense of urgency to change is not enough to move through the impasse.

If this is what your congregation is experiencing, consider switching your approach from *seeking to learning*. What would happen if you replaced the question of "What do we need to do?" with "What do we need to learn?"

A new resource written by the Rev. Peter Coutts, and produced by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, explores "Design Thinking." This is a process that helps learners think outside of the box with the help of others. It is created to help you gain a greater understanding of a need and how to address that need effectively. A key part of Design Thinking is "pro-

tototyping"—the practice of putting a new idea into action on a small scale over a short period of time.

In this resource, you will explore the steps of Design Thinking through a story of a fictitious congregation that wants to be more missional and make a difference in their neighbourhood, but they are not sure how to go about it. The resource provides a series of useful steps that you can use to guide your congregation through the process of determining how to live out your missional calling.

The Spirit Prays Within Us

Prayer Workbook for Elders

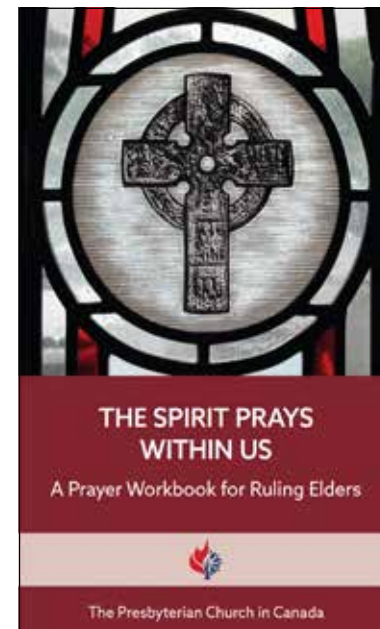
Prayer is a multi-layered practice in Christian life, a powerful dynamic in Christian worship and, for many, the heartbeat of our personal relationship with God.

The Spirit Prays Within Us is a prayer workbook written by the Rev. Dr. Nancy Cocks for the PCC that is designed to help ruling elders explore

the practice of prayer in their pastoral role. Knowing that our experiences and expectations of prayer are many and varied, this workbook offers suggestions and exercises to help elders expand ways to lead prayer in pastoral encounters.

This workbook invites elders to explore their own practices of prayer and the opportunities to pray with others that present themselves as they under take pastoral responsibilities. The booklet does not propose a single model of prayer. Instead, there are sections that invite reflection on questions, either separately, or perhaps, with other members of Session.

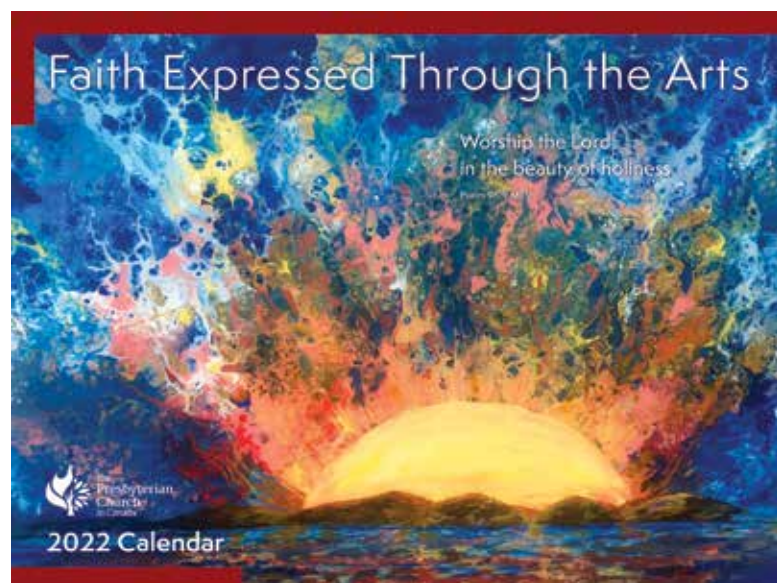
This resource could be used for personal study, group study, Session starters and elder training or mentorship. It is broken into sections that



focus on the reader's current views on prayer, taking into consideration those who are within your care, the ways you currently pray, public prayer and preparation before prayer.

To order these resources online through the Resource Ordering Portal, visit presbyterian.ca/portal (and have your username and password ready). You can also place an order through the online order form at presbyterian.ca/order or call 1-800-619-7301.

2022 Wall Calendar



Art, in all its forms, can nourish our souls and bring us closer to God. The PCC's 2022 wall calendar features the incredible artwork of Presbyterians from across the country, including paintings, quilts, photography, pulpit falls, and more.



Cost: \$4.00 each

Order today through the PCC Resource Ordering Portal at presbyterian.ca/portal (have your congregation's username and password ready) or use the online order form at presbyterian.ca/order. You can also call 1-800-619-7301.

 **The Presbyterian Church in Canada**
presbyterian.ca

COMMITTEES

The Wineglass: How a Fund to Help Financially Strapped Ministers Saved Christmas

By Stephen Farris, as originally appeared in the Presbyterian Record magazine, December 2014.

My wife, Patty, and I returned from graduate study in England in the autumn of 1981 debt-free, but nearly penniless and with a six-month-old baby. That is not at all a complaint, let me tell you. Penniless but debt-free is better off than most graduate students. Moreover, at least I knew that a job was awaiting me. I had been appointed under the old ordained missionary system to Trinity, Amherstview, Ont. What's more, Trinity had a manse. A job, or better, a ministry, an assured income, a home to live in; who could ask for anything more? Well, it turns out that a family setting up a home for the first time does demand a few things more. The income was assured but it was also low. As a newly ordained minister, I was on "minimum stipend with no annual increments," which in plain English meant "not all that much."

We collected furniture from the attics of all our relatives—I believe "Early Attic" is both the name of a kind of ancient Greek pottery and of a furniture style widely displayed in the homes of new clergy and other impecunious folk. We scraped together a down payment for a car and applied for a credit card. The bank authorities turned us down; our income was too low. The local bank manager personally interceded for us, however, and we did receive a shiny but very limited credit card. We had been granted what I believe was the lowest possible credit limit at that time, \$200.

But life was good. I was enjoying the ministry. The church took a few modest steps forward and, after having lived in dorm rooms, student flats and apartments for our entire married life, it felt good to have to lock both a front and a back door at night. A year soon passed by and the Christmas of 1982 approached at the end of my first full year of ministry. Buying presents on minimum stipend and with a \$200 credit limit was a challenge. But we managed barely. It was all made a little easier by the fact that we didn't need to cook a Christmas dinner. Trinity Church held two Christmas Eve services but none on the day itself. Our plan was to drive first thing in the morning to Patty's parents' home to spend Christmas with the extended family. So the cupboard and fridge were all but bare—no cake, no fruit, no goodies or Christmas cheer.

My only real difficulty was that I had not yet bought Patty a present and Christmas Day was approaching. The morning of Christmas Eve itself had come before I could find the time to go shopping for her. I drove through the ice and snow of the Ontario winter to the nearest mall. The \$200 limit on our card had long been reached and I had a little less than \$25 in my pocket. Any present for Patty had to be less than that hard and fast limit. I actually found a gift for her—a box of six not particularly lovely but satisfactorily inexpensive wineglasses. It was perhaps not the wisest gift since there would certainly not be enough left to purchase a bottle of wine to go with them. But

at least Patty could open the box, admire them and place them in the sparsely covered shelves in our kitchen. I paid for the wineglasses—in cash, of course—and made my way through the icy parking lot to the car.

I shifted my weight to transfer the box of glasses to my left hand, reached for my keys, slipped on the ice and fell flat on my face beside the driver's-side door. I could hear what I had done to the glasses but I didn't have the heart to look. I drove home with self-pity buckled up beside me in the night. I had worked so hard. I had studied so long. I didn't have a single goody in the house to celebrate with my wife and new son, not even a bottle of wine, and now I had smashed my wife's Christmas present.

I opened the door and stepped into the manse's front hall. Patty had been watching for me and grasped immediately that something was wrong; she could hear me clinking. There didn't seem to be any point in hiding the disaster from her. I said, "Patty love, I bought you some wineglasses for Christmas but I slipped on the ice in the parking lot. You can hear what happened." And I held out the box to her.

Patty rubbed me gently and soothingly on the arm and said, "It doesn't matter, my love. Let's open up and see if any survived." And there, amidst the shards, remained two intact wineglasses! One for Patty, one for me; who could ask for anything more?

Just then we could hear the mail-



The Nativity Window is one of a series of McCausland windows created over 40 years (the first was in 1894) for St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Ottawa, Ont. This particular one was designed by Yvonne William and was a gift from Maud Helen Fleck in 1934, in memory of the Fleck and Booth families, prominent in Ottawa society and philanthropy, and members of St. Andrew's. PHOTO CREDIT: EJPHILLIPSON

box lift and clang shut. I stepped outside and retrieved the mail flyers, some late Christmas cards and, to my surprise, an envelope from the headquarters of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Inside, there was a letter stating that a donor who wished to remain anonymous had established a fund to give a helping hand especially at Christmas, to ministers paid at, or near, minimum stipend. Inside the letter was a cheque for \$387.

A gift I had not expected and could not deserve, Christmas Eve!

There was just enough time to rush to the bank, deposit the cheque, withdraw a little cash, pick up some fruit and shortcake and, above all, get to the wine store to buy one bottle of inexpensive wine.

That night after the second service was over and Allan, the baby, was soundly asleep, Patty set out the fruit and shortcake. I opened the wine bottle and carefully filled our two new glasses. A connoisseur would turn up his educated nose at the wine, and the glasses were less than fine crystal, but in the candlelight the wine glowed like the richest rubies. We sat together on the long-used hand-me-down couch, sampled the fruit and sipped our wine. Then, with a contented sigh, Patty put down her glass and stretched out her legs to snuggle into my shoulder...and kicked over her wineglass.

We have moved many times since that Christmas Eve and over the years we have been given or purchased some very fine crystal indeed. But in our china cabinet there sits to this very day one rather plain, perhaps even ugly, but treasured wineglass.

The aforementioned source of help for clergy is called the Fund for Ministerial Assistance. I hear they are a little short of money this year.



Norman M. Paterson

The Fund for Ministerial Assistance

The Fund for Ministerial Assistance provides financial support to ministers and diaconal workers of The Presbyterian Church in Canada who meet the terms of the fund and who are at, or near, minimum stipend as set by the General Assembly.

The fund has a remarkable history. It was established by an anonymous gift of one million dollars on February 8, 1951. In 1983, following the death of the donor one week after his 100th birthday, the fund was renamed the Norman M. Paterson Fund for Ministerial Assistance. Businessman and Senator Norman Paterson and his wife, Eleanor, who were associated with St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Ottawa, Ont., maintained a lifelong interest in the ministers of the church and their families and they hoped that their generosity might encourage the beneficence of others.

Norman Paterson's original gift has grown and allows the church to provide eligible ministers and their families a gift four times a year. The fund is overseen by a committee of appointees made up of people from across the church who also serve as the denomination's Benevolence Committee.

Ministers or diaconal workers within The Presbyterian Church in Canada can apply by contacting Ian Ross-McDonald at imcdonald@presbyterian.ca or 1-800-619-7301.

COMMITTEES

Update from the Special Committee on Petitions 1 and 2, 2021

By Peter Bush, co-convenor of the Special Committee on Petitions 1 and 2, 2021, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Fergus, Ont.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multicultural, multi-lingual gathering of people who declare that Jesus Christ is Lord. People from Korea and Ghana, from the Arabic-speaking world and from Trinidad and Guyana, from Scotland and the Netherlands and Hungary, Indigenous people and individuals who have been displaced so frequently that they have no roots—all of them have been drawn by the action of the Holy Spirit into the community of God's people we call The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Regarding Petitions 1 and 2 (2021), the Special Committee, which was established by the 2021 General Assembly, is asking: How is the church doing at being a community gathered "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" (Revelations 7:9)? How is the church doing at living into the truth that the church's sole source of unity is our common allegiance to Jesus Christ as our Monarch and Head?

The Special Committee has begun the process of listening to stories about the relations between people of the various ethnicities, language groups, cultures and races who are part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. We have heard stories of welcome offered across cultural lines and ethnic differences: stories of support and encouragement as the gifts of diverse populations were welcomed into the predominantly Anglo-Saxon (Scottish) society of Canadian Presbyterianism. The dominance of this Scottish culture is evident in how many churches are named Knox or St. Andrew's. These days, members act to assist and support our brothers and sisters from other ethnicities as they adjust to the new context in which they find themselves, teaching them the systems and structures of the church.

Offering welcome is complicated and takes great sensitivity to do well. The Special Committee has heard stories when the welcome was not well handled, and members of the dominant culture failed to act as good hosts by failing to appreciate that the



differences are deeper than language and include cultural practices and ethnic understandings. One elder's comment shed light on the tension between the Congo-born pastor and the Session of their church: "I thought that when their English improved, they would be just like us." The subtext being that the pastor's assimilation into the dominant culture was hoped for, even expected.

The Special Committee has heard accounts of members of the dominant culture speaking in ways that were hurtful, such as when a pastor of Korean-ancestry was told that he and his people (Asians in Canada) were responsible for the Asian beetle that was eating crops in the region; or when a second-generation Korean (that is, someone born and raised in Canada) is told, "You speak English very well, I forget that you are not from here."

The Special Committee has also heard stories of how members of the dominant culture have marginalized and diminished the space and place of those whose culture and ethnicity was not part of the dominant culture. One of the subtle ways in which this marginalization is evident is in interactions when members of the dominant culture speak about the others in the church as having a culture, while failing to recognize that they themselves have a culture as well.

Very much like when people note the accents with which other people speak English, while claiming that they themselves have no accent. In identifying that others have a culture, while acting as though the dominant group does not have a culture, the members of the dominant group create an environment in which the words and actions, the critiques and challenges offered by the other cultures are named as being "cultural matters." Such language is a form of marginalization that diminishes both the speaker and their words.

The Special Committee has heard stories of how members of minority cultures and ethnicities have been subjected to tokenism. The presence of other ethnicities and races is welcomed in photographs and to sit on committees and boards in order to demonstrate cultural diversity, but they are blocked from using their skills and abilities in their roles within the church. Their presence is welcomed, but their voices are not. They are to be seen and not heard, rather than being treated as full participants at the table.

The Special Committee has been reflecting on John Swinton's discussion of thin and thick relationships. Thin relationships are those in which the other person is known by only one or two things. For example, we

may know the neighbours by their names, the country they come from and that they dress in ways that are different from us. It is a thin relationship. A thick relationship is one in which we know many things about the other person, and we have discovered common interests as well as experiences that we both resonate with. As we discover that the neighbours are hockey fans, that their children are interested in music, that they have a compelling story to tell about their immigration to Canada, the relationship thickens. In a thin relationship, it is easy to dismiss the voice and hopes of the other. When disagreements arise, their viewpoints are quickly labelled as "other" and rejected. Thin relationships see the other in one- or two-dimensional terms. In a thick relationship, the other is three-dimensional, we pay attention when they voice their feelings and their hopes. And even when we disagree, we express that disagreement in respectful ways.

The question then arises: What kind of relationship do members of the dominant culture of The Presbyterian Church in Canada have with the people of "every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" that are also part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada? Is it a thin relationship? Or is it a thick one?

And the follow-up question is, does the dominant culture have the will to build thick relationships with the many language groups and ethnicities that are part of The Presbyterian Church in Canada?

The Special Committee hopes that the General Assembly, in establishing this committee, is indicating the commitment of the members of the church to build thick relationships across ethnic and cultural lines of division.

The Special Committee is hoping to hear additional stories from within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, regarding how various ethnic and minority groups have been welcomed or not welcomed, have been offered leadership within the denomination or blocked from exercising leadership, have been treated with respect or with disrespect, have been accepted as equals or seen as second-class. We are hoping to hear from a wide variety of voices, including clergy who are serving cross-culturally in primarily dominant culture congregations. As well, members of the dominant culture who wish to bear witness to what they have seen, heard and participated in, are welcome to send in their stories.

Stories are being gathered by a variety of methods. Congregations or subgroups in congregations are welcome to invite members of the Special Committee to come and hear their stories. Zoom meetings can be set up so that people, as part of a group or individually, can share their stories. As well, people can write about their story and submit it by mail or email. We understand that some people will be nervous about speaking publicly, on the record, and we can offer confidential places for stories to be told.

To connect with the Special Committee, email us at: special.committee.pcc@gmail.com or by phone/text message at: 226-820-0634. Your stories are needed by Feb. 15, 2022.

The members of the Special Committee are the Rev. Sampson Afoakwah, the Rev. Mary Fontaine, the Rev. Joon Ki Kim, the Rev. Stephen Kwon, the Rev. Sean Lee, the Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott, the Rev. Dr. Frank Szatmari, the Rev. Linda Park (co-convenor), and the Rev. Peter Bush (co-convenor).



