



Moderator: The Rev. Dr. Douglas Robinson

Clerk: Mrs. Donna McIlveen

136th Synod Meeting Highlights

Commissioners from the five presbyteries within the bounds of the Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario (le Synode du Québec et de l'Est de l'Ontario) gathered on Friday, October 15th and Saturday, October 16th, 2009 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Melbourne in Richmond, Québec and within the bounds of the Presbytery of Québec for the 136th Synod meeting.

The moderator of the 135th Synod, the Rev. James T. Hurd opened the meeting with worship at 2:00 p.m. Friday afternoon, including the celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Following opening worship and the constitution of the court, the election of the moderator of the 136th synod meeting was held. The Rev. Dr. Douglas Robinson from the Presbytery of Montréal was elected and installed.

The business of the court continued with the receiving and considering of various reports including from the Committee on Business, the Finance Committee, the Treasurer, the Mission/Robert Fund Committee, the Regional Staffing Committee, and the WMS Synodical. In addition to the committee reports, the court was pleased to hear a report from the two Regional Staff, Anita Mack who serves the synod in the Presbyteries of Montreal and Quebec, and also from Christine Ball who serves the synod in the Presbyteries of Ottawa, Lanark and Renfrew and Seaway-Glengarry.

On Friday afternoon Christine Ball, Anita Mack and Donna McIlveen presented an educational component on "Congregations in Transition". The presentation was based on material and insight gained at the Congregations in Transition event held at Crieff Hills Community, December 1-3, 2009 with Alice Mann of the Alban Institute as facilitator.

On Friday evening and Saturday morning the synod was pleased to welcome as their guest speaker evangelist Wendy Farha. Wendy addressed the synod with passion and humour, communicating the joy of her faith and her journey with cancer. She also delighted the commissioners with several songs enthusiastically challenging everyone to not shy away from evangelism. We were blessed by her presence and dedication to sharing the good news of Jesus Christ

On Saturday morning, the synod was also pleased to receive camping updates from the two camps located within the bounds. Douglas Kendall, chair of the Board of Directors of the

Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre, introduced Mrs. Relena Lyddon Myers the new executive director. Relena addressed the synod and showed a power-point presentation on Gracefield. The synod next received a report from Craig Dewar, convenor of the Camp Board for Camp d'action biblique (CAB). The synod was then pleased to make their way to Camp d'action biblique, a short drive away, for lunch and the remainder of business.

At the 135th synod meeting of 2009, the synod resolved to distribute a survey to all elders within the bounds concerning the effects of a commissioned court upon our synod. The question asked was: "Are you in favour of continuing the meetings of the Synod as a commissioned court?" 248 elders (teaching and ruling) replied with 174 in favour of continuing as a commissioned court and 74 not in favour. In light of the replies received, no change was made to the resolve to meet as a commissioned court. However the synod did resolve "that a committee be struck to examine the role, structure and function of synod, including place and location, to the end of strengthening ministry, and report to the synod council with a subsequent report to the 137th synod meeting."

At the 135th synod meeting it was resolved that the Synod Youth Committee lie fallow for one year during which time the Regional Staff were to confer with the presbyteries as to the future role for the synod in co-ordinating activities for children, youth and young adults. The Synod Council received a report from the Regional Staff and submitted a report to the 136th synod meeting and recommend that the Synod Youth Committee lie fallow for one additional year.

The Regional Staffing Committee also introduced an updated Job Description and Terms of Contract for the Regional Staff, which were adopted. The position of Regional Staff will now be called Synod Mission Advocate and Educator (SAME).

The matter of the reduction of funding from the WMS and the Life and Mission Agency for Regional Staff effective January 1, 2011 was addressed. After much discussion the Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario resolved at its meeting to make up the funding shortfall for the year 2011 by including an assessment to the presbyteries for Regional Staff, calculated on the dollar base.

The synod adjourned at 3:40 p.m. and will meet again on October 21st and 22nd, 2011 within St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth, Ontario.

Many heartfelt thanks are extended to the congregation of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Melbourne, for their gracious hospitality.