

ALGOMA PRESBYTERY
of The United Church of Canada

November 20 & 21, 2009

PRESBYTERY MEETING

2009-10

15

The full court of Algoma Presbytery met on Friday, November 20 and Saturday, November 21, 2009 at John Wesley United Church, Sault St. Marie, beginning at 5:30 p.m. Chair Nancy Ferguson led the meeting and a quorum was present.

ATTENDANCE:

Order of Ministry: Larry Burton, Nancy Ferguson, Thom McDonough, Bruce McLeish, Laurie Milito, Phil Miller, Janet Norman, Eun-Joo Park, John Porter, Betty Pretty, Jan Schenell, Helen Smith, Don White

Laity: Betty Allen, Bonnie Beaupre, Fred Bright, Kim Evoy, Jane Graham, Aileen Hadden, Leone Hamilton, Ailsa Hanson, Anne Jones, Janet Jones, Bonnie Lavoie, Lavine Livesey, Diane Marshall, Brian Mundell, Nancy Mundell, Wilma Oliver, Norma Orr, Tom Orr, Judith Rose, Harry Stewart, Heddys Stevenson, Clare Walker

Regrets: Lorna Chiupka, Barbara Frasier, Sandy Fulcher, Linda Hedderson, Sharon Lane, Rolly MacLean, Bonnie Rayner, Doreen Sproule

Guests: Peter Kingsbury, Personnel Minister, London Conference; Joyce Biggs, Jana Howson, Marnie McDonough, GC 40 Commissioners; Drew Beaumont, 2009 Camp Director, Camp McDougall; Leith Harris, Chris Southin, Deborah Woodman, Focus on the Gay Family Planning Committee; Kempton Hewitt, six-week pulpit supply at Blind River Pastoral Charge

WELCOME AND GATHERING WORSHIP:

Chair Nancy Ferguson called the meeting to order with words of welcome. Larry Burton added his welcome and invited the Court to join with him in a responsive Call to Worship. Worship continued with Hymn 154 in *More Voices*, a responsive reading of Psalm 132, a brief homily, and the singing of "Eat This Bread" as the group moved to serve one another communion at the dinner table.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Chair Nancy Ferguson welcomed Peter Kingsbury and other guests to the Court, as noted under Attendance; and new Presbytery Representatives Betty Allen from East Korah Maxwell and Bonnie Lavoie from Goulais River were introduced and welcomed.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: There was consensus that the agenda be adopted as printed.

MINUTES: **Moved, seconded and carried** that the Presbytery minutes of September 18, 2009 be approved, and that the Presbytery Executive minutes of August 20, 2009 and September 3, 2009 be received for information.

CORRESPONDENCE: **Moved, seconded and carried** that the correspondence be accepted as dealt with. (See Appendix A.)

GREETINGS FROM CONFERENCE: Peter Kingsbury brought greetings from his colleagues in the London Conference Office, said that his time over the past week with 13 pastoral charges in Algoma had been very meaningful, and asked for prayer support for London Conference in their ministry challenges.

FOLLOW-UP REPORT FROM GC40 COMMISSIONERS: Joyce Biggs, Jana Howson and Marnie McDonough spoke about the difficult issues facing General Council (e.g. questions about ministry, financial problems, changes to the Articles of Faith) and the work done in each of the Atlantic, Arctic and Pacific Commissions, then shared their personal highlights. (The PowerPoint presentation is on the Presbytery website.)

CAMP MCDOUGALL REPORT: John Porter, Chair of the Board of Camp McDougall and Drew Beaumont, the 2009 Camp Director told the Court about the joys (young, dedicated, creative staff) and challenges (declining registration, run-down facilities and an inadequate water system). Camp Treasurer Marnie McDonough presented the 2009 financial statement. Information about the 50th Anniversary will be distributed to all pastoral charges.

“FOCUS ON THE GAY FAMILY CONFERENCE” REPORT: Committee members spoke of the highlights of their experience, planning and facilitating the conference. They are still awaiting word from Westminster College Foundation regarding the grant. James Loney will be doing a short session next year on scripture and the LGBT2SQ community, and there are already plans being made for the second conference to be held the last weekend of September 2011.