Continue the conversation on social media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram

 @pccconnect



MISSION & OUTREACH

Glenview's Charity Challenge



By Natalie Jahm, Christian Education and Outreach Leader, Glenview Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ont.

Every year, Glenview Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ont., raises money for a special fund to support projects and missions, primarily Presbyterian-led, that respond to current needs in the world. This year, we have been raising funds to support Native Child and Family Services Toronto; Cariboo Presbyterian Church; ARISE Ministry; Portland Place; Evangel Hall Mission; and Boarding Homes Ministry.

While many of our traditional fundraising events still can't happen as they used to, we decided to try something new this year: we entered a team into the Scotiabank Charity Challenge at the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon.

As word spread, we experienced

overwhelming support and enthusiasm for this event. "Team Glenview" had 13 team members of all ages who walked or ran 5K, 10K, half-marathon and marathon. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only the 10K race could take place in person, but with limited capacity. Thus, most of the race took place "virtually," meaning everyone could do their run whenever and wherever they preferred. Even though we missed the thrill of the big, in-person event, it gave us the opportunity to find creative ways to do the race virtually. Some of our team members did the virtual race together in one of Toronto's parks; one team member participated in the 10K in-person race on the Toronto waterfront and the others completed their run on their own, whenever and wherever it worked best for them.

Members and friends of Glen-



view who chose not to run or walk cheered on Team Glenview, and generously supported their efforts. By mid-October, we had already raised almost \$4,000!

Even though so much had to be put on hold since the COVID-19 pandemic hit last year, we are still called to reach out, to love and to serve, and be the church of Jesus Christ today. A big thank-you to all team members and supporters of Team Glenview for making a difference in people's lives!

The Art of Neighbouring in Calgary

By the Rev. Dr. Tim F. Archibald, Lead Minister, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta.

In the sunny days of July—following our Albertan Premier's "Open for Summer" declaration—St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Calgary excitedly began to plan for a Fall season of in-person re-gathering. At that time, our Chief Medical Officer began talking of the move from pandemic to endemic as Albertans enjoyed the end of all COVID-19 protocols. Yet our congregation remained cautious about returning to in-person worship. The steep curves of the second and third waves in Alberta had only reinforced people's hesitancy to re-gather in person. As one "pre-COVID regular" told me honestly one day, "I rather like my 'new Sundays' of getting my coffee, settling in my comfy chair in my bathrobe and fluffy slippers along with my dog for online worship each week; it's a habit that will be hard to break." I knew right then that we had our "re-gathering" work cut out for us in the autumn of 2021.

We chose, as our Fall theme, "Re-gathering and the Art of Neighbouring." After a season of isolation, it was time to break out of our bubbles—and brush up on our skills of neighbouring—whether across the street or across the aisle! In some neighbourhoods, COVID-19 had actually brought people together in a



new way—we wanted to help our parishioners build on that in their respective neighbourhoods. The series was an attempt to raise the focus from "ourselves" to "others." After all, Jesus says that the most important Commandment is to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves. We wanted to work on loving our neighbours better and more deeply.

We designed a Fall Sunday worship series around a variety of themes on neighbouring: Hospitality; A Biblical Tradition; Rediscovering Neighbouring; Making time—Being Interruptible; Overcoming Fear and Stereotypes; Forgiveness; When God Moves into the Neighbourhood; and to finish the series, a film and gospel Sunday based on the movie about Mr. Rogers, *A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood*.

To supplement our Sundays together we designed a small group

study series based on the book *The Art of Neighboring* by Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon and planned to create myriad groups. Individuals in each group would do a "Block Diagram" of their neighbourhood and set weekly goals for creating great connection on their street. We scheduled a "Re-gathering Sunday" for after Labour Day—with a special congregational event immediately following in-person worship. We spearheaded a "Neighbouring Across the Aisle" initiative, where all our households would be contacted by someone from our congregation and invited to our re-gathering events. We designed a Blessing of the Pets Sunday on St. Francis Day at the church building. And finally, we prepared for a screening of the movie—*A Beautiful Day in the Neighbourhood*—on a Friday night in our sanctuary, in preparation for the last Sunday of the series. Films are not only a great way for the

church to see clearly the main issues facing our culture but are also an opportunity to help us connect gospel with the current needs in our culture. An important focus of this particular film is how people deal with anger and fear. It seemed a great choice for our Covid-weary time.

And then September arrived. Alberta's COVID-19 numbers were off the charts compared to what we had seen during the previous waves. A Medical Emergency was declared. COVID-19 deaths in the province passed 3,000. It was a stressful and chaotic time.

So, at St. Andrew's, Calgary, we had to pivot (I think many of us will totally want to ditch the word pivot when this pandemic is finally over). "Re-gathering" disappeared from the title of our series; but since Jesus says that the most important Commandment is to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves, the series on the Art of Neighbouring continued.

Instead of in-person small groups we created Zoom Small Groups. We cancelled the special congregational event following Labour Day, but held the Blessing of the Pets in early October on our lawn. The "Neighbouring Across the Aisle" initiative continued, but with a greater pastoral component.

Two stories illustrate the impact of the "pivoted" series on neighbouring. First, one newer person in our

congregation, who had lived in her neighbourhood for some time, became very aware of how few people she actually knew on her street. She decided to drop off handwritten Thanksgiving cards to her neighbours. In the card she told them a bit about her family and offered to be of help if anyone needed assistance. A new couple who had just moved from Ontario appreciated her card so much that they reciprocated with a special card, a photo of themselves and a desire to connect.

Second, two people in one of our small groups wanted to say "thank you" to our weary and faithful health-care workers. They sent a homemade card to the largest hospital in South Calgary. The card was so appreciated that it was photographed and emailed to staff at the hospital. Hundreds of people received that card. And as one hospital staff member told us, "The card was the talk of the whole hospital that day and deeply appreciated." A small gesture of neighbouring can go a long way.

Our new Mission Statement at St. Andrew's is: *Woven into the neighbourhood, growing disciples who love like Jesus*. The series on neighbouring has challenged us as individuals and as a congregation to practice greater love of neighbours and has spawned further creative ideas for being better woven into our neighbourhoods and living out our mission in South Calgary.

MISSION & OUTREACH

Feeding the 5,000 in B.C.

By the Rev. Laurie McKay, Team Lead for the "Don't Go Hungry" program and minister at St. Aidan's Presbyterian Church in New Westminster, B.C.

The Don't Go Hungry program started in May 2021 at St. Aidan's Presbyterian Church in New Westminster, B.C., as a response to the food and economic insecurity that arose out of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the beginning, we accrued more volunteers than people to feed with an initial response of only around 20 people coming to wait in line at St. Aidan's weekly and food was distributed to feed seven households. Currently, the Don't Go Hungry program is distributing food to feed 368 households across four sites, located at three churches (St. Aidan's and Knox Presbyterian Church in New Westminster and Gordon Presbyterian Church in

Burnaby) and the Queensborough Community Centre in New Westminster, with an average of 1,100–1,200 people coming to wait in line at one of the four sites weekly. In October, the program fed 5,860 people.

Our dedicated volunteers devote a combined total of 400 volunteer hours weekly to make this all possible. When I think of the incredible dedication, grace and generosity of our volunteers, I think of the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000. **Engaging people with compassion for our neighbours is essential to this work.**

The Queensborough site, which operates in an area with a high homeless population, is managed by the New Westminster Soccer Club. On one rainy day in October, the Queensborough volunteers were joined by 20 soccer players, aged 10-years-old, and their parents who came to "help."



Managing the energy of 10-year-olds who were mainly interested in running around in the rain added an extra layer of happy chaos for our volunteers as they did their best to corral the energetic children while serving a long lineup of hungry, rain-drenched people. Holding our grace amidst chaos and bad weather is a true challenge. These experiences show us **how we can learn from Jesus how to have good humour and compassion when circumstances are not ideal.**

The Gordon Presbyterian Church site in Burnaby, B.C., serves the bulk of our numbers with a wee army of volunteers, who typically feed over 700 people within a time span of two hours. **Releasing people to lead**

is key to growth. As in any thriving mission, one person cannot possibly keep track of everything that needs attention. As the program has grown, special teams have been developed so that we can confidently and effectively tackle any situation. For instance, as we live in a multicultural society, we sometimes encounter people in the lineup who don't speak the same language. In these situations, people from the lineup have stepped forward to volunteer as translators to help calm anxiety and confusion. A volunteer came up with an effective way to manage the lineup of 200 hungry people. Over-crowding has been averted as a result. **Feeding the hungry is not for the fainthearted.** No

wonder Jesus had people sit down in groups of 50!

As I write this, I feel awe and humility at what the Lord can accomplish when we get out of the way of ourselves. I am thankful for the people we have met from the lineups who are now volunteers for the Don't Go Hungry program. I am thankful for leaders who want to do more even while some are exhausted. I am thankful for the connections we've made with schools, social agencies and businesses that provide our program sites with much needed items to help people feed and house their families (such as clothing, meal cards and infant items). I am thankful that the Don't Go Hungry program now has a website (dontgohungry.ca) and policies in place to manage extreme weather and ensure healthy food, compassionate service as well as regular volunteer training. And I am thankful for the church community that prays for the program leaders, volunteers, people in the lineups and those who are isolated. **Together, we are the people God loves.** I can't help but think God is smiling as we become the hands and feet of the living Christ.

Faith in Vaccine Campaign in Hamilton

By the Rev. Penny Garrison, minister at Knox Presbyterian Church in Dundas, Ont.

"What is the role of faith communities and their leaders in this pandemic?"

This was the important question posed to Deirdre Pike, a senior social planner at the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton, Ont., that got her thinking about the role of

faith communities in promoting vaccination and would eventually incite the idea for the interfaith #faithinvaccine campaign.

Deirdre recalled that, at the time she was asked that question, she pondered it at a table in which the City of Hamilton's hospital Emergency Room heads, and industry and business leaders were all present: "It wasn't clear to me yet, how

I could engage faith communities in building vaccine confidence, but that's what I had been asked to do." She noticed that there "wasn't much happening" when it came to including local faith communities in the conversation about COVID-19 protocols, vaccines and risk reduction measures in the city. The noticeable absence led her to researching possible ways to fill it. She looked to other Canadian cities for examples of how faith leaders were getting involved in their cities' vaccine rollout. The examples she found showed her that they had faith in vaccines. Deirdre said she talked to her colleagues about her idea of faith leaders demonstrating their faith in the COVID-19 vaccine and #faithinvaccine was born. "With the help of local vaccine ambassadors, I reached out to nine faith leaders in the area and received a 'Yes' nine resounding times."

As the minister of Knox Presbyterian Church, Dundas, I was one of those nine faith leaders who said "yes" right away to participating in the #faithinvaccine campaign. As it turned out, 22 more local faith leaders got involved along the way in this interfaith project. Leaders from several different Christian denominations, along with leaders from Jewish, Hindu and Muslim communities,

joined together to promote and encourage people in their faith communities and beyond to get fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

When Deirdre asked if I would be willing to participate, there was no hesitancy on my part. I had already been actively advocating for the vaccine and encouraging people to be fully vaccinated for a number of reasons. It provides effective protection against getting Covid and even stronger protection against serious outcomes from Covid. It is a kind, responsible, caring and wise action, not only for ourselves, but for our family and friends, and the larger community. For me, it is a very concrete way to love our neighbour and it totally connects to who we are as Jesus' followers.

The invitation to participate in this initiative took me back to January 20, 2021, when I, along with over one thousand other faith leaders from across Canada met with Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, via Zoom. In that meeting, Dr. Tam provided information about Canada's vaccine rollout program and encouraged each of us as faith leaders to assist in the rollout by educating, supporting and promoting the COVID-19 vaccine within our faith communities and beyond. She stressed the vital role that faith

leaders had in helping people obtain credible information about the vaccine and being available to them as someone they could trust to discuss the matter with, as well as assisting them in accessing the vaccine when it became available.

The invitation to participate in the #faithinvaccine campaign was another way to do my part. The campaign involved having each of the participating faith leaders provide a brief response as to why we had faith in the COVID-19 vaccine, along with a picture of ourselves. Our responses and photos were shared in the *Hamilton Spectator* as part of the campaign launch on Sept. 20, 2021. We were all provided with digital copies of the campaign images as well so that we could share them on social media and our websites and in our bulletins.

It was rewarding and satisfying to be able to participate in the campaign, particularly given Hamilton's low vaccination rate over the past few months. It was also good to work with the larger interfaith community in a common effort. I trust and pray that we contributed to helping people take that step and get vaccinated, which makes this a valuable and important team project. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to step up and make a difference.

MISSION & OUTREACH



The Raw Carrot van loaded for a soup drop.

Raw Carrot Soup Lunches Bring Fellowship

By Rebecca Sherbino, the Raw Carrot

Are you looking to engage your congregation members in some post-Covid fun (those in person and those who've not yet returned to church)? Why not host a soup lunch?

Through cooking handcrafted, delicious gourmet soup, the Raw Carrot Soup Enterprise provides jobs for marginalized individuals who struggle with barriers to employment, who have experienced poverty or who are living with a disability.

Over the past few months, we have had a number of churches plan a communal soup lunch. Here's how it works: Each participating individual or family orders soup, a pick-up day is planned, and then after the meals have been taken home, everyone eats their soup together (over Zoom or in person, depending on the circumstances). While eating soup, you can learn more about the Raw Carrot staff members and how purchasing a bowl of soup can change individual lives through the dignity and income of work. We also have a few short videos that we you might be interested in seeing.

We all need meals in the freezer and these meals make a difference to people in need of a hand UP (instead of a handout) in life. One hundred percent of the sales of soup go back to supporting jobs, dignity and the message of hope that Jesus brings, for people in local communities. This is a fun, intentional way to be in touch with church members, to support a local ministry and to have a few extra meals in your freezer...all through the connections that come through food.

Email elena@therawcarrot.com to start planning. It's fun, easy and impactful.



Soup lunch!



Presbyterians
Sharing

Gifts to Presbyterians
Sharing help support
the Raw Carrot's
ministry.

Quilting in Bobcaygeon

By Myra Coene, Knox Presbyterian Church in Bobcaygeon, Ont.

In early August, the "Quarantine Quilters" from the Knox Frocks sewing group at Knox Presbyterian Church in Bobcaygeon, Ont., once again packed up four boxes with 39 quilts and shipped them to Cariboo Presbyterian Church in B.C. We also sent 20 quilts to our local pregnancy centre in Lindsay, Ont. We'd been given a beautiful large tablecloth, but when we unfolded it, we found it had a couple of large candle burn holes in it. So, we decided to make a small tablecloth and several table runners from what we could salvage to donate to the store for women's resources in Lindsay.

Because we were all busy with summer activities (limited as they were), we did not quilt over the summer, but we trust that, once again, we will soon be able to gather at the church to continue sewing together. If that's not possible, we will continue to make quilts at home, as we did last winter.

Our sewing group is made up of approximately 10 women (in pre-Covid times), making clothing for kids



The Quarantine Quilters at Knox Presbyterian Church in Bobcaygeon, Ont., (l-r): Donna Simon, Myra Coene and Kathleen Morningstar.

in developing countries: pillowcase dresses and shorts. We have a well-organized selection of a variety of donated fabrics in a room in the lower level of our church, complete with several sewing machines and a serger. Some of the fabric was not suitable for dresses, so quilting became our focus. Winnipeg Inner City Missions

and Cariboo Presbyterian Church in B.C. became recipients of our quilts. We welcome anyone into the group who is interested in sewing or helping in any way...cutting, measuring, assembling or making tea!

We trust our quilts have become a blessing to show God's love for those in need.

In Motion in Saskatoon

By Laura Van Loon, Pastoral Care Nurse, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon, Sask.

Running, jogging, walking, swimming, skipping and so many more activities keep us in motion. Getting from here to there is imperative, but there are people who have short-term and chronic disabilities that affect their mobility. Understanding this, the Pastoral Care team at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Saskatoon, Sask., strives to help members of our church and mission communities.

A few years ago, our committee wanted to replace the old, makeshift wheelchair we had. The church gave me, the Pastoral Care Nurse, permission to buy a new one. I visited the showroom of MEDiChair and we discussed the wheelchair I wanted in exchange for the one I brought from the church. Their generous donation of the balance of the cost has provided our church with the safe, new wheelchair that we use today. This company moved and changed their name but kept our information.

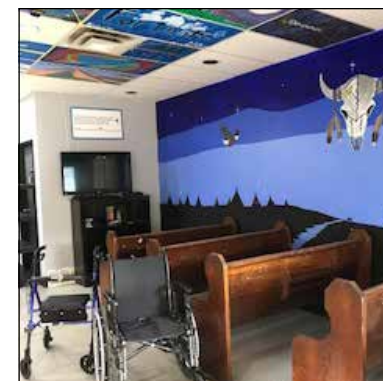
About a month ago, I received a call from the newly located MOTION

(formerly MEDiChair) and they had two wheelchairs and a walker that they wanted to donate to St. Andrew's church family. I accepted immediately and, with the help of the Rev. Roberto, we delivered these refurbished items to PCC-supported Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry (SNCM). At that time, Executive Director Dylan Nippi was not too sure when, or if, they would be used. However, within about a week, one of the clients limped in using a creatively fashioned stick to support one of his hips. Dylan looked at him and said, "I have just the thing for you," and wheeled the walker out for him. There was great joy," Dylan said, "as this gentleman took that walker, did wheelies right there and was so happy with the gift that improved his mobility and lessened his pain."

