

142nd Synod Meeting and Conference Highlights

The Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario (le Synode du Québec et de l'Est de l'Ontario) gathered on Friday, October 21st and Saturday, October 22nd, 2016 at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Carp, Ontario for the 142nd Synod Meeting and Fall Conference. The synod met as a full court, consisting of the constituent members of the five Presbyteries.

Worship

The past Moderator, Mr. Warren Wong, led worship Friday afternoon. Opening worship included the sacrament of the Lord's Supper celebrated by the host minister, the Rev. Shaun Seaman. Musical praise was offered by the Trinity praise team led by Minister of Music, Mr. David Chin. Following opening worship and the constitution of the court, the election of the moderator of the 142nd synod meeting was held. The Rev. John Vaudry from the Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew was elected and installed. Friday evening's worship was led by Mrs. Shahrzad Kandalaft. Pre-service music was offered by Mrs. Ann Langabeer on the piano. Musical praise during worship was offered by the Rev. Geoff Howard. Mr. Philip MacFie shared highlights and blessings from Canada Youth 2016. Worship on Saturday morning was led by the Moderator, the Rev. John Vaudry, with musical accompaniment provided by the Rev. Ross Davidson. A time of worship, led by Mrs. Shahrzad Kandalaft, was offered near the end of the Saturday morning conference. Steve Verhey was the pianist. The children's choir from St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, under the direction of Tracey Stabback, offered their gift of music.

Guest

On Friday afternoon, the Synod welcomed Jennifer de Combe, Associate Secretary Canadian Ministries. She addressed the Synod, including a power point presentation highlighting Canadian Ministries which works with congregations and presbyteries to support and equip congregations for faithful and vibrant ministry in the world to which Christ came for which he died. Resources in areas such as worship, Christian education, evangelism, congregational life and development, are available. Congregations are encouraged to check out the Canadian Ministries webpage, and to contact them for assistance.

Business Meeting

The Moderator of the 142nd Synod was elected Friday afternoon. The Rev. John Vaudry of the Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew was installed following opening worship. The business of the court included the consideration of various reports including from the Committee on Business, the Finance Committee, the Treasurer, the Synod Webservant, the Synod Historian, the WMS Synodical, the Mission/Robert Fund Committee and the Regional Resourcing Committee. In addition, there was a report from the Camp d'action biblique camp committee and the Presbytery of Ottawa on the oversight of the Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre.

The Synod received a letter from the Presbytery of Montréal and an overture from the Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew requesting the dissolution of the Synod. Time was set aside on the docket for a discussion on the matter of dissolution, and following discussion the synod resolved the following:

That a special committee be struck to investigate the advisability of dissolving the synod and the ramifications and necessary contingencies should the synod be dissolved, and that the five presbyteries earnestly consider the future configuration and organization of the presbyteries and communicate their respective positions to the synod special committee.

The special committee will make a full report to the 143rd annual Synod meeting, with that report made available to presbyteries and posted to the synod website by September 1, 2017.

The Moderator named the following persons to the special committee:
David Christiani, convener, Karen Dimock, Geoff Howard, James Hurd, Jill Turnbull and one to be added.

The Mission/Robert Fund Committee received three requests for funds for 2017. The committee was informed by Canadian Ministries that there is \$21,023.89 for distribution in the Reserve for Home Mission Quebec (the designated label for monies generated by the Robert Fund). The synod resolved that \$12,000 be distributed to Camp d'action biblique, \$4,500 to La communauté Chrétienne Siloé and \$4,500 to Église St-Luc.

The Regional Resourcing Committee updated the Synod on the various projects being supported by the Regional Resourcing Grants. The total available to the synod in 2017 is \$61,986.00. Presbyteries are reminded to submit proposals for programs and projects to the Regional Resourcing Committee for consideration.

The Finance Committee presented their report in the first sederunt on Friday, including the budget for 2017 and corresponding presbytery assessments as well as a five-year forecast. The report was duly considered and on Saturday afternoon, the report, as amended, was adopted.

Conference

The conference theme was "The Roots of Change". The two speakers were the Rev. Dr. Roland De Vries, Director of Pastoral Studies and the Rev. Dr. Dale Woods, Principal of The Presbyterian College, Montreal. The conference was supported in part by a grant from The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Roland De Vries' address was entitled "Toward Missional Identity". Dale Woods' address included a revealing documentary entitled "When God left the Building – the exodus of America's faithful and what's next..." The slides for both presentations are available on the synod website.

The synod adjourned at 2:10 p.m. and will meet again as a commissioned court on October 20th and 21st, 2017 within the bounds of the Presbytery of Montréal.

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