

143rd (2017) Annual 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 20th and Saturday, October 21st, 2017 within The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montréal, Québec for the 143rd annual synod meeting.

The Moderator of the 142nd Synod (2016), the Rev. John Vaudry and the Rev. Dr. Kay Diviney, Associate Minister at The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, opened the meeting with worship at 2:00 p.m. Friday afternoon, including the celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The Moderator's message was entitled "Justified by Faith".

Following opening worship and the constitution of the court, a memorial time was held recognizing the teaching and ruling elders from the five presbyteries whose death occurred since the synod last met.

The business of the 2017 synod continued with the election and installation of its Moderator, the Rev. Katherine Burgess from the Presbytery of Québec.

The report from the Special Committee re the Possible Dissolution of the Synod was received and considered. Two stated times were assigned on the docket for consideration of the report, with the first time on Friday afternoon for one hour. The second stated time was set for Saturday morning when consideration of the report resumed.

Following the first stated time, other business before the synod was considered. The Treasurer presented the 2016 Financial Report, the reviewer's report, a 2017 year to date financial statement as well as a projection until the end of the year. The Finance Committee presented the 2018 budget of synod expenses, 2018 presbytery assessments, and a five-year forecast. Discussion on the Finance documents resumed on Saturday. Following receipt of the financial documents, reports were received from the Synod Webservant, the Synod Historian, and the WMS Synodical.

After a break for dinner the Synod reconvened Friday evening. To mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Friday evening sederunt was devoted to an address offered by Dr. Jason Zuidema entitled "Justification by Faith and the Christian Life: Luther's Insight for Today".

The Synod resumed meeting on Saturday morning, beginning with worship led by the Moderator. Her address was entitled "Grace". Business continued with a report from the Regional Resourcing Committee, and then the Mission Committee/Robert Fund Committee. The Synod agreed to allocate from available funds \$18,000 to Camp d'action biblique, with the balance of \$11,983.85 directed to the Presbytery of Montréal for francophone work within its bounds, including such groups as Communauté Chrétienne Siloé and Église St Luc.

Reports from the two camps within the synod bounds were received – the Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre (gracefieldcamp.ca) located in Gracefield, Québec and Camp d'action biblique (cabqc.ca) located in Richmond, Québec.

Following the camp reports, consideration resumed on the report from the Special Committee re the Possible Dissolution of the Synod. The following motion was brought forward from the floor:

That the Synod of Québec and Eastern Ontario begin the process of dissolution with the close of this (2017) Synod by striking a special committee to negotiate and formulate terms to ensure the continued support of our various presbyteries and camps.

Following debate, the motion was defeated.

The following motion was subsequently brought forward.

That Synod Council consider and reimagine the role and function of Synod and develop a plan to accomplish the goals of synod with reduced resources and report back to the 144th meeting of synod in 2018, including input and feedback from presbyteries and sessions.

Following debate, the motion was adopted.

The remainder of the Committee on Business recommendations were considered and adopted. The financial documents were adopted including the 2018 expenditure budget of \$103,167.00, a 0.10% change from 2017.

The synod adjourned at 1:00 pm. The 2018 Synod will meet as a commissioned court on Friday, October 19th and Saturday, October 20th, 2018 within the bounds of the Presbytery of Seaway-Glengarry.

The thanks of the Synod are extended to The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul for graciously hosting the 2017 annual meeting.