A couple of days later, another client limped into the SNCM doorway and Dylan looked at him and said, "You need to get that leg looked at." The client, who was very hungry and wanted some lunch, had literally hobbled from his apartment, stopping traffic in order to cross the street. His caregiver was away for a week. Dylan said he was a very

large man and knew that the oversize wheelchair would fit him. During their discussion, Dylan said that he would ask his assistant to push this person up the hill to St. Paul's Hospital Emergency Room. Since then, I have found out that this man was admitted to hospital where he was treated for a week and has now returned home.

There are needs in our community that we just have no idea about. Helping citizens to keep in motion by seeking partnerships in the city has benefited those who now have an improved accessibility to the world around them.



The Gathering Place at Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry in Saskatoon, Sask.

GATHERINGS



Saint Andrew's Church
512 Charlotte St, Fredericton, NB
455-8220 sapc@sapc.ca

Exploring the questions:
WHO is my neighbor?
HOW can we love our neighbor?

12 neighbors

Small Groups begin this week with various time options.

Sunday @ 9am or 12:15pm (brown bag)
Monday @ 8pm via Zoom
Tuesday @ 10am
Friday @ 5:30pm (dinner provided)
Saturday @ 10:30am via Zoom

COVID protocol will be followed

Groups will meet monthly the week of:
Oct 17
Nov 21
Jan 16
Feb 20
March 20
April 24
May 15
June 19



The "12 Neighbours Project," developed by Marcel LeBrun from Fredericton, N.B., is an international program designed to encourage community groups to understand our neighbours. The initial phase of this program brings people together in small groups to view a series of short (10–15 minutes) documentary-type films (12neighborsfilms.com) and then engage in directed conversations regarding the issues presented in the films. The kick-off of this project took place during worship at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Oct. 10. Lucy (our resident puppet) kept Janet on her toes with *many* questions about who is our neighbour and how we can love them. Small groups will meet once a month (October–June) with Five Small Groups hosting close to 40 participants within the congregation and community at large.



The family of the late Hugh MacDonald, along with the Rev. Shelly Chandler, gathered around Hugh's Garden Bench, a welcoming rest-stop dedicated to his memory. Hugh's Garden Bench can be found in the garden, his pet project, at First Presbyterian Church in Pictou, N.S. Hugh was an active and dedicated member of First Presbyterian Church. He served on the Board of Managers, Session, as well as various committees. He also spearheaded the First Church Soup Luncheon Program.



During this year of COVID-19 confinement, St. John's Presbyterian Church in White Rock, B.C., has had a unique experience. Our talented organist and choir director, Reynhardt Crause, presented interesting and informative hour-long programs expounding on the history and evolution of Christian church music over the ages. Reynhardt told us stories behind some of the hymns and offered a glimpse of the life of some composers. He would play the organ or piano and sing as many as 12 pieces per program. The series can be found online at saint-johns.ca.

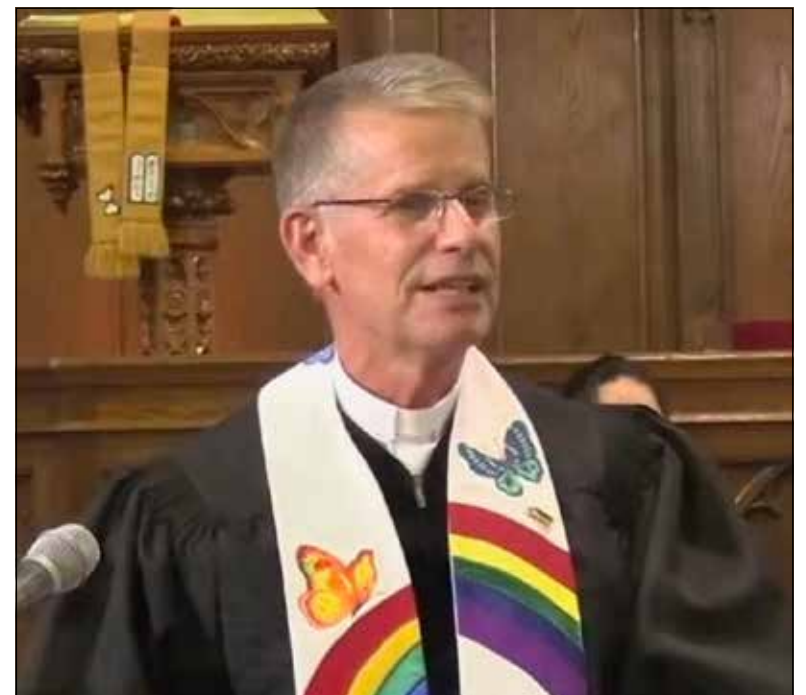
GATHERINGS



Six elders were ordained recently at Guildwood Community Presbyterian Church in Scarborough, Ont. To maintain Covid distancing, instead of observing the right hand of fellowship, the Rev. Chuck Moon sprinkled water from palm branches on the ordinands' heads. The water reminded the ordinands of their baptism and new life in Christ, and the palm branches symbolized the peace, support and prayers of the Session and congregation.



George MacLean was recently honoured for 50 years of service as a ruling elder at St. Giles Presbyterian Church in North Sydney, N.S. Norma MacAdam was also recognized for her many years of service to the congregation, including as an elder and, most recently, as Clerk of Session. She has now relocated to P.E.I. They are pictured with the minister, the Rev. Ritchie Robinson. PHOTO CREDIT WES STEWART.



The Rev. William Bynum, Moderator of the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington, officiated at the induction of the Rev. Marty Molengraaf at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Kitchener on Sept. 26. After a prolonged search for a new minister, the Rev. Molengraaf was called to St. Andrew's, assuming duties on the first of August and casting himself enthusiastically into his new role. He has made extraordinary efforts to meet and connect with the members of his new congregation, despite the lockdown and other restrictions. Live streaming the Sunday services makes his warm and friendly approach familiar and valued.



Durham Presbyterian Church in Durham, Ont., reached out to their local hospital to show their appreciation for the health-care workers of the community. Pictured is the Rev. Will Basson handing over gift packages to health-care workers at Durham Hospital. Each gift bag included home-baked cookies, a slate coaster, a pizza voucher, a pen, a thank-you card and some treats. The bags were decorated by the children of the congregation.

GATHERINGS



A special event was held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Picton, Ont., on Canada Day, in front of Christi Belcourt's mural, "Wisdom of the Universe." One hundred and fifty members of the wider community gathered to knit orange sweaters, sign a petition for our MP, raise money for the Seed Sanctuary on Tyendinaga and for Christi Belcourt's culture camp, and to learn about the Indian Act. PHOTO CREDIT: RAMESH POORAN.



On Aug. 29, the children at St. David's Presbyterian Church in Toney River, N.S., enjoyed a wonderful outdoor afternoon together that included a Bible story, prayer, crafts, games and snacks. Everyone had so much fun! It was a great way to say so long to summer and welcome in a brand-new year of Sunday School.



St Mark's Presbyterian Church in Orillia, Ont., held a short Remembrance Service outside the church at 11 a.m. on November 11. Over 400 members of the congregation lovingly crocheted and knitted poppies, which were on display for the 100th anniversary of the poppy as a symbol of remembrance. The Last Post and Reveille were played on the trumpet by the Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie.



GATHERINGS



Participants in Orange Shirt Day on Sept. 26 at Armour Heights Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ont.



Everyone who drives by St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Lindsay, Ont., enjoys reading the latest information and messages that Jim McKechnie posts on the church sign. Pictured here is Jim on Labour Day, updating the St. Andrew's church sign with a "Back to School" message.



On Sept. 11, the congregation of Community Presbyterian Church in Almonte, Ont., held a Yard & Bake Sale in support of the Centre Vie Orphanage in Haiti. The Yard & Bake Sale is an annual fundraising initiative that the congregation has organized for over 25 years to help feed, school and support the children at Centre Vie. This year, we arranged the tables in the church hall to be safely spaced apart and used arrows to direct guests through the maze of tables showcasing previous-owned treasures as well as baked goods. We prayed for a good turnout and the Lord heard our prayers. The 2021 Yard & Bake Sale raised over \$1,200.



Members of Stamford Presbyterian Church in Niagara Falls and Hope Presbyterian Church in Welland, Ont., have been busy. After hearing that Positive Living Niagara was looking for volunteers to assist with their annual Red Scarf Project, several members grabbed their knitting needles, crochet hooks and balls of red yarn and started creating twenty-six beautiful scarves. In December, Positive Living Niagara will hang these scarves, along with educational information about living with HIV and AIDS, around the Niagara Region. (Dec. 1 is World AIDS Day.) People who find the scarves are encouraged to take them home and keep them.

GATHERINGS



The Sutherland Children's Library at Glenview Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ont., is an important part of the Christian Education program at Glenview Presbyterian. As the COVID-19 pandemic still prevents us from fully sharing our library, we regularly record book readings and write book reviews, and share them with the congregation, and young families in particular. This has been a wonderful opportunity to explore with children (and adults!) how to live your faith in your daily life.



On Oct. 16, Armour Heights Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ont., hosted a Fall Fair with Mosaic Home Care and Resource Centre, an organization that delivers holistic, community-centred home care. Despite the weather, the community was able to safely gather and celebrate Mosaic as community partners, as we officially unveiled our Rainbow Friendship Benches.



On Sunday, Oct. 3, the congregation of Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church in Richmond Hill, Ont., thanked Don and Lucille Glenn for 31 years of dedicated and loyal service as our church custodians. We sincerely appreciate all their hard work over the years. Even though they're now retired, the Glenns are members of our congregation, and we know we will still see them often. PHOTO CREDIT: ROGER POTTS.

Bulletin covers, certificates, logos, photos, videos, slides for worship...

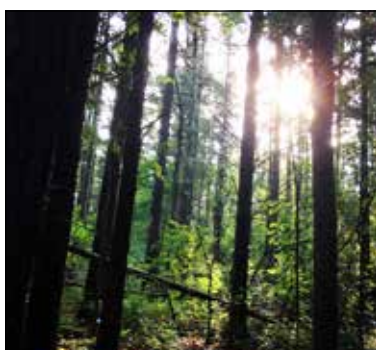
Find it all and much more at presbyterian.ca



GATHERINGS



This past summer, the congregation of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Winchester, Ont., created a memorial garden to honour Indigenous children who died in Residential Schools. In addition to planting grasses, orange lilies, cedar and orange annuals, a painted wooden heart that reads "Every Child Matters" was put together by congregation members and installed in the centre of the flower bed. On Sunday, Sept. 26, Donna McIlveen conducted a moving memorial garden dedication service, for which the congregation was encouraged to attend wearing orange. After the dedication service, children in the congregation placed stones they had painted in the flower bed.



Recognizing that COVID-19 has been a major stressor, the ministry committee of the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington made a decision to enable every minister on the roll, as well as their spouse and young children, to have a private three-day (meals included) time away at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre, all costs covered. The motion was approved in July 2021, noting that the presbytery has a responsibility for the psychological, emotional and spiritual well-being of the ministers within its bounds.



On Aug. 29, an anniversary and communion service was held at Little Narrows Presbyterian Church in Little Narrows on Cape Breton Island, N.S. The Rev. Mary Anne Grant was the guest speaker at this special service. A new organ was also dedicated in honour of member Stanley H. MacDonald and his lifelong loyalty and support of Little Narrows Presbyterian. Pictured with the new organ (left to right): Ann Hayes, Clerk of Session; Lois MacDonald, organist; Margaret MacIntyre, lay minister.

GATHERINGS



The Walking Team from Knox Presbyterian Church in Dundas, Ont., raised over \$5,000 for the annual Wesley “Case for Kids Walk” in June 2021. The 26 members of the team (aged 3–93) walked on their own or with someone in their household for the 30 days of June. By the end of the month, the team had walked a combined total distance of about 2,000 km! Members of the congregation and team member’s families and friends supported the team with donations. Wesley Urban Ministries is a local non-profit group offering support for people experiencing poverty, homelessness and barriers in the Hamilton Community. Knox Dundas has been participating in the walk for about 25 years. During the pandemic, the congregation has also addressed other community needs by supporting the local food bank and the Dundas Community Dinners program.



The Gathering Place Presbyterians set up a table at the Farmers’ Market in Port Colborne, Ont., half a block away from the church, over the summer and autumn to share books and information. Collecting donations for the local food bank was both a bonus for the community and a great conversation starter with both vendors and shoppers alike!



GATHERINGS



Sunday, Oct. 24, was Anniversary Sunday for St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Carluke, in Ancaster, Ont. A wonderful service, structured around the themes "God is Holy," "God is Worthy" and "God is Faithful" was held at the church for St. Paul's 175th anniversary. During the service, the congregation was privileged to have had six past ministers and/or their families share their greetings and memories of St. Paul's, Carluke.



On Oct. 17, members of Armour Heights Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ont., participated in a 5k walk to raise funds in support of Evangel Hall Mission.



On Sunday, Oct. 3, an elder ordination service was held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Hillsburgh, Ont., to welcome Loren Clough as a new elder to the church.



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Hillsburgh, Ont., took part in the Fall Fair Display Contest at the 2021 Erin Fall Fair, with a fall festive display created by the Special Friend Club. The display and their efforts were rewarded with the first-place ribbon!

GATHERINGS



Lhotse, aged 11, a member of the Community Presbyterian Church in Almonte, Ont., with her poster thanking church members and the community for their donations. Lhotse raised \$4,700 by cutting her long blonde hair and donating it to the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Wigs for Kids initiative.



An open house event called "Walk through Memory Lane" was organized in the summer to celebrate the 175th anniversary of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Carluke, in Ancaster, Ont. Booklets providing a history of St. Paul's were prepared for the open house event and handed out to people to read as they walked through memory lane. A model version of St. Paul's was also built and put on display at the open house.



The congregation of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Burlington, Ont., was welcomed back to in-person worship in a big, celebratory way on Sunday, Sept. 26, 2021. PHOTO CREDIT: DENIS HIRD.



The annual flu shot clinic at Iona Presbyterian Church in Dartmouth, N.S. Dr. Natasha Deshwal gave the Rev. Cynthia Chenard her shot, assisted by our Parish Nurse, Christine Burden-Arseneault.



The Rev. Allen Aicken was the guest minister at West Vancouver Presbyterian Church on September 26, speaking about truth and reconciliation. Allen had been our Transitional Minister when we were without a minister from October 2011 to June 2013, and did an amazing job, using his unique creativity and leadership skills. The t-shirt he's wearing was made by his two grandchildren in Calgary.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

The Moderator's Visit to Atlantic Canada



The Moderator and the Rev. Roger MacPhee at St. John's Presbyterian Church in Belfast.



The Moderator and the Rev. Andrew Hutchinson.



The Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott (left), at Summerside Presbyterian Church with the Rev. Brad Blaikie and Clerk of Session Nancy Harvey.



By John Barrett, Clerk of Session, Zion Presbyterian Church in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Shortly after the confirmation of the Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott as nominee for Moderator of the 146th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island extended an invitation for him to attend the 200th Anniversary meeting of that church court in September 2021. Presbytery was ecstatic to learn that this invitation had been accepted and that the Rev. Dr. Scott had decided to take further advantage of this opportunity to extend his stay in P.E.I. and New Brunswick during which time he had the pleasure of visiting numerous congregations.

Arriving on Saturday, Sept. 11, the Rev. Dr. Scott spent the afternoon at Summerside Presbyterian Church with the Rev. Brad Blaikie and clerk of Session, Nancy Harvey. Both of these individuals are former moderators of the P.E.I. presbytery, so he was able to not only learn what was happening in their vibrant congregation, but was also given some insight into the denomination throughout the province.

On Sunday, Sept. 12, the Rev. Dr. Scott was a guest at Zion Presbyterian Church in Charlottetown, and delivered the sermon entitled, "Commissioned," taking the text from Matthew 28:18-20. The congregation was delighted to have the moderator in their midst and, through the good fortune of relaxed Covid protocols on P.E.I., he was able to chat with many in attendance following the service, including a former classmate, the Rev. Andrew Hutchinson. After en-

joying a quick lunch with Zion's lead minister and clerk, he was off to Calvin Mermaid Church (a preaching point of Zion) to attend the annual Memorial Service.

Keeping up with his own congregational, teaching and moderatorial responsibilities, the Rev. Dr. Scott spent most of Monday morning in various online meetings before heading off to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Moncton, N.B., to meet with the lead pastor, the Rev. Dr. Martin Kreplin, along with past and current members of Session. On the way to Moncton, the moderator had the distinct pleasure of meeting elder Dale Waddell at North Tryon Presbyterian Church and enjoyed the welcoming and historic nature of this special Island country church.

