

The Rev. John Barry Forsyth, Moderator
Mrs. Donna McIlveen, Clerk

138th 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 19th and Saturday, October 20th, 2012 at Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Beaconsfield, Québec for the 138th Synod meeting.

The Moderator of the 137th Synod, the Rev. Marilyn Savage and the Rev. Dr. Greg Davidson, host minister, 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 138th synod meeting was held. The Rev. John Barry Forsyth from the Presbytery of Québec 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, the History 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 – *via skype* - who serves the synod in the Presbyteries of Ottawa, Lanark and Renfrew and Seaway-Glengarry.

In 2012 the Synod Youth Committee was dissolved and the responsibility for matters overseen by the Youth Committee – the Synod's participation in Canada Youth, Youth in Mission, other youth mission endeavours and youth programming – was given to the Regional Staffing Committee for a one year trial period. After due consideration, the committee agreed that another avenue for overseeing youth ministry within the synod was needed. It was agreed that a Synod Youth Ministry working group be created.

On Friday evening the Synod heard from the Rev. Glenn Inglis, who served with the Church of Central Africa in Malawi. He showed a power-point presentation and highlighted the challenges and joys of life in Malawi. He shared with the synod the Maternal and Child Health Care initiative.

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Following were two presentations, the first by the Rev. Joel Coppieters of the Presbytery of Montréal who spoke on the Four Church/Mission Models. The evening presentation ended with the Rev. Dan MacKinnon, the Presbytery of Ottawa who spoke on The Upper Room, a church plant in Rockland.

On Saturday morning, the synod was also pleased to receive camping updates from the two camps located within the bounds. Douglas Kendall, past-chair of the Board of Directors of the Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre, addressed the synod and showed a power-point presentation on Gracefield. The synod also received a report from Craig Dewar, convenor of the Camp Board for Camp d'action biblique. The Executive Director, Mr. Randy Johnston, was introduced to the court.

At the 137th synod meeting of 2011, the synod resolved that “On a trial basis the Synod meet as a fully represented court consisting of the constituent members of the five Presbyteries, every third year, beginning in 2013, in a conference style and that Synod apply to the Life and Mission Agency for a conference grant to help pay for the additional costs, and that the Synod appoint a committee representing all of its presbyteries to plan such a conference, focusing on the mission of the Synod.” The committee is convened by the Rev. Dr. Dale Woods, and plans for a fruitful full synod meeting are underway. It was announced that the guest speaker for the full synod meeting of 2013 will be the Rev. Dr. Gary Nelson, president of Tyndale University College. To help the planning team a time of open discussion was held on Saturday morning when the gathered commissioners considered the questions: What do we want to see happen over the next three years in the Synod, and how will we know it has happened?

The Finance Committee presented their report, including the budget for 2013 and corresponding presbytery assessments and a five year forecast. Following prayerful consideration and vigorous discussion, the Finance Committee report, as amended, was adopted.

The synod adjourned at 2:25 p.m. and will meet again as a full synod on October 18th and 19th, 2013 at St. John’s Presbyterian Church, Cornwall, Ontario.

Many heartfelt thanks are extended to the congregation of Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Beaconsfield, for their gracious hospitality.