

Annual Meeting Summary Notes: June 7-10, 2012 at Prairieland Park, Saskatoon

These notes are for the use of Twin Valleys Presbytery Congregational representatives to help in making congregational reports (Communications Committee)

Worship

Preaching Team: Evan Stanley, Barb McNaughton, Kim Antosh

Music Team: Band Together 2.0, Keith Hall, director

1) Thursday, June 7

Opening: ‘Telling the Pentecost story’ – the Spirit changes all who encounter God’s presence, urging us to dream, live faithful lives.

Closing: a lament for the church. Laying of the stoles and lighting liturgy candles.

2) Friday, June 8

Opening: Reflection on the United Church, “a body of faithful people struggling with the challenge of discerning God’s way in our world.”

Closing: Focus on relationships – supporting, sharing, growing together with the Holy, with the earth and creation, with First Nations peoples, with each other as people of faith.

3) Saturday, June 9

Opening: The “waiting world” isn’t waiting for the church to save it, but to join it in its struggles and challenges. We need to be living the radical way of Jesus and doing the work he did.

Closing: Change is hard; the old and familiar is more comfortable, but God has called us to move in a new way.

Theme Presentations

Presenters: David Giuliano and Nancy Ferguson

1) “Into a Waiting World” inspired reflections of the sorrows, hopes and dreams of today’s church.

Encouragement to ‘boast’ about the positive times, and share the struggles of

the negative times. God is at work in periods of emptiness, loss and transition.

2) “Be yourself.” We need to wake up to who we really are, to what God wants us to do and be. Stories of the creative power of God to move people into new places in their lives.

3) “Being re-sent into the field.” God is leading a time of transformation where, like the disciples, we’re being sent on our mission journey in vulnerability, trusting that our needs will be supplied.

President’s Message

“Into a Waiting World” provides our church with the opportunity to engage in dreaming, to be excited about the future and to share our hopes with one another while exploring possibilities.

Some highlights of the year were presbytery visits, attending the TRC event in Labret and the Youth Rally at Westminster United Church.

Proposals

These proposals were carried:

1. Increase funding for persons living with mental health issues.
2. a) Call on General Council to petition the federal government to reverse the decision to make age 67 the minimum age for application for OAC/GIS benefits.
2. b) Petition the Sask. Government to firmly oppose the federal decision to raise the minimum age for applying for OAC/GIC benefits to 67.
3. That ordination/commissioning be dependent on settlement or call only.
4. Donation of \$20,000 to the national TRC event as an Act of Reconciliation.

This proposal was tabled:

1. Call for solidarity and action on the occupation using economic sanctions

This proposal was concurred to GC:

1. Reinstatement of the former Congregational Accountable Ministry policy allowing up to 13.75 hrs/wk

This proposal was defeated:

1. Newer statements of faith (remits) to be added to the Basis of Union as a separate chapter

We celebrated

Ordination: Brenda Simon, Jim Tenford

Recognition (Designated Lay Ministry):

Gary Johnson

Retirees: R. Lynne Clarke, Doug Craig, Faye Greer, Norm Laird, Ken Robinson, Linda Stumpf

Celebrations: 50 years of ministry

Larry Edwards, William Shank, Robert Thompson

55 years of ministry

William Chapman, James Kirkwood,

Dale Morrison, James Tremblay

60 years of ministry

Wendell Stevens

65 years of ministry

John Bray, Phillip Rees

In Memorium

Ministry personnel who passed away since the last Annual Meeting:

Jean Martin, Benjamin Smillie, Clare Lethbridge, Bob Bater, Robert Gay, David Jackson, Mary Barber, Beth Ames, Donald Hudson, Kenneth Fisher, Clark McCutcheon, Russell Earl, Marion Francis, Gwen Dingwall, Lee Tennyson, David Goodwillie, Walter Gardiner

Stewardship Education

Stewardship is our response to the gospel in the care of the earth and one another. Topics covered:

1. Fresh water crisis.
2. Need to get involved in environmental issues using our time, talent, passions.
3. Consider Pre-Authorized Remittance
4. We're all involved in lifestyle choices to address the "unprecedented ecological crisis"

Reports

Nominations

Commissioners to GC41 in Ottawa:

- lay: Brandon Mee

- ministry: Cordelia Karpenko, Manasse Habonimana

Ministry rep to GC: Laura Fouhse

President-elect: Gayle Wensley

Education & Students

- introduction of candidates for ordination and recognition

Finance & Administration

Budget of \$848,360 to cover commitments of \$629,030 and contingencies of \$24,900

Affirming Ministries Committee

- support for Nora Vedress of Calvary United (Prince Albert) over personal attack from local ministerial re: Pride Day

Intercultural Ministries Committee

- Prairie Mosaic event in Saskatoon June 6-7 recognizing and celebrating diversity. 80 people attended

Peace in Israel/ Palestine Network

- national gathering in Toronto in Feb. to consolidate the church's position on the issue of a just peace for both sides

Women in Ministry Committee

- reflecting on the life and work of Lydia Gruchy, Barb Elliott, Carolyn Connoroe and Reba Hearn

UCW Report

- 50th anniversary. National event in Ancaster, ON "Our Tapestry of Love"

Justice & Rights Relations

- TRC gatherings for listening, learning
- women's canoe trip (mid-August)
- Treaty 6 celebrations Oct.26-28

Truth & Reconciliation Commission

- addressing the institutionalized, systemic racism that shattered families, created dysfunction and despair in aboriginal communities
- TRC events probe questions of residential schools, "What happened? How did it happen?" hearing from survivors, seeking truth that shouldn't be hidden or ignored.

All Native Circle Conference

- dependency, colonial thinking still runs deep in aboriginal mentality. Need to move to wholeness as symbolized in the medicine wheel.

YAYAC (Youth & Young Adults)

- report on national youth event "Rendez-Vous 2011" in Toronto last July: outreach, worship, education

General Council Executive

- candidacy pathway steering group
- intercultural ministry must include all types of diversity, not just racial
- addressing privilege and power

Ministry, Personnel & Education

- lay leadership training, continuing education for ministry personnel, preparation for professional ministry and post-graduate programs offered at 6 locations on the Prairies: St. Andrews and St. Stephen's Colleges, Centre for Christian Studies, Calling Lakes Centre, Faculty of Theology (U of W), Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre

Registration

- 329 delegates (158 lay, 133 ministry, 38 youth and visitors)

Thank you

- UCRD bookstore in Toronto, Calling Lakes Centre bookstore, Ten Thousand Villages for being vendors

- Prairieland Park for facilities and catering
- for all those who organized and brought displays
- for a fun evening of square dancing

Next Annual Meeting

- May 30 – June 2, 2013 in Estevan