The moderator was especially anxious to attend St. Andrew's in Moncton and meet with those present to address the many questions and concerns they had for him regarding the future of our denomination. This was an extremely worthwhile visit with the hopeful conclusion that by listening, we can all benefit from our expressions of divergent opinions.

Tuesday was another morning of Zoom meetings and preparation for the meeting of presbytery later that evening. Following lunch, the Rev. Dr. Scott had the opportunity to meet the Session of St. Mark's Presbyterian Church in Charlottetown and spend time in discussion with the Rev. Dr. Tom Hamilton and the Rev. Paula Hamilton. St. Mark's is somewhat unique in our denomination as the congregation is led by a married couple who jointly serve the needs of their membership. Their love for one

another as well as for their congregation was most evident during the moderator's time with them and shed yet another perspective on the diversity of styles and approaches that exist across the presbytery.

Following his visit, the moderator was off to visit the Rev. Dr. Kay Diviney, interim moderator at the Kirk of St. James in Charlottetown, the clerk of Session, David Robinson, and music director, Frances McBurnie. (Lead minister, the Rev. Amanda Henderson-Bolton is currently attending to her newborn child and will return to the Kirk following her parental leave). Again, the moderator was treated to one of the most beautiful and historic churches on Prince Edward Island and was impressed to see that the congregation has been faithful in maintaining the physical structure of their church as well as their commitment to living God's Word.

These visits were followed by an exceptional evening of celebration as the moderator attended and participated in the 200th anniversary meeting of the P.E.I. presbytery. One interesting component of that evening was the opportunity for three moderators of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to have some time together: the Rev. Dr. Daniel Scott, the Rev. Dr. John Cameron, Moderator of the 116th General Assembly, and the Rev. Douglas Rollwage, lead minister of Zion Church and Moderator of the 142nd General Assembly. This was certainly a unique opportunity for all three gentlemen to "compare notes."

The Rev. Dr. Scott's final day on Prince Edward Island was no less busy with visits to Wellspring Church

Continued on page 31



The Rev. Dr. Daniel D. Scott, the Rev. Dr. John Cameron and the Rev. Douglas Rollwage.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Recovery of St. Andrew's Celtic Cross



By Joan Rivard, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Ottawa, Ont.

When thinking about the recent theft of St. Andrew's Celtic cross, I am really struck that a story about loss contains so many things to be thankful for.

The first Celtic cross was brought to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Ottawa, Ont., by a member of our congregation, who thought it might look nice in our eastern garden. We are appreciative of caring members like this, those whose gestures add so much to the life of our church community.

Immediately, it was obvious that this was a good fit. It just felt like the cross was where it was meant to be. I worked nearby and had walked by that garden hundreds of times. I always enjoyed catching sight of the cross standing among the tulips or perennials or saddled with snow. The little garden was tended by our great custodians and by volunteers from the church, who literally got down in the dirt beside a busy downtown intersection to plant and prune and pluck. How lucky we are for all those

who give their time and energy to beautify St. Andrew's.

But in the spring of 2021, we discovered that the cross was missing. It must have taken considerable effort to wrestle it out of the ground in which it was so firmly embedded. We reported the loss to the Ottawa Police, and the information was picked up by the Ottawa Citizen, which ran articles reporting on the incident in May and June. The cross is the symbol of our faith. We are in a prominent location. In these unsettled times, there was the real possibility that this was more than a simple theft. Perhaps it was part of a larger statement, a threat against our church community or even against our faith. It was disconcerting.

The articles generated an immediate response from the Ottawa community. Offers of help came from within and beyond the congregation. All of these kind offers touched our hearts. Patrick O'Shaughnessy, owner of Laurin Monuments in Ottawa, quickly got in touch with the Rev. Karen Dimock. Mr. O'Shaughnessy offered to create and donate a replacement cross for us. He's not a member of St. An-

drew's, but simply felt moved to help. He said that he believes that the best way to handle theft or vandalism "is to just fix it," as quickly as possible. We are so grateful for Patrick and his unequivocal generosity.

It's wonderful to have a Celtic cross again in the church garden. This cross is sturdy, having been carved from heavy granite. It will be there for as long as we are.

In the meantime, someone walking along a pathway by the Ottawa River came upon our original cross. It was not damaged, and Ottawa Police were able to retrieve it and return it to us. Whatever caused its loss, we were thankful for its return. It's now gracing our Atrium, and when I see it I can't help wondering about its journey while away from us. What thoughts did it provoke in passersby on that river path?

So, at its core, this is a story about a loss that caused us some distress here at St. Andrew's. But the heart of our community shines through every part of it. This loss brought out the best, the kindest and the most charitable impulses of our congregation and our neighbours. We are grateful.

A Moderator visit is an important activity in the life of our denomination

Continued from page 30

near Montague and the historic St. John's Presbyterian Church in Belfast. The visit to Wellspring with the Rev. Dr. Atkinson and the Rev. Dr. Son was a particularly important piece of the moderator's itinerary as he was able to see first-hand how the amalgamation of four small country

churches can be done in a way that pays homage to their past while at the same time growing their congregation in a new multi-purpose, modern facility. Lessons learned from this visit will no doubt be shared with other churches across our denomination who have not yet taken the

bold move that is necessary for their ongoing survival. Under the direction of former interim moderators, the Rev. Bill Dean, the Rev. Dr. Lonnie Atkinson and Wellspring's current lead minister, the Rev. Dr. Donghui David Son, Wellspring, now debt-free, is a shining example to our presbytery

and the entire denomination.

Completing the moderator's visit and in sharp physical contrast to Wellspring, the moderator travelled to St. John's in Belfast to meet with the Rev. Roger MacPhee who has been serving this congregation for over three decades. The facility and the incredible surroundings of this large rural church are breathtaking before even entering the historic and unique sanctuary. A jewel among all churches on Prince Edward Island, the history is so well reflected in its architecture and through the presence of the thousands of former members resting within its acreage. The Rev. MacPhee reflected on his time at St. John's, Belfast, and the unique and unexpected challenges that exist in a rural congregation. The blend of a more musically modern style of worship within the physical environment of one of the earliest churches in the province leaves a lasting impression on all who attend. Dr. Scott was moved by the Rev. MacPhee's gentle and thoughtful approach to leading his congregation.

Great things are happening in Belfast and throughout the entire presbytery. Through this visit, Dr. Scott has been able to see these wondrous

works first-hand and share the lessons learned with others across this country.

With there being no rest for the travelling moderator, Dr. Scott's final visit took place Wednesday evening when he likely should have been at his hotel packing for his next flight. The moderator made a return visit to Zion Church as the choir was rehearsing and he wanted to drop by and thank them in person for their contribution to Tuesday's Presbytery service—an effort that was highly appreciated by those in attendance.

A visit by the Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is an important activity in the life of our denomination. Not only does the moderator glean ideas and concepts from the places he travels to so they can be shared countrywide, but those he visits learn and appreciate the diversity of our denomination and the far-reaching work that The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to do. Presbyteries and congregations are encouraged to invite our current and future moderators to their homes so that together we can learn, grow and better carry out the glorious task we've been assigned.



The Moderator at Wellspring Church near Montague, P.E.I., with the Rev. Dr. Atkinson and the Rev. Dr. Son.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Why a Church?

By Aaron Crowe, Mizze Cote-Walker,
Mark Chevrier, Bow Valley College
in Calgary, Alta.

One of the amazing blessings of the Spiritual-Relational Hub at Knox Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta., is the diversity of students that come to collaborate, learn, discover and be a part of creating a sense of belonging in community. This term, our three students from Bow Valley College who specialize in Addiction Studies with an Aboriginal Focus, were asked to share why they stepped into what some may not have seen as a normal practicum opportunity. (Students in 2021 have collaborated for 1,860 hours with Knox Spiritual Relational Hub.)

"When talking with the practicum placement instructor we were trying to figure out what I would be doing for practicum this fall. I was still living in Montreal the whole first year of school and didn't know all that much about Calgary other than what I had learned in school and seen when I visited. Once I finally moved to Calgary in May of 2021, I started working at an agency called Alpha House. They run a shelter, detox, housing and outreach program that promotes harm reduction in the city of Calgary. I have always been a huge supporter of harm reduction, so I was happy to have found myself there. Since I am already working in a high stress environment with folks that are struggling with addiction, I felt that working at Knox would be a great complement to my experiences in helping. I was raised going to an Anglican church in Montreal, but at twelve years old I decided that I was not a religious person, but I was told about how Knox Presbyterian is focused on community building, support and inclusiveness. These are all things that I am passionate about and firmly believe in. I may not be religious but, to me, there is no difference between doing practicum in a church, a rehabilitation centre, a homeless shelter or a prison. It's all about helping people in need regardless of race, religion, gender or any other defining factor. Knox made it abundantly clear that they also shared this same view. Not only did they share it but they were actively working in spreading a message of inclusiveness. I also found out that my instructor from the year prior, Ty Ragan, would be overseeing much of our practicum which

made me even more interested due to really enjoying the classes he taught. Hopefully with the community building and development skills I will learn at Knox coupled with my experience working with active addiction at Alpha House I will really be able to find the avenues that are right for me within the world of helping."

—Mark

"As a member of the Mi'kmaq people, I would like to thank the people of Knox Presbyterian Church for honouring me with the opportunity to build connections, share space and stories, and offer a chance to share my culture. As a child there was a time I was urged to hide my ancestry in fear that harm would come to me, and I would not have the same experiences as my peers. Through the ongoing work with Truth and Reconciliation I have embraced my heritage and feel pride in sharing it with all who wish to learn. Since the original stories heard from the Residential School survivors from 2008 to 2014 during the construction of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), we have seen Indigenous peoples speak up and seek the truth of what happened to their loved ones and find answers to why our Indigenous culture was stripped from us. Through this work Indigenous people have overcome many obstacles and barriers. Through the Indigenous way of life and the Medicine wheel we have begun the stages of healing. But with healing must come reconciliation and to achieve reconciliation we must come together as a community, as a country, and as people. I wish to thank Knox Presbyterian Church and its members for supporting me on the first annual National Day of Reconciliation, and holding space, heart, and memory for our ancestors who were not here to see this day in person, through our hearts they will be here in spirit."

"From the bottom of my heart, I thank you."

—Mizze

"I chose to do my practicum at Knox Presbyterian Church because I saw that it gave me the opportunity to apply what I learned in my classes to the real world setting by using methods of community building and outreach to foster an atmosphere for addiction prevention. It is proven that strong community support can provide mental health benefits to



A musical jam session run by students from Bow Valley College, majoring in Addiction Studies with an Aboriginal Focus, who chose to come to Knox Presbyterian Church in Calgary, Alta., for their practicum.

its members and even through this tough pandemic we are facing, Knox Presbyterian is adapting to keep connections as strong and inclusive as possible. I am an Indigenous student, representing the Piapot First Nations in Saskatchewan and am proud to be able to promote reconciliation and share my views regarding Indigenous affairs through my projects. Also being raised in a Christian household, I am comfortable in a church setting and was excited when I noticed all the ways in which Knox Presbyterian assists the community. From the community garden, little library and Good Food Box program to more further-reaching initiatives and programs that connect students with other agencies around the city. Seeing the emphasis that was placed on music at Knox Presbyterian was very pleasing as I have spent a good part of my life learning, playing and teaching music, and I look forward to integrating my talents into the work I do here. In the time I have been here I have already learned a lot and I can't wait to see what we can do for the community going forward into the term."

—Aaron

Each student who has joined our community has served well, but more importantly, has been able to take the space opened to them to discern their next vocational steps.



The Calgary Tower illuminated orange on September 30 for Orange Shirt Day.



WISHING YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA!



CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Annual Meeting of the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces



Charles Greaves, Moderator of the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces.



The Rev. Dr. Richard Topping, Vancouver School of Theology.

By John Barrett, Representative Elder to Synod, Zion Presbyterian Church in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

On Tuesday, Oct. 19, 2021, members of the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces met online for their annual meeting. With the 2020 meeting cancelled last year due to travel and health restrictions, this is the first time the full Synod has met for 24 months. Despite the inconvenience and lack of personal interactions of meeting online, those charged with the smooth technical preparation for the event are to be commended. Synod recognizes the supporting efforts of Synod Clerk the Rev. Jeffrey Murray, church host and technical assistant the Rev. Andrew Campbell, and Grace McCreary, Program Assistant with the Life and Mission Agency. They aptly guided us through the various processes and voting protocols as well as leading in the Synod Orientation on October 18.

Synod began with the Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Marion Barclay-MacKay, leading in worship and communion. Due to Covid and the cancellation of the 2020 Synod, Marion has served in this capacity for the last two years. She shared the difficulty of visitation during her tenure but remained positive despite the challenges faced by the churches of our region. Following worship, Charles Greaves, Clerk of Session at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Sydney, N.S., was installed as the new Moderator of Synod for the 2021/22 year. A former member of Assembly Council, the National Finance Committee and Moderator of the Cape Breton Presbytery, Charles accepted the challenge of Moderator and looks forward to perhaps a more normal year ahead and the opportunity to meet in person next October in Hanwell, New Brunswick.

As is normally the case, the Synod Book of Reports was circulated in advance with many of the 31 recommendations being able to be passed

through a consent agenda. Highlights from the business component of the meeting included the adoption of a new job description and the approval to advertise for the upcoming vacancy in the position of Synod Camping and Youth Consultant. The contract of current employee Whitney Canning has been extended to December 31, 2022, with the hope that the new candidate will be approved at the October 2022 meeting of Synod and have the opportunity to spend time with Whitney before she leaves.

Synod heard from our Halifax Hospital visitor Calvin Burt, who eloquently expressed his deep commitment to the position and the effect that visitation has not only on patients, but family members who are unable to be at their loved ones bedside due to distance.

Reports from the usual committees such as Nominating, Missions, Camping and Synod Council were all shared with positive news coming from all fronts. A recurring theme throughout the day was online service and their importance during the pandemic. Churches were encouraged to share links to their online services with each other so that all can learn from one another.

The highlight of the day was a ninety-minute presentation by the Rev. Dr. Richard Topping from the Vancouver School of Theology. Richard's topic was "Scripture, Preaching & Imagination." His words of wisdom and advice were extremely well received and was certainly something those in attendance could take away, digest and implement in the months ahead. Synod is extremely grateful for Dr. Topping's contribution to this year's program. The Rev. Dr. Dale Woods has been invited as Synod's special guest speaker for the 2022 annual meeting.

All members look forward to meeting in person next year for the 148th meeting of the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces.

INTERNATIONAL

Freedom, Peace and Justice for Taiwan



The Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie with the Rev. Glynis Williams (left), Associate Secretary of International Ministries, and the Rev. Dr. Paul McLean, international mission staff to Taiwan.

By the Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie, St. Mark's Presbyterian Church in Orillia, Ont., and PCC representative on the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum steering group.

Very early one morning in October, I woke to the news that Chinese war planes, including heavy bombers and advanced fighters, had again entered Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ), flying in attack formation. These incursions by China have been happening with increasing frequency in the past several months, and this was certainly the largest show of force to date.

This news prompted me to have a very visceral reaction, which was based in fear. I am not Taiwanese, but I am the PCC's representative on the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum's (TEF)

Steering Group, and in that role have come to know and have great respect for those I have met and worked with. I worried for them, and their families, and what might lie ahead for this tiny island nation. I can't imagine what it would be like to live each day with the very real threat of invasion and the possibility of war hanging over my head. I have often said that the "tagline" of the PCC should be, "It's all about relationships," and that is certainly true for our international partnerships. Living into our relationships with our Taiwanese siblings in Christ means that we must learn about their reality; we must recognize that the geo-political tensions that exist in that region of the world take a toll on everyone.

The TEF is an initiative of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT). Through it, many international ecumenical partners have come together to journey with the PCT "in pursuit of justice and peace for the people of Taiwan and the Asia-Pacific."¹ A number of working groups have been formed, and I am a member of the Theological Reflection Working Group. We were tasked with completing a biblical-theological reflection about the crucial issues of concern to the PCT: identity, self-determination, the importance of transitional justice, the rights of

Indigenous peoples, human rights and human dignity.² Since these are all unquestionably matters of faith, our paper affirms the need to focus the work of the TEF on the "people's inalienable rights and responsibility to self-determination within a global environment dominated by amoral empires that act only for their own interests."³

This latest act of aggression by China affirms the need for the international community to speak out in defence of Taiwan's political independence from China. Following a civil war in the 1940's, China has viewed Taiwan as a breakaway province, and has used its power to effectively isolate Taiwan internationally, blocking their participation in many important organizations, including the United Nations, the World Health Organization and INTERPOL. (Taiwanese citizens are not allowed to visit the United Nations headquarters in New York.) Taiwan is not officially recognized by many nations, including Canada. In fact, the United States does not officially recognize Taiwan, either, though it does have a law that requires the U.S. to provide defence articles to Taiwan so it can defend itself. And while the material and political support of the U.S. is appreciated, Taiwan now finds itself squeezed between two empires, China and the United States. Both exert considerable cultural influence on the people of Taiwan, and this is a concern to those who want to determine their own future.

I know the PCT and the members of the TEF covet our prayers, and our interest in their situation. I would challenge you to hold them in prayer, and to learn more about the geo-political realities in which they live. Ask your elected representatives to pay attention to the plight of Taiwan, and to advocate for their recognition on the international stage. As Christians, we are called to take sides, and to stand for and with the peoples' struggle for freedom, peace and justice. May we, like the persistent widow in the Gospel of Luke, not grow tired of advocating for justice for Taiwan and its peoples.

FOOTNOTES

1 Taiwan Ecumenical Forum Newsletter (Issue No. 017)

2 Concept Paper. Theological Reflection Working Group of the Taiwan Ecumenical Forum for Justice and Peace. p. 1

3 Ibid. p. 4



The Rev. Linda Patton-Cowie with a youth delegate to the TEF conference.

INTERNATIONAL

Canairelief: Air Delivery of Emergency Food to Biafra



The Rev. E.H. Johnston and the Rev. R. T. Hall, meeting with Nigerian military in Biafra, Nigeria, 1968. PHOTO CREDIT: PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ARCHIVES

By the Rev. Richard Fee,
 Moderator of 2004 General Assembly,
 former mission staff to Nigeria

“How does one of Canada’s finest hours of bravery, selflessness and humanitarianism get left in the past and forgotten?” This is the opening line of the documentary, *Operation Lights Out: The Story of Canairelief*, by Angela Nnenne Onuora. The film tells the story of one of the first two “television wars”—the Vietnam War and the Biafran War/Nigerian Civil War. It is the story of heroism, sacrifice and daring carried out by civil Canadian society.

Canairelief was part of the much larger Joint Church Aid (JCA) airlift operation, fondly called “Jesus Christ Airlines” by the pilots and aircrews who took part. JCA was formed in November 1968 by 27 agencies from 17 countries. It was supported by European and North American churches and the wider American Jewish Community. JCA served as the umbrella facilitating smooth and coordinated air-relief delivery of food and medicines, and carried expatriate personnel into and out of Biafra. Captain Axel Duch, a Danish-Canadian who served as Chief of Operations, stated that JCA was made up of agencies from the Netherlands, Swe-

den, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Canada, Belgium, France, Caritas (The Vatican), Scotland, Ireland, USA and Austria. As such, it was the first major ecumenical humanitarian venture ever carried out.

When the breakaway Republic of Biafra separated from Nigeria in 1967, it entered a two-and-a-half year civil war that ultimately saw two million people die by starvation—primarily women and children. Failing to broker successful peace negotiations, a band of Canadian non-governmental humanitarian agencies ultimately purchased five Super Constellation aircraft to join with Joint Church Aid. The Rev. Edward (Ted) Johnson, Canadian Presbyterian Overseas Secretary, tirelessly shuttled between Canada, USA, Europe and Africa throughout 1968 and 1969, first trying to broker peace and then seeking all ways and means to keep Canairelief flying. Along with the Rev. Johnson, Henry Fletcher, Oxfam-Canada Executive Director, and Jack Grant, a Canadian Jewish businessman, these were three of the key personalities behind the founding of Canairelief. The Presbyterian Church in Canada loomed large throughout the entire operation of Canairelief.

During 1968 and 1969 planes flew into Biafra only at night, landing on

a widened portion of highway known as Annabelle, (Uli Airport), which quickly became the second busiest airport in Africa. Flying medicine and food into the beleaguered nation—which was only recognized by four nations, including France—the pilots and crew are credited with saving the lives of over one million people. From the Uli airport, the relief materials entered an amazing network run by foreign and national humanitarians spread throughout the Biafran nation and headed by Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu.

The on-the-ground distribution was ostensibly initiated by the International Red Cross, but the role of that agency collapsed when it was accused by both sides of breaking protocols and mutual agreements. Distribution fell to the churches, which were uniquely positioned and organized into World Council of Churches (WCC) and Caritas (Vatican) arms. Each took alternate nights in receiving the aid at Uli airstrip and delivered whatever arrived each night to their distribution centres. Canadian Presbyterians Ron and Hazel McGraw were in charge of such distribution for four major provinces and stayed in Biafra until the last flight out.

On the night of August 3–4, 1969



(Sunday–Monday), a Canairelief plane (CF-NAJ) crashed on approach to Uli airstrip. Four crewmen died: Captain Donald Merriam (49) of Kingston, a dual Canadian and Swiss national; First Officer Raymond (Ray) Levesque (27) of Montreal; Flight Engineer Vincent Wakeling (37) of Montreal; and Loadmaster Gary Libbus (29) of Toronto, originally from Sydney, Nova Scotia. The actual cause of the accident was never determined, but an explanation of sorts may be found in the fact that the aircraft flew into trees 1,500 feet up on the top of a hill, 15 kilometres off course, shortly after reporting their approach to the airstrip and calling for lights. It seems likely that after being passed from the Area Control Centre to Uli tower, which was acknowledged by all parties, the aircraft took a wrong heading and, in fact, never flew over the radio beacon beside the runway at Uli. One possible explanation for the location of the crash site is that the aircraft was tuned in to the wrong radio beacon and was actually approaching the second seldom-used Biafran military airstrip at Uga.

The end of the civil war came swiftly on Jan. 11, 1970. Colonel Ojukwu flew out that night and went into exile; second-in-command, Brigadier-General Phillip Effiong, surrendered to the Nigerian forces and the last humanitarian flights concluded that night. Today, the remnants of the largest civilian humanitarian airlift in history—two Canadian Super Con-



Angela Nnenne Onuora, host of the documentary *Operation Lights Out: The Story of Canairelief*.

stellation aircraft—can still be seen at the end of the runway on the island of Sao Tome in the Bight of Biafra, off the southern coast of Nigeria.

The “Biafran War” gave birth to several non-governmental agencies and brought about many international protocols, establishing standards for the protection and care of vulnerable populations in times of war and disaster. Today, the United Nations, the Red Cross, Action by Churches Together (ACT-International) and all such non-governmental organizations subscribe to these standards in all of their interventions. Biafra was the beginning.

Visit operationlightsoutmovie.com to learn more about the documentary. To learn more about the PCC and Biafra, visit presbyterian.ca/biafra-pcc for a detailed Presbyterian History article.



The Rev. E. H. Johnston (left) and the Rev. Russell Hall (right), with prisoners of war in Biafra, 1968. PHOTO CREDIT: PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ARCHIVES

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan: Challenges and Opportunities



PWS&D is assisting Afghans displaced in Kabul since the Taliban took over the country.

By Guy Smagge, PWS&D Director

The summer of 2021 was another challenging one. In Afghanistan, the takeover by the Taliban created panic in large sections of its population. Thousands went into hiding or desperately sought to leave the country. PWS&D received messages from current and former partner staff asking for assistance to come to Canada as refugees. The messages were lined with distress: hiding in undisclosed locations, fearing persecution from the Taliban due to an association with Christian organizations like ours.

But our partners don't have any intent to convert anyone to Christianity. Just like Jesus showed us, our support and assistance are always based on need and not on one's religion, race, gender or political affilia-

tion. Our partners reach out to those who are most in need, with a focus on the most vulnerable.

In recent years, we supported maternal and child health programs in collaboration with Global Affairs Canada. We have provided food assistance to populations displaced by fighting in Afghanistan or those recently returned to Afghanistan after being refugees in Iran and Pakistan. This assistance has been critical to aid families in getting through the harsh winter months, until livelihoods can be re-established.

While there is still much uncertainty as to what will be possible moving forward, our partner in Afghanistan has operated under Taliban rule before and is continuing to assist where possible.

As of October 2021, the United Nations estimated that over 18 million Afghans, half of the country's population, are facing a humanitarian crisis. As winter sets in, this number will increase dramatically. In response, a new food assistance project is underway. Thankfully, our work with Canadian Foodgrains Bank—and contributions from other denominations at the Foodgrains Bank—makes it possible to reach out to even more people than last year. Cash transfers to the most vulnerable families will help them buy food and pay for critical items, with the hope of renewed livelihood opportunities next year.

As for girls' education, there remains much uncertainty. While the Taliban initially promised that girls' education would be allowed at all levels, as long as boys and girls didn't mix in classes, they have since broken this promise. This has put the possibility for girls to attend high



Girls' education remains an essential part of the work PWS&D supports in Afghanistan.

school and university in jeopardy.

Primary school education has been allowed to resume and the schools PWS&D supports are still able to operate. With its emphasis on community ownership, girls have been able to access education safely and communities have come to value girls' education more than before. PWS&D is supporting this project in coordination with an Australian member of the ACT Alliance. Over the last few years, this collaboration has allowed the project to grow and reach many more girls and commu-

nities. Our solidarity is needed more than ever.

As we prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth, let us be mindful of the message Jesus left us with: to love our neighbour. Let us remember those who are facing the hardship of winter without access to sufficient food in Afghanistan, and let's pray that those who lead the country may open their hearts to the people's needs and connect to a God of generosity and compassion.

*Information on Afghanistan was accurate as of October 2021.

Heads Up: PWS&D's 75th Anniversary Is in 2022!

In 1947, facing post-war shortages in Europe, the church reached out with humanitarian assistance—and the first iteration of PWS&D was created. Since then, PWS&D has changed and evolved, with an ever-expanding mandate to serve the world's most vulnerable populations.

In 2022, PWS&D will commemorate 75 years of service on behalf of the PCC. Keep an eye on this newspaper to look back at some of the key moments in history when the church responded through PWS&D.

You might be surprised by how much has been accomplished by a relatively small agency, deeply supported by the church, working together with partners and coalitions, and with the government's assistance, to make a lasting difference in the lives of so many around the globe. We are working at pulling together the "Story of PWS&D." Stay tuned!

Life for Displaced Families in Somalia

The following poem was submitted for the Kids Create Change Challenge by Thomas (13), a PWS&D Champion from Markham, Ont. For this activity, kids and their families were asked to read stories about PWS&D's work and respond by doing something creative.

*Somalian camp
Who'll help the people in need
PWS&D
Helps babies that are starving
And gives them the food they need*

In Somalia, approximately 839,000 children face severe food insecurity, including those living in camps for internally displaced persons. Factors

like conflict, unpredictable weather, the ongoing desert locust infestation, and now the COVID-19 pandemic have made it difficult for people to farm or purchase enough nutritious food to thrive.

PWS&D is working with local partners through Canadian Foodgrains Bank to address food insecurity in the Gedo region of Somalia. Support focuses on providing therapeutic food to help babies and young children regain their health. Shiindha, the mother of a three-year-old child who accessed emergency intervention through the program, commented, "I am forever grateful for the existence of such services to help our children."



Shiinda's three-month-old baby received emergency nutritional treatment with support from PWS&D.

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

Emergency Relief for Long-term Recovery



ACT Alliance members in Haiti provided food for survivors following the August 2021 earthquake. PHOTO CREDIT: THOMAS NOREILLE/ACT ALLIANCE

By Karen Bokma,
PWS&D Communications

In August 2021, Haiti experienced a magnitude 7.2 earthquake that rendered tens of thousands of people homeless. It quickly recalled the year 2010, when a devastating earthquake hit the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, and we were inundated with images of flattened buildings and so many in need of food, shelter and medical care. Hundreds of thousands of people died. The world

responded generously, including Canadian Presbyterians, to assist those left homeless and destitute.

The visuals from more recent disasters, including Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and the earthquake in August, can sometimes make it feel as though Haiti will never recover from the disasters and trauma inflicted on the country.

But while political instability, lack of infrastructure and environmental insecurity continue to be issues facing the country, there are signs of

hope. Progress made in response to past disasters has not been lost.

Following Hurricane Matthew in 2016, ACT Alliance members (with support from PWS&D) helped construct 100 houses for families who lost their homes in the hurricane and repaired over 1,000 more. Following the August 2021 earthquake, when assessment teams began visiting communities, they found that every one of the houses built and repaired by ACT was still standing and structurally sound.

Prosperity Raymond, the convener of the ACT Haiti Forum, said, "We are really proud that we did a really good job in this situation. All the houses that we have seen since the earthquake that we built are still standing.

"Some neighbours went to those houses, and put their children in those houses, because they felt safe in them in the first days after the earthquake," he continued. "They were confident in those houses. They became points of safety for the community in those first days."

To continue to build back better, ACT members will use the same model to design and rebuild strong homes in response to the earthquake.

In addition to having engineers design better houses, ACT members also made sure strong foundations

were built, which was unusual in the area at the time. They worked with families to find the best place on their property to build the house and followed international standards when mixing the cement and sand used to make the materials. All these factors helped to produce houses that remained standing after the earthquake.

"As we have a good model already, that means that as soon as we have the resources, we can move forward to rebuild faster—the construction will be better," said Prosperity.

In addition to aiding with shelter construction and rehabilitation in response to the August earthquake, PWS&D is also supporting ACT Alliance members in a variety of other ways, including essential food and non-food items, unconditional cash transfers for the purchase of essential items and agricultural support to farmers.

Community leaders and local volunteers will also learn about community-based humanitarian action when confronted by a crisis. This capacity building will ensure that when future disasters happen, communities will know how to plan and implement a response.

But PWS&D doesn't only respond to humanitarian needs in Haiti. To help address issues of environmental inse-



Houses constructed with support from PWS&D after Hurricane Matthew in 2016 survived the recent earthquake in Haiti. PHOTO CREDIT: ACT ALLIANCE HAITI FORUM

curity, we work with local partners to support farmers as they learn how to navigate a changing climate. Farmers receive training in soil conservation, soil fertility management and production diversity, which helps increase yields and builds disaster resilience.

While challenges persist in Haiti, we also know that progress is being made. Families who had new, stronger houses were able to weather the earthquake in safety, offering secure places for others to shelter as well. Malnourished children are receiving nutritional therapy that provides hope for better health. Farmers and their families are addressing the impacts of climate change and improving their livelihoods for the future.

To learn more about how PWS&D is helping build back better in Haiti, visit WeRespond.ca/Haiti.

Human Tragedy in Tigray

By Emma Clarke,
PWS&D Communications

In a community in Tigray, Ethiopia, a water pump sits broken. This vital piece of infrastructure is yet another casualty of the devastating violence that has marred the region since November 2020.

Just over one year ago, the Ethiopian government sent troops into Tigray, escalating a long-standing political disagreement. Many faced sexual and gender-based violence, and even death, amidst the conflict. Dropping everything to flee the fighting, families walked hundreds of kilometres seeking safety. Sadly, many left behind loved ones, as well as homes and livelihoods.

Throughout the region of Tigray, over two million people, including

residents, internally displaced persons, returnees and Eritrean refugees, need immediate humanitarian assistance in the form of shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, and reliable access to food.

One of the injustices of war is that it not only puts people's safety at risk, but robs them of the systems they need to survive. "Every war is a human tragedy," explained the ACT Alliance Ethiopia Forum. "It not only destroys lives but the social fabric of society." It is important, in the face of this humanitarian disaster, to recognize and respond to people's diverse needs. These include safe access to clean water, sustainable food sources, and psychosocial support. The ACT Alliance response in the region—which PWS&D is supporting—is helping to meet these needs

for 855,000 people.

Water rehabilitation projects are making wells and latrines available, through work programs that also create income for people who have been displaced. Families facing food insecurity are receiving grain, flour and oil, as well as seeds and tools in areas where there is access to farmland. Food supplements are providing malnutrition treatment for children who are undernourished, and for pregnant and lactating women—these same supplements are providing multi-generational hope. Professional clinical care is also being made available for those struggling to cope with the trauma they have experienced or who have faced sexual and gender-based violence.

PWS&D is also supporting a three-month food assistance project with Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The project is supporting internally displaced populations with food rations. Additionally, our partner in the region hosts three sites that provide in-patient support to people with



PWS&D is responding to help meet the diverse needs of people displaced from their homes in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. PHOTO CREDIT: LWF ETHIOPIA

mental health issues, the chronically ill, and elderly people in need of care. Daily meals, including locally available food and nutritionally fortified supplements, are provided to clients at these homes.

How can you respond to this crisis? You can advocate for peace, donate for action and pray for affected people.

Earlier this year, PWS&D, together with other ACT Alliance members, wrote a letter to the Canadian Foreign Minister calling for an end to the

hostilities, as well as the creation of a humanitarian corridor so that aid could reach those in greatest need. You can continue to raise awareness by engaging others in conversations about the conflict and writing the Canadian government to let them know you care about peace-building efforts in this region. You can financially support PWS&D's humanitarian work in the region. Finally, you can pray for peace, and for the safety, food security and other needs of those who have been affected.

"Every war is a human tragedy as it not only destroys lives but the social fabric of society."

—ACT Alliance Ethiopia Forum

PRESBYTERIAN WORLD SERVICE & DEVELOPMENT

Hope after Tragedy



Families whose loved ones were killed received support to help them get back on their feet.

By Stephanie Chunoo,
PWS&D Communications

In Comitancillo, a small town in western Guatemala, 60% of the population lives in extreme poverty. Families, who on average have eight members in the home, live on a daily income of

about US \$2.00.

Consequently, many people resort to temporary migration to urban areas and large-scale farms in Guatemala for work. But in recent years, the low price of coffee, worsening labour conditions on coffee and sugarcane farms, and discrimination against Indigenous youth in urban areas have increased international migration. As a result, many are looking to the United States as a more attractive alternative—with the plan to send earnings from work in the US back to loved ones in Guatemala.

The process of migration to the United States is perilous. The cost to hire smugglers who guide migrants to the USA illegally is very high. Many young people are forced to take out loans with extremely high interest rates, or in some cases, families will remortgage their properties to make the journey possible.

The dangers of taking this trip have increased in recent years. Throughout the journey, migrants are subjected to mistreatment at the hands of migration authorities in Mexico. In addition, many migrants fall prey to criminal gangs who see an opportunity to generate income quickly or take advantage of migrants to transport drugs.

Yet, despite the dangers and out of

desperation, more and more young people embark on this journey in hopes of achieving their dreams and accessing opportunities that seem unavailable to them in their home country.

Chasing the American Dream—with a Tragic Ending

In western Guatemala, Ana Maricelda López Téraj lived with her husband, Elfego Roliberto Miranda Díaz and their four children, who range in age from four months to six years.

Like many families, Ana and Elfego dreamt of a better life for their kids, one that included buying land to build their dream home and sending their kids to school. Elfego also dreamed of buying horns and other instruments for the musical group he directed at his local community church.

However, the minimal income that Elfego earned as a teacher and through piecemeal agricultural jobs was barely enough to support the family. So Elfego made the difficult decision to migrate to the United States to help better provide for his family.

A couple of days after her husband left, Ana started to hear rumours that a group of migrants had been killed in Mexico, close to the US border. The



Ana sits with her four children at their home in Comitancillo in western Guatemala.

next day, her worst fears were confirmed—Elfego had been murdered, one of 16 victims killed in a turf battle between rival Mexican gangs.

“This news left us with great impact because no one could believe it, but unfortunately, it was a truth that we could not accept. We have cried day after day, and night after night, but unfortunately, my husband passed away and our dreams collapsed,” shared Ana.

Left with no monthly income and debts to pay off, Ana felt helpless.

But it wasn’t just Ana who was affected. Of the 16 victims, 11 were from Comitancillo—devastating the community.

To help assist Ana and other families who lost loved ones in this tragedy, PWS&D provided them with livestock, tools and agricultural inputs,

clothing, food and kitchen items so that they could resume their lives and care for their household.

Our partner, AMMID, assessed every family’s situation and identified what they each needed most. Ana received fertilizer for her crops, clothes for her sons and daughters, two sheep, food and economic support to cover her expenses. While still grieving the loss of her husband, at least Ana does not have to also worry about how to feed her children.

“We thank [PWS&D who] supported AMMID to provide this support, that God gives them more life and health. Maybe I will never thank them personally, but God will reward them for all the effort they have made to help us minimize this deep pain that we are going through,” Ana expressed with gratitude.

Ride for Refuge Benefits Farmers and Families



In Edmonton, Alta., the Churches of Edmonton Lakeland team pause their walk to snap a picture.

By Stephanie Chunoo,
PWS&D Communications

On Saturday, Oct. 2, 77 PWS&D supporters geared up across Canada to participate in Ride for Refuge in

support of PWS&D’s food security programs.

The Ride for Refuge is a nationwide cycling and walking fundraiser that helps charities raise money for the displaced, vulnerable and per-

secuted. Like last year, due to COVID-19, teams participated virtually or in small groups.

Your generous support meant that this year we surpassed our \$20,000 fundraising goal. Eleven teams cycled and walked to raise over \$36,000, making this year our most successful one ever!

Shirley Carter, a member of Team Knox in Waterloo, Ont., shared, “This was my first walk for any cause. I set a modest goal of \$200. Through the generosity of my donors, I exceeded that goal by more than double the amount. I was thrilled by their gracious support and walked with a happy heart!”

“We enjoyed our walk through the beautiful North Saskatchewan River valley. It is always a delight to meet new people from our neighbouring congregations. This year with COVID-19 restrictions, the op-



In Waterloo, Ont., Team Knox gets ready to kick off their ride.

portunity to enjoy fellowship safely outdoors was greatly appreciated,” explained Christine Ball, a member of the Churches of Edmonton Lakeland team in Edmonton, Alta.

Unfortunately, hunger in the world has worsened since the pandemic began. Your incredible support this year will help us respond in places of great need, such as Yemen, Syria, Haiti, Malawi and Afghanistan. Dona-

tions will be matched up to four times at Canadian Foodgrains Bank, multiplying the impact of contributions.

Farmers will also be supported to learn sustainable agricultural practices that help deal with the impacts of climate change, increase crop yields and improve nutrition for families.

Thank you to all who participated and donated in support of this year’s Ride for Refuge. See you next year!

BOOK REVIEW

Book Review of *Unspeakable*

By the Rev. Konnie Vissers, Deputy
Clerk of the Presbytery of Hamilton

*Unspeakable: Preaching and
Trauma-Informed Theology*
Written by Sarah Travis
Cascade Books, 2021

Sarah Travis's new book, *Unspeakable: Preaching and Trauma-Informed Theology*, offers a fresh nuance in the field of homiletics. At a time when the public state of alert is heightened—with the pandemic still in full swing, the continually unfolding stories of Residential School survivors and victims, and the climate crisis, to name a few—Travis gives thoughtful consideration to the realities of trauma and faithful interpretation of scripture for preaching. She holds the tension of context and content in beautiful balance.

From the beginning, Travis identifies a key problem—in the face of trauma, “beautiful words” fail (p. 1). As pastors, preachers and people of faith, what do we say when words fail? Drawing from her own experience of devastating loss, she explores the challenging territory of pastoral care and community support when trauma strikes. This book will equip pastors, elders and Christians who care for others to understand the nuances of trauma and avoid the pitfalls of harmful words intended to heal. Though it is specifically written for preachers, all types of pastoral caregivers will benefit from reading this.

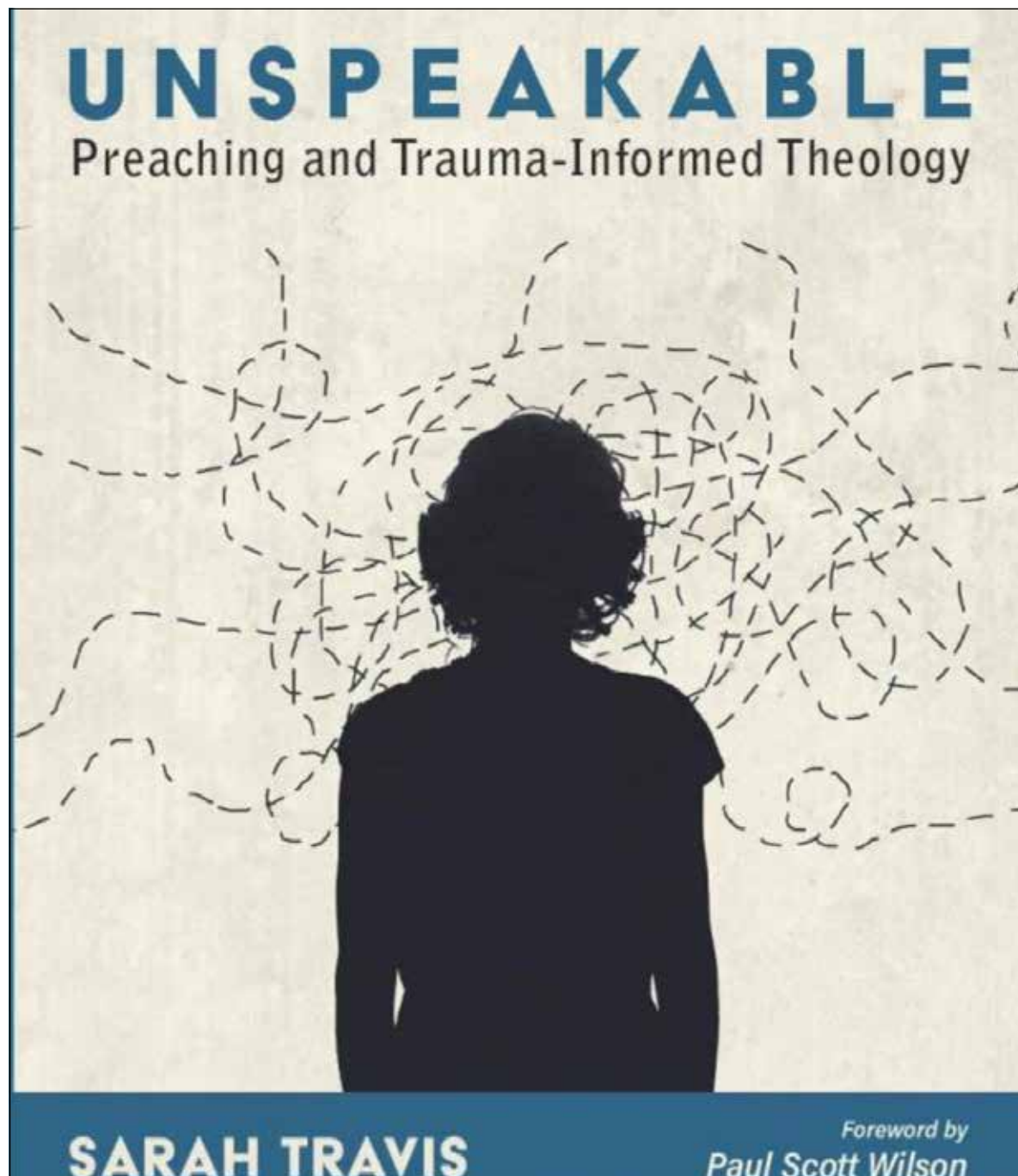
The first chapter takes a broad view of trauma. Travis wisely notes, “Trauma is defined by the way an individual responds to an experience, not the nature of the event itself” (p. 15). Drawing upon insights from psychology, traumatology, theology and homiletics, the author brings together the pieces of the puzzle with much research and thoughtfulness, and reminds pastors and preachers that trauma not only affects the body

or mind, but the spirit, an ontological sense of identity (p. 28).

Chapter two begins with the reminder: “Christ leads to healing, but it is the wounded Christ that leads to healing” (p. 32). The author reminds preachers, who draw upon the texts from scripture, that the Bible is full of trauma. She brings biblical stories to life, advising the reader of context, and cautioning against glory theologies. Additionally, she cautions well-meaning Christians who offer misguided comfort in times of crisis and trauma with words like, “It was God’s will” (p. 41). This is where the rubber meets the road for lived theology and preaching. The words we speak are reverberations of our theology. Not only do words matter, but congregations are urged to create safe spaces which may allow for healing and recovery (p. 53).

Chapter three begs the question, “How do we witness to the power of trauma in both personal and collective contexts while also witnessing to a larger story of grace and mercy that is found in the gospel?” (p. 56). This single question might be the thesis of this book. When preachers name trauma and abuse for what it is in scripture and in the news, as well as sensitively consider and voice the problems of trauma in the pews (with permission), they bear witness simultaneously to the present reality of trauma and the grander narrative of the Biblical witness. Put succinctly, Travis writes, “We continue to proclaim resurrection, even if it has had a shadowy side that inhibits us from seeing grace in all its glory” (p. 71). She ends this section with the call for preachers to declare this witness beyond the pulpit through the embodying work of Christ in the world.

The fourth chapter images preaching as midwifery, where a preacher delivers a message for the sake of life and growth and flourishing (p. 78). Utilizing theological imagination, Travis reminds us that part of the task



of the preacher is to envision hope in the face of death. It is this imagination that prophets and preachers have relied on for centuries. Imagination opens the mind to change before change can be embodied. Travis challenges preachers to rethink sermon endings as well. Trauma creates non-linear narratives, which must be taken into account in preaching. She asks preachers to consider how to account for the messiness of the here-and-now, while simultaneously upholding the mandate for preachers to imagine hope for the hopeless, and convey it in a manner that the hopeless can hear. She also reminds us that while trauma disintegrates a

narrative, preaching can be an act of “integration” (p. 90).

Both in chapters four and five, Travis offers sections of sermons by other preachers, as well as her own, which illustrate the points she makes. Through a sermon by Nadia Booz-Weber, she explains that preaching from the Bible not only offers good news to those who are hurting, but “accompaniment in dark journeys” (Travis, 100). She ends with the practices of Bibliodrama and lament, both of which can be incorporated into services as ways to embody, witness and testify to both trauma and grace.

Finally, she illustrates a power-

ful and provocative example of a trauma-informed sermon, using one of her own sermon excerpts. It demonstrates precisely what she argues for all along—that trauma can (and must) invade our sermons because it invades the world all around us. Trauma gets a word, but not the last word. While acknowledging the brokenness of our circumstances, Travis directs our imaginations toward new possibilities, ultimately—hope.

This book will change the way you think about preaching, challenging you to consider your own place in the world, and the way your position affects your hermeneutic of trauma and hope.



The Presbyterian Church in Canada


**GIVE US
A FOLLOW!**


@PCCONNECT



@PCCONNECT



@PRESBYTERIAN_CHURCH_IN_CANADA

ONLINE WORSHIP

Launching a Virtual Ministry in Guelph



*By the Rev. John Borthwick,
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
in Guelph, Ont.*

As a response to the post-pandemic reality of church, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Guelph, Ont., launched "The Abbey," a virtual ministry that is a safe space to nurture spiritual things and to care for those who tend to all things spiritual.

After completing a course about hybrid ministry in a post-pandemic world at Luther Seminary with Ryan

Panzer, author of *Grace and Gigabytes*, the Rev. John Borthwick, minister at St. Andrew's, learned that while the pandemic revealed people are looking for spiritual things, they aren't necessarily interested in attending the traditional church. In the course, Ryan looked at how, since the spring of 2020, daily online engagement through vehicles like Netflix, YouTube and Facebook have risen dramatically while the studies from the Barna Group indicate that those who have no religious affiliation have

sought out spaces where they could ask questions and explore their spirituality. At the same time, Google trends show a sustained increase in searches related to religion and spirituality, searches which previously had been stagnant or declining. Ryan urged the church to "find a way to show up in those spaces."

St. Andrew's also considered the insights of Casper ter Kuile, author of *The Power of Ritual*, who said: "The distribution systems [of church] are becoming obsolete ... but not the practices or the wisdom itself ... and the spiritual longing is as strong as ever." This was affirmed by the contributors to *Being the Church in a Post-Pandemic World: Game Changers for the Post-Pandemic Church*, who wrote: "The post-pandemic church must be a digital church. Whether this is a both/and approach or only online, we must be a digital church. We must offer online ministry, not just online worship."

They put these insights together with the knowledge that the pandemic has also taken a toll on clergy and church leaders, many who feel

isolated as they struggle to minister in the contexts that they find themselves. St. Andrew's wanted to provide a space where they could share their experiences and find support and encouragement for the future.

"The Abbey" is St. Andrew's response to this longing. They have created a virtual space that they hope will be similar to a monastery: a place for learning, rest and healing, practicing spirituality and nourishing one's body and soul. It is open to strangers and travellers as well as church leaders and members. St. Andrew's envisions using online tools to nurture spiritual disciplines like prayer, worship and dialogue; provide care to church leaders through webinars and facilitated discussions; and celebrate those who tend to all things spiritual by randomly offering participants gifts of "bread, beer or books."

With the endorsement of the Presbytery of Waterloo Wellington, "The Abbey" secured a grant for congregational renewal from Presbyterians Sharing to begin this work. In October 2021, they held their inaugural

workshop series, looking at hybrid ministry with Ryan Panzer. Participants representing a variety of denominations from across Canada learned more about hybrid ministry, shared best practices and learned practical tools to use in their ministry settings.

Soon, "The Abbey" will host two upcoming events on how people's empathy is under strain. The first will help faith leaders recognize how their calling impacts their well-being and offer strategies for thriving amid the stress and strain of caring for others, while the second will cover similar material but for a wider audience.

In the spring of 2022, John will host a monthly "No Reading Required" Book Club called, "Pearls Before Nine." Over the span of an hour, "pearls" of various books from self-help to business to theology will be shared, all before nine in the morning! He reads the books, so you don't have to.

For more information, or to register for these events, visit *The Abbey* at facebook.com/TheAbbey.ca or brotherborthwick@gmail.com.

RECOGNITIONS

P.E.I. Presbytery Celebrates 200th Anniversary

*By John Barrett, Clerk of Session,
Zion Presbyterian Church in
Charlottetown, P.E.I.*

On Tuesday, Sept. 14, Zion Presbyterian Church in Charlottetown played host to the 200th Anniversary meeting of the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island. Special guests included the Rev. Dr. Daniel Scott, Moderator of the 146th General Assembly; Her Honour Antoinette Perry, Lieutenant Governor of P.E.I.; Charlottetown Mayor, Phillip Brown; and a host of visitors and elders from various P.E.I. congregations.

Led by presbytery moderator, the Rev. Douglas Rollwage, the worship service, which precedes all meetings of the P.E.I. presbytery, included hymns and prayers from the time during which the presbytery was

formed in 1821. The sanctuary choir, under the direction of Zion's music director Faye Barrett, performed "Lord of Mercy, Lord of Grace" as an introit, and later in the service as an anthem commissioned for the 200th anniversary of a congregation in nearby Maine entitled, "Here in the House of the Lord."

The Rev. Dr. Scott delivered a sermon entitled, "Driving Forward with Your Eyes on the Rearview Mirror," emphasizing the need to look forward while not forgetting our past, yet not dwelling on the past. The Rev. Dr. Scott also assisted the Rev. Rollwage in the sacrament of Communion, which, again, is a standard component of each September meeting of presbytery. Later in the meeting, the Rev. Dr. Donghwi David Son was inducted as the



Back (left-right): John Barrett, Clerk of Zion Session; Nancy Harvey, Clerk of the P.E.I. Presbytery; Robert Moffat, Aide de Camp. **Front (left-right):** The Rev. Douglas Rollwage, Presbytery Moderator and Moderator of the 142nd General Assembly; Her Honour Antoinette Perry, Lieutenant Governor of P.E.I.; the Rev. Dr. Daniel Scott, Moderator of the 146th General Assembly; the Rev. Dr. John Cameron, Moderator of the 116th General Assembly. PHOTO CREDIT: CATHY MACDONALD.

presbytery's new moderator for the 2021-22 year.

Presbytery was pleased to have in attendance the Rev. Dr. John Cameron, Moderator of the 116th General Assembly. Dr. Cameron, along with the Rev. Dr. James Farris and the Rev. Dr. Gordon Matheson (all members of the Appendix to the Roll), were

recognized for their untiring commitment to the P.E.I. presbytery and the denomination.

For the first time in almost 18 months, presbyters were treated to a time of fellowship and refreshment provided by Zion Church. Those in attendance certainly experienced a wonderful celebration of God's love and

work in this province and left enthused and motivated as they headed to their home congregations.

For those wishing to view the worship component of this historic service, visit the Zion Presbyterian Church YouTube channel, which can be accessed through our website at zionpres.org

WOMEN

Recognizing Pauline Brown, International Mission Staff to India



November 10, 2021, marked the 70th anniversary of Pauline Brown's mission service to India.



By the Women's Missionary Society

On November 10, 2021, the Women's Missionary Society hosted an online event to celebrate Pauline Brown's 70 years of mission work in India. Pauline and the Rev. Emmanuel Ariel, a close friend and minister in the Vindya Satpura region of India, joined the event from India where the local time was around 11:30 at night. Family members and friends from all over North America and India joined

in to share stories and accomplishments from Pauline's life and to bring good wishes. The event included a presentation from Pauline's niece, Anne Orr.

Pauline Brown dreamed of going to India when she was a child. Years later, working as a navy nurse, a former missionary in India encouraged her. With no theological training nor mission experience, Pauline applied to go to India to work among the Indigenous Bhil people. The Women's Missionary Society had been looking for a nurse for four months and recognized the 25-year-old Pauline as an answered prayer. Six months later, she was on a boat. Upon arrival in India she thought, "I am home." She felt this was where she was meant to be.

Pauline received her R. N. from Ottawa Civic Hospital. She earned a Diploma in Public Health and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Ottawa. Later, she obtained her Master of Health Sciences (Health Care Practice) from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ont. Pauline is a life-long learner, reading theology and keeping up on current events worldwide.

Pauline arrived in India in 1951 and served as a missionary nurse until retirement in 2006. She served as the Director of Jobat Christian Hospital, Madhya Pradesh, and as a teacher at the Graduate School of Nursing in Indore. Pauline spent her 55 years in India working under the Church of North India in various capacities, focusing on health care and education. She travelled the rolling hills of the Bhil region with a mobile clinic, organizing and leading community health programs, which included training in first aid, nutrition and midwifery, and teaching at schools of nursing. She also found time to participate in the women's group at



Pauline (centre front) with members of the Southwest Ontario Synodical Executive in May 2018.

her church in Jobat, and to welcome guests and visitors to her home.

In 2000, Pauline was made a member of the Order of Canada. She holds honorary doctorates and awards from the Canadian and Indian governments for her work in the Vindhya-Satpura Region where she established community health networks to support the Bhil people. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Divinity from Knox College in Toronto in 1998.

Pauline credits her WMS superiors for encouraging her to stay in India. Now, all these years later, Pauline says that "God is still working."

During the 70th anniversary event on November 10, Pauline, now 96 years of age, was in her element. It was very late in the day in Jobat, but she was alert and excited to be with friends from around the world. We listened in awe as she confirmed stories of her work and shared family tales. Pauline said, "When I am gone, don't mourn. Have a glass of wine

and celebrate my life."

What a truly remarkable woman of faith! Pauline has led by example over the past 70 years of serving God. Anyone who has met Pauline knows that she is a very warm and caring person, always sharing God's love with everyone who comes into her life. We in the WMS are proud of Pauline, who was one of the first women missionaries sent by the WMS. It was truly our joy to celebrate with her on this very special day. May God richly bless Pauline wherever she is, and always!

Event Cancelled

In October, the Women's Missionary Society made the difficult decision to cancel the Celebrate! in-person gathering planned for May 2022, due to the ongoing uncertainty of the pandemic. Stay tuned for details about future events at presbyterian.ca/wms.

Christmas Come Together Celebration

December 8, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. (Eastern)

Join the Women's Missionary Society for our Christmas Come Together Celebration. The Rev. Theresa McDonald-Lee and her team at Camp Kintail will be leading in our last "Come Together" event of the year.

To register, email skim@presbyterian.ca or call 1-800-619-7301.



SHARE YOUR PHOTOS!

CALLING ALL CONGREGATIONS!

The Presbyterian Connection newspaper needs photos demonstrating your church's ministry and mission in action.

EMAIL TO:

CONNECTION@PRESBYTERIAN.CA

REFLECTIONS

All Means Everyone

By Nicole Flynn, a person who has lived experience, 2021 Graduate Loyalist College General Arts & Science Diploma, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Tweed, Ont.

Inherited perspectives toward intersectionalities from religion and political ecology continue to relive the past, perpetuating the negative attitudes against people who are marginalized. There is fear among people who have an intellectual disability that if the tendency toward congregate living does not change, then the abuse, neglect and devaluing of people will continue.

The history of segregating people who have an intellectual disability is happening again. The attitude of separating people who are different is not stopping. There are congregant living centres such as Indwell, Reena, and now Cherry Blossom Village, which will be added to the list along with Apple Blossom Village, Blooming Acres Farm, and Blooming Acres Snow Valley Lodge. The cycle is being repeated and it is spreading across the province of Ontario.

All people have identities and see themselves in specific ways. These identities meet, or cross, or run beside each other and these are known as intersectionalities. This is how people are judged and how stereotypes, biases and prejudices develop. Intersectionalities lead to negative attitudes. People who are identified as being different are marginalized to the sidelines, segregated from mainstream activities, denied their right to freedom, power and prosperity.

Marginalized groups live on the edges of society and do not have power. Marginalized groups and communities are treated unfairly and excluded because the balance in society is not equal.

Governments are largely composed of elected politicians who are typically male, white, straight, able-bodied and wealthy. Women, First Nations, people of colour, the LGBTQI2+ population, the disabled and the poor are rarely represented in the government.

Organizations manipulate people into thinking they are doing a good deed by working together on a project, like creating housing for people who have an intellectual or developmental disability. People believe they will have a better place in Heaven or in their next life just because they participated in what they have been told is a good thing. However, these congregate settings do negatively affect people who have a disability

by excluding them. This perpetuates the attitude of “them” and “us,” or always considering people who have an intellectual disability as “the other,” an object to be housed, rather than people to be included.

In Plato's *Republic*, balance in society was discussed as being significant. Plato describes how children who appear different had to be removed to a separate setting and were not considered worth raising to adulthood. The amount of work to support a person who is different would offset the balance and this would negatively affect the entire society.¹

Religion helps people to understand and find meaning and a purpose in life and to answer important questions about the world around them.² Whether people are religious or not, their inherited views, perspectives and attitudes continue to inappropriately impact the way people who are different are treated.

In the article “*Multiculturalism,*

to decreasing social expenditures, restricting unions, large tax cuts, reducing governments, increasing the markets internationally, as well as increasing unemployment.⁵ The neo-liberal attitude segregated and divided society so that people who are different, such as people who have an intellectual disability, were marginalized. The conservative ideology of the individual being responsible for themselves and not relying on the government was clearly stated by Margaret Thatcher in her famous quote:

“...so they are casting their problems on society and who is society? There is no such thing! There are individual men and women and there are families and no government can do anything except through people and people look to themselves first.”⁶

These attitudes have developed barriers for people who are marginalized and have excluded people from their communities.



ence for people who are somehow like us. Michaeli clarifies that these survival instincts are not part of our DNA. The article further discusses that in 1896, James Mark Baldwin said some children learn how to adapt faster than the adults and these children develop their skills and pass them on to the next generation, which becomes a heritable behaviour. These behavioural changes have a non-genetic affect on the genes, which is how they are transmitted to the offspring.

Dr. Michaeli explains that as people

time to listen to their struggles and experiences, and by understanding who they are as a person. We also increase the balance by valuing the role of allies who support people who have an intellectual disability. Increasing education, employment opportunities and health care would also bring balance to society.

The author, as a person who has Trisomy 21, an intellectual disability, asks the decision makers in society to put aside the veil of ignorance and make decisions as if they were the ones born differently. How would this impact their lives and the lives of their families?

If someone wants to increase their understanding and compassion, then the author recommends they become a friend, or a good neighbour, to a person who has an intellectual disability. Include your new friend in your book club, or Bible study, or bowling night. Try new things together. This will increase their awareness of someone who has an intellectual disability as a person. This will also begin to change the genetic code in the brain toward one of inclusion.

The author frowns upon trying to cure, heal, fix or change a person, just because they are different. Accept everyone for who they are—a very important person. Having a disability did not happen because someone sinned. God wants everyone to be together as they were created to be.

Housing is important. The type of environment has to be appropriate, inclusive, supportive, affordable and accessible. This doesn't mean putting all of one type of person in a building together on the fringe of society. This means gathering people together as one big family, sharing community resources. It means knowing each other: the hardships, the laughter, and just being together.

We do have the ability to change our attitudes, our actions and our instincts toward people who have a disability. The changes we make now will impact generations to come. Everyone will be involved, everyone will be included in community activities, and this will be the norm. Intersectionalities will not matter, however a person identifies who they are as a person; everyone will have their human rights recognized and will be accepted.

*Society is not balanced if people are marginalized to the sidelines. . .
The solution is to bring the people who are marginalized into the
community and include them in mainstream activities.*

Religion, and Disability; Implications for Special Education Practitioners,” by Brooke Blanks and David Smith (2009), it is presented that Christians also follow the rules of the Old Testament, which discuss disability as a punishment for sin. Blanks and Smith state that since 400 AD, Christian people have tried to establish the theory that intellectual disabilities are the “evidence that immorality is inheritable.”³ This same argument was used by Nazi Germany as well as in Canada to develop the eugenics movement. “Sixteenth century reformer Martin Luther made remarks about drowning children with disabilities, based on his belief that these were not actually human children but rather incarnations of the devil.”⁴

Political ecology addresses the association between politics and the economy, the environment, social services, and how these connections affect communities. A change occurred in the political attitude during the 1980s when British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President Ronald Reagan created neo-liberalism. The political climate went from high employment and social services

In the article “*Are Cultural Bias and Prejudice Inherited?*” by Dr. Dov Michaeli (2017), two systems of how people react are discussed. One reaction system is fast, from the gut, and the other is slow, processed from the logical mind. For example, someone meeting a person who has an intellectual disability might respond from the gut: “Oh, they're different, stay away.” Thinking, however, is a different pace: slower, more thoughtful. To increase one's new analytical thinking, there has to be an increase in listening to the new person and hearing their stories and learning their perspectives. For example, “Oh, they're different, I will stop and learn from them.”

Our initial responses come from our memories or experiences—the gut reaction. “Instincts are beliefs embedded in their psyche over a lifetime.”⁷ In the article, Michaeli describes how instincts lead to survival, such as loud noises alert us to danger and being able to read faces helps us determine who is a friend or a foe. He continues to say that we, as people, also participate in tribalism, which is our prefer-

ple experience life, their brain can change from these exposures, and these changes can be passed down to the next generation, which means the children learn from the same exposure of their parents. This means that we can change the way we think, we can change our attitudes and our behaviours toward people who have an intellectual disability. Increasing exposure to people who have been traditionally marginalized will cause our brains to think broadly and provide a new perspective, and this will begin the new era of genetic thinking.

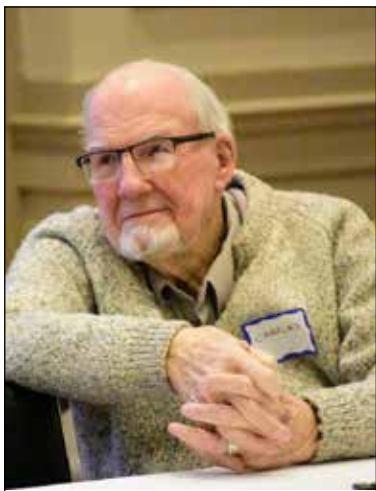
Society has usually done things Plato's way and it hasn't worked. Society is not balanced if people are marginalized to the sidelines. The family members, caregivers and support staff are also on the sidelines. There is no value to marginalized people who have an intellectual disability or their allies. The solution is to bring the people who are marginalized into the community and include them in mainstream activities. We increase the value of people by treating them with equity, getting to know them as a person, taking the

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Mystakidou, Parpa, Tsilika, Katsouda, & Vlahos, 2005, p. 98
- 2 Ferraro, Andreatta, & Holdsworth, 2018, p. 327
- 3 Blanks & Smith, 2009, p. 298.
- 4 Blanks & Smith, 2009, p. 298.
- 5 Steger, 2017, p. 41–43.
- 6 Thatcher, 1987.
- 7 Michaeli, 2017.

REFLECTIONS

Heaven and Hell, Really?



By Charles H. Diltz, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Toronto, Ont.

What is the origin and meaning of these two words, heaven and hell, for us today?

The answer to the first question is easily found: both words derive from the Anglo-Saxon language. However, the reply to the second query is next to impossible because the Anglo-Saxons didn't leave complete definitions of what the words meant to them. We have surface-level definitions: *heaven* comes from *heofan* which means a meadow, and by extension, a pleasant place. The word *hell* comes from a verb, *hel*, meaning to cover or hide. A good example using this root is the word "helmet" (*helmit*). But it's difficult to explain how these words came



to signify the afterlife or anything involving our current understanding of the word hell.

Both Christianity and Judaism sprang out of the monotheistic ideas and practices of the Hebrews and Israelites. Did they have a concept of either heaven or hell? No, they did not, and those concepts evolved in

Judaism over time.

Anyone familiar with the King James Version (KJV) or the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible will be accustomed to reading the word *heaven* in the Old Testament. In fact, the word *heaven* appears in some form approximately 392 times in English translations of the Old Testament, in its singular form, which would suggest that *heaven* is a specific place. The problem is that, in Hebrew, the word is in the plural, namely: *heavens*. So, what are we to conclude?

There are at least two points to be made from this. One is that the translators of the Old Testament into English showed their bias by not staying with the Hebrew *heavens* (plural) and, thereby, introducing the concept that heaven is a place. The other is that the Hebrew peoples did not conceive of a place called heaven. Rather, the idea evolved in different forms over time and in different places.

Some came to believe that the

body went into a tomb, cave, or grave, while the soul went into a very deep pit, where it joined with the souls of the departed from all over the world to await the Day of Judgement, which would herald the healing of God's creation and the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. The word in Hebrew for this pit is *Sheol*, mistranslated in the Old Testament of the KJV as either the grave, pit or hell, but used consistently in the English version of the NRSV, with a note referring to it as "the abode of the dead."

There are about 750 Dead Sea Scrolls, or fragments thereof, which were found in 11 caves near the Dead Sea between the years 1946–1956, having been hidden from the Romans probably circa 68 A.D. at the beginning of the Jewish War. Some 223 Scrolls of the Old Testament, except the Book of Esther, comprise numerous copies of the books of the Old Testament, which provide the basis for another 249

Continued on page 43

FINANCE

And the Survey Says...

By Karen Plater with Jim MacDonald, Stewardship & Planned Giving

Good financial management is part of congregational stewardship. Research has shown that people are more likely to give to a congregation when there are multiple ways to contribute and when they know what is happening with the gifts they give. These days there are excellent computer programs that can help congregations manage the many ways people give (cash, envelopes, pre-authorized remittances, online giving, terminals) and report on what the gifts are accomplishing.

In the spring of 2021, The Presbyterian Church in Canada surveyed congregations to find out which software products they were using to track donations and for accounting purposes. More than 400 churches responded.

The treasurer's ability to issue receipts and prepare financial statements, which meet the needs of the congregation in a timely and accurate manner, is the determining factor of how information about gifts and accounts are kept. In the survey, nine percent of respondents indicated that they are still using manual systems for accounting software, while 12% are using manual systems to track donations. If a manual system is working for the congregation, there is no re-

quirement to switch; however, good software can save hours of work on reconciling accounts, preparing the variety of reports a congregation needs and connecting with donors.

Dedicated donation software not only issues receipts, it helps congregations understand how people give, as well as communicates thank-yous and updates. Accounting software helps treasurers and bookkeepers track income and expenses and will also prepare financial statements, which can be used to generate reports for members, governments, banking institutions and the PCC's statistical report. As well as keeping accurate books, congregations can use their accounting software to help them construct a narrative budget that tells their story and connects dollar amounts with their mission.

These days there are many software options for congregations to choose from. Some software programs are hosted fully online, while others have desktop programs that can be downloaded and installed on a network, where the data can be shared between computers. While some congregations are using the same software for accounting and donations, others use two separate systems. Congregations also reported using church management systems, such as Breeze, Realm, ServantKeeper, PushPay and Planning Center. These

programs not only manage church giving but also every aspect of church life, including membership data, children's check-in, and event, small-group and volunteer management, along with automated workflows and dashboards. This kind of sophistication requires training and time to run reports and analyze information, so they tend to serve larger churches. However, smaller congregations with people adept in technology may find it helpful for the work hours they save.

An updated chart of the various types of software is available online in the Treasurer's Handbook at presbyterian.ca/finance.

The most popular accounting tools were Excel (used by 21% of responding congregations) and Simply Accounting (used by 20%). Simply Accounting has now been replaced by Sage 50, though a cheaper version called Sage Accounting (currently being used by 3.5% of congregations) is able to serve most congregations. Quicken is used by 7% of respondents, while PowerChurch is used by 6%.

Donation Software by Coopersoft, used by 14% of congregations to track gifts, and OfferingHelper.com, used by 1% of congregations are two Canadian companies that received high praise in the survey, even among smaller churches. Donarius.com and ChurchWatch.com were two other



options used by 7% and 4% of congregations respectively. More than 11% of congregations surveyed use PowerChurch Plus, which includes accounting, donation, event, membership and record keeping, as well as equipment/library inventory modules, all for one price. However, it is an American company and does not offer a Canadian payroll module.

The PCC doesn't endorse any specific software and congregations are free to select software to suit their own diverse requirements. In choosing an option, congregations should consider the size of their budget and the number of donors, and then look at the cost, reporting capacities and compatibility with other programs, along with the ability to customize, when considering their needs.

Software Complements Other Stewardship Practices

While sound operational management helps people feel confident that their gifts are participating in God's mission, it isn't the only thing that encourages people to give to the church. Congregations with higher per capital

giving provide opportunities for spiritual growth and to engage in mission; they involve many people in leadership roles; are active in social justice work; incorporate stewardship into worship; and have intentional stewardship education programs. In fact, in her 2009 doctoral thesis, Barbara Fullerton found that congregations who neglected stewardship education and integrating stewardship into worship can experience decreased giving, even if they had good operational management.

Read more about congregations with strong financial gifts in Barbara Fullerton's 2009 doctoral thesis *Growing Generosity: Identity as Stewards in The United Church of Canada* (Washington, D.C.: Wesley Theological Seminary) and visit presbyterian.ca/growing-generosity.

To talk about financial stewardship for your congregation, including how to develop a stewardship plan or implement online giving opportunities, contact Stewardship & Planned Giving. For questions about best accounting practices, contact Financial Services at 1-800-619-7301.

DEATH NOTICES

Read all full obituaries online at presbyterian.ca

Drusilla “Druse” Watt Bryan
Montreal, Que.
Deceased August 4, 2021

John Gerald Robert Sutherland
Kingston, Ont.
Deceased August 6, 2021

Margaret Mackay
Toronto, Ont.
Deceased August 21, 2021

Robert Earl Robertson
Ottawa, Ont.
Deceased August 27, 2021

Ward Schade
Kitchener, Ont.
Deceased August 30, 2021

Olive Ryckman
Scarborough, Ont.
Deceased September 3, 2021

Mary Elizabeth McInnis
Essex, Ont.
Deceased September 4, 2021

Sarah Mansfield Hoag
Toronto, Ont.
Deceased September 15, 2021

The Rev. Marian Elizabeth Raynard
Lucknow, Ont.
Deceased October 7, 2021

Carol Anne Issac
Truro, N.S.
Deceased October 9, 2021

The Rev. William Welsh
Halliday Baird
Peterborough, Ont.
Deceased October 10, 2021

Edith Anne Gear
Toronto, Ont.
Deceased October 15, 2021

The Rev. Dr. Lorna Gayle Hillian
Peterborough, Ont.
Deceased October 16, 2021

REFLECTIONS

Continued from page 42

Scrolls that tell of different groups of people who were convinced that they were living in apocalyptic times. They were sure that Judgement Day—the “End of Days”—was imminent, and so, they were driven by a hope that better times would follow, for which they sought to prepare themselves.

Third, turning now to the books of the New Testament, written in first-century Greek, there are three English words in use therein which are of interest to this issue: *heaven*, *Hades*, and *hell*. But those who read or heard the actual three words used in Greek understood the term *heaven* to mean the home of the gods on Mt. Olympus, *Hades* to refer to the Underworld, where the souls of the dead go for eternity, and the Hebrew word Gehenna (*hell*), which was a small valley just outside Jerusalem. Some scholars suggest that this valley was the garbage dump for Jerusalem and thus was continually on fire. But, that is just one guess among others. Obviously, the people of the day understood the reference to Gehenna, but they did not connect it to our modern idea of hell, which would be *Tartarus* in Greek. By using these words, of which the readers and hearers were familiar, the gospels and letter writers had the task of explaining the meaning of the words in Christian terms. There is a reference to “furnace of fire” in Matt 13: 42 that is worth looking at. As well, there is a play on words here. Take the *h* out of *Gehenna* to get a New Testament Greek word meaning “hell-fire,” which is

never found in classical Greek.

Fourth, the Apostle Paul, the most prolific and ardent writer of letters in the New Testament, never used the word *hell*, and wrote the word *heaven* about two dozen times, and even then only in the local idiom. Other letter writers rarely used those two words at all.

The writers of the New Testament were very concerned with our calling to daily tend to the building of the Kingdom of God and healing individuals in body, mind and spirit, with God’s help.

Touching on the topic of God’s Kingdom, Paul, more than any other Apostle, declares to all humankind, worldwide, a unique and full-of-hope explanation of the “End of Days.” He asserts that all persons left on earth throughout the world following the Judgement, will be changed “in the twinkling of an eye” to be healed of humanity’s fatal flaw, which has bedevilled every single body since Creation. These new beings, new creatures, will know the peace of God, and will end inequality, hunger, poverty and homelessness; thanks be to God.

We usually think of salvation as having come to save humankind, but we often neglect in our thinking that all of creation needs God’s renewal of salvation. In this regard, many Indigenous people around the world have a deep and sacred care for the gifts of the Creator. Let us listen to and be guided by the wisdom of the elders.

Something to think about.

PULPIT VACANCIES

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

Edmonton, Dayspring (full-time minister) – Alberta & the Northwest

Fredericton, St. Andrew’s (full-time minister) – Atlantic Provinces

Duncan, St. Andrew’s (full-time minister) – British Columbia

Prince George, St. Giles (full-time minister) – British Columbia

Ajax, St. Andrew’s (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Amherstview, Trinity (60%-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Bradford West Gwillimbury, St. John’s (full-time Associate Minister for Children and Families) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Elmira, Gale (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Elmvale, Elmvalle and Knox Flos (full-time minister, 2-point charge) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Lakefield, St. Andrew’s, Knox (60%-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Orillia, St. Andrew’s (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Parry Sound, St. Andrew’s (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Port Credit, St. Andrew’s (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Toronto, Formosan (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Toronto, Knox (full-time senior minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Toronto, Mimico (75%-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Toronto, Rosedale (full-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Toronto, York Memorial (half-time minister) – Central, Northeastern Ontario & Bermuda

Kenora, First (full-time minister) – Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario

Thunder Bay, Lakeview (full-time minister) – Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario

Arnprior, St. Andrew’s (full-time minister) – Quebec & Eastern Ontario

Montreal, Snowdon Korean (full-time minister) – Quebec & Eastern Ontario

Montreal, Taiwanese Robert Campbell (full-time minister) – Quebec & Eastern Ontario

Dundas, West Flamboro (80%-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

Fonthill, Kirk on the Hill (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

Innerkip (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

London, Oakridge (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

London, Trinity (half-time stated supply) – Southwestern Ontario

Mitchell, Knox (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

Thornbury, St. Paul’s (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

Walkerton, Knox (full-time minister) – Southwestern Ontario

JUST WONDERING...



Submit your questions to connection@presbyterian.ca

Now that the General Assembly has approved a new definition of marriage that includes two options, who decides which one our congregation will adopt?

Answered by the Rev. Don Muir,
Deputy Clerk, General Assembly Office

In 2021, the General Assembly adopted two parallel definitions of marriage, recognizing that faithful, Holy Spirit filled, Christ centered, God honouring people can understand marriage as a covenant relationship between a man and a woman or as a covenant relationship between two adult persons. That congregations, Sessions, ruling and teaching elders be granted liberty of conscience and action on marriage (A&P 2021 p. 27).

Since it is the Session that is responsible for all policy and procedures with respect to the use of church buildings and property, subject to the oversight of presbytery (Book of Forms 109.2), the question of whether the church will host same-sex weddings rests with the Session and not the congregation. While the Session will want to be pastorally sensitive to the expectations of the congregation, it would not be necessary (and possibly

not appropriate) for the congregation to vote on the subject. Like all Session decisions, this is one that can be reconsidered if there is a will to do so at some time.

If the Session (minister and ruling elders) accepts marriage as a covenant relationship between two adult persons, then it would make decisions about weddings held at the church based on that principle.

If the Session agrees that marriage is a covenant relationship between a man and a woman, then it would make decisions about weddings held at the church based on that principle. In this instance, it would be pastorally respectful for the minister to kindly refer a couple seeking a same-sex marriage to another minister who is prepared to consider conducting the wedding.

You can find more information about the definitions of marriage, guidance for Session decisions about marriage, and a sample wedding policy that would express those decisions at presbyterian.ca/session-decisions-marriage.

JUST WONDERING...

What is the PCC's vaccination policy for ministers?

Answered by the Rev. Don Muir, Deputy Clerk,
General Assembly Office

One of the great joys and important pastoral functions of a minister is, as an older version of the ordination vows put it, "to go in and out among the people."

As concerns over the transmission of COVID-19 continue, it is essential that ministers and other staff who wish to fulfill pastoral responsibilities in hospitals, long-term care homes and even the homes of parishioners, do all they can to ensure their ministry is carried out as safely as possible.

Being fully vaccinated is perhaps the best way that ministers and others who wish to return to visiting and offer closer physical presence with members and adherents of the church can significantly reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 for themselves and others.

The polity of the church holds that Sessions are responsible for what takes place within the church building, and presbyteries are responsible for the care and overseeing of both ministers and congregations.

Book of Forms, section 109.2

The Session is responsible for all policy and procedures with respect to the use of the

church buildings and property subject to the provisions in sections 114.6 and 163.

Book of Forms, section 200

To the presbytery belongs the care and good order of the churches within the bounds.

Vaccination policies for congregational ministries and for ministers are the responsibility of Sessions and presbyteries to decide and are not national in scope. If a Session determines that vaccination is required for Session members or for all who enter the church building, the minister will fall under that policy. Likewise, a presbytery could develop a policy that requires ministers on their roll be vaccinated.

The development of a vaccination policy needs to be guided by local public health guidelines and requirements and will always include exemptions for grounds protected by human rights law (e.g., medical accommodation). Sample vaccination policies are widely available, including through national office.

Our common faith calls us to act in ways that demonstrate love for our neighbour and care for all people, especially the most vulnerable. Being vaccinated in accordance with public health recommendations helps us to live this faith.



??

My local Presbyterian church recently reopened after being closed due to COVID-19. Sunday services now start 30 minutes earlier. But they only informed members of this change by email, so the first Sunday back I was late. My question is this: Does a local Presbyterian church have an obligation to communicate with church members who cannot afford email or Internet?

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

According to the polity of the church outlined in section 111 of the Book of Forms (presbyterian.ca/book-of-forms), the Session of each congregation is responsible for regulating the hours and forms of public worship, arranging special services and determining when the sacraments will be celebrated. All Sessions would want to ensure that any announcements about worship and important congregational events are communicated appropriately.

Churches use a variety and increasing number of communication pathways to reach members, adherents and the general public. These communication pathways include phone trees, letters and newsletters, as well as regularly updating information on signs, web pages and other social media. It's unfortunate that the news about the changed hour for worship did not reach you before you arrived after the service had started. Your question is a good reminder that not everyone has email and how important it is to communicate accurate information broadly and in multiple ways, especially when significant changes have been made.

Following the decisions from General Assembly this year, my congregation is considering ways we can be more inclusive. Can you tell me what kinds of policies we should review and update?

Answered by Carragh Erhardt,
Sexuality & Inclusion Program Coordinator

After decades of prayerful study and debate, the 2021 General Assembly adopted changes to The Presbyterian Church in Canada's theology and practice, regarding marriage and the ordination of LGBTQI2+ people. Through adopting the final report and recommendations of the Rainbow Communion, the church also recognized that there is still more to be done to address the harm the church has caused to LGBTQI2+ people and their loved ones. Congregations are encouraged to review and update their policies, procedures and practices to ensure that they reflect the full inclusion of all people so that this harm will not continue (Rainbow Communion recommendation No. 11, A&P 2021 p. 661). This article offers some questions to help ministers, Sessions and other congregational leaders get started in this process.

Does your congregation clearly communicate its wedding policy? It is important for Sessions to review their wedding policies and ensure that they are clear and easily accessible on their congregation's website. Whether your church will host weddings for same-sex couples or not, having a clear policy helps couples make informed decisions to see if your congregation is a good fit for them. It is reasonable that Sessions may need time to review and update their wedding policies in response to the changes to The Presbyterian Church in Canada's understanding of marriage. In such cases, think about how Session will respond to requests from LGBTQI2+ couples while you are still discerning. You might also consider making a note on your website to indicate that you are taking the time to review your policy in light of the recent change in denominational practices and will provide an update as soon as possible.

Ensuring that your congregation is a welcoming and inclusive place for LGBTQI2+ people goes deeper than whether you will host or officiate weddings for same-sex couples in your sanctuary. Beyond reviewing wedding policies, here are a few other questions to help get congregations started as they work to

include LGBTQI2+ people more fully in their ministry:

Is your pastoral care team prepared to offer appropriate support to LGBTQI2+ people and their families? While there are elements of pastoral care that are relevant to all people, there are also experiences that are specific to—or more common among—LGBTQI2+ people. Reading the Rainbow Communion's final report can help you start to understand some of these experiences. I also recommend *Ministry Among God's Queer Folk* by Bernard Schlager and David Kundtz as an introductory book about LGBTQI2+ pastoral care.

Does your mission or welcome statement include LGBTQI2+ people? The phrase "all are welcome" is common on church signs, websites and welcome statements; however, the church's treatment of LGBTQI2+ people has rarely demonstrated that this is true. Many storytellers spoke to the Rainbow Communion about feeling isolated because they feared what would happen if they disclosed information about their personal lives with their faith community. If your church is committed to welcoming and supporting people of all sexual orientations and gender identities, you need to be clear about that commitment and the steps you are taking toward it.

Are your worship services relevant to LGBTQI2+ people? The language we use and the stories we lift up in worship all communicate who we see as beloved members of our communities and the body of Christ. Using gender-exclusive language (i.e., brothers and sisters, instead of siblings; husbands and wives, instead of spouses or partners) reinforces the message that all people are or should be straight and cisgender. When we include LGBTQI2+ stories, celebrations and concerns in sermons, prayers and worship music, we communicate that LGBTQI2+ people are present and valued in the church.

I hope these questions will help open conversations within congregations about how you can take more intentional and clear steps toward including LGBTQI2+ people.

For more resources and support, you can visit presbyterian.ca/sexuality or contact cerhardt@presbyterian.ca.