UPDATE ON APPEAL – Rev. N. St. Jean vs. Algoma Presbytery: Chair Nancy Ferguson updated the Court on the status of the Appeal.

- **Moved, seconded and carried** that Algoma Presbytery hire Legal Counsel Margaret Szilassy to consult with us in preparation for the Conference Appeal Hearing of Algoma Presbytery vs. Rev. Norine St. Jean on November 28, 2009. (There were two abstentions.)

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND MOTIONS FOR ACTION:

Education and Students: Helen Smith

- The Committee is meeting with Jana Howson to discuss options during her candidacy process.
- Reports are due February 1, 2010 to Education and Students from the Support Committees for Candidates for Admission Eun-Joo Park and John Porter.
- Effective January 1, 2010, there are new rates for Licensed Lay Worship Leaders, and for travel.
- **Moved, seconded and carried** that the following be approved as Licensed Lay Worship Leaders for the year 2010: Joyce Fielder, Jane Graham, Marnie McDonough, Joy McPhee, Brian Mundell, Nancy Mundell, Wilda Ryckman, Gordon Stone, Margaret Tait. (There was one abstention.)

Faith Formation and Communication: Larry Burton – No report.

Finance and Administration: Fred Bright

- **Moved, seconded and carried** that Algoma Presbytery grant permission for Thessalon Pastoral Charge to sell the United Church manse located at 246 Water Street in Thessalon, Ontario for the negotiated price of eighty-six thousand dollars (\$86,000).

The 2009 Income and Expenses Statement was presented, and a wide-ranging discussion ensued around ways to save money and about the Presbytery's priorities, particularly related to camping ministry and the future of Camp McDougall.

- **Moved, seconded and carried** that the 2010 budget be set at \$65,444.60. (One opposed.)
- **Moved, seconded and carried** that Algoma Presbytery directs the Executive to develop a process through which there can be an open and direct discussion about Camp McDougall and its viability at the next full meeting of Presbytery in February.

Nominations: Helen Smith

- **Moved, seconded and carried** that Rolly MacLean be appointed Chair of the Pastoral Care and Oversight Committee.

Outreach: Heddys Stevenson

- This year's mission theme is a continuation of the "Challenging Empire" theme with emphasis on "choosing Creation over Empire." "Empire" is a term that attempts to describe a complex experience of systems that dominate and oppress both people and earth. The first two years of this study were challenging just to understand the term 'empire.' Many people found it difficult to get connected to. However, this year's theme should be one we can and should relate to. The May edition of Mandate had lots of good ideas on a personal basis for things we can do.
- **Conference Division of World Outreach Website:** The Conference World Outreach webpage (www.londonconferencedwo.org) has been updated with a new letter and photo from Deborah Elliott and Don Gibson who are in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua. The current political situation in the area and events that Deborah describe are a reminder to keep them and the people of Puerto Cabezas in our prayers.
- Mission Support Grants announced: First United, Wawa - \$6,500; St. Paul's United, Manitouwadge - \$12,500.

Pastoral Relations: Leone Hamilton

- Preliminary work has begun on a Personnel Mentoring program for all ministers moving into the Presbytery; there will be more information in the new year.

Moved, seconded and carried that Algoma Presbytery accepts all Committee reports.

HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Peter Kingsbury stated that healthy congregations "start with healthy ministry personnel, healthy pastoral relationships, and a healthy court." He commended Algoma Presbytery for the work done during this meeting and reminded us of the importance of the underlying values of good communication, respect and trust, the inclusivity of all voices, and the need to challenge those who would silence others. He spoke of his work with the Ministry and Personnel Committees over the past week, and talked about the Joint Needs Assessment process, referring

us to the handbook on the website, and reminded us that it is healthy for congregations to do some intentional needs assessment work periodically. He advised that there is expertise in Huron-Perth Presbytery which might be of benefit to Algoma. He offered us a resource entitled "Birthing (re-birthing) our Congregations" and a document containing information on Ministry Categories. Finally, he asked us to continue to hold up Blind River in prayer and support.

Kempton Hewitt, from the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, has been providing pulpit supply and pastoral care at St. Andrew's United, Blind River for six weeks (October 18 to November 22, 2009), and he spoke to the Court briefly about renewal in tough times. He suggested that we approach our problems biblically, and that "unless we are willing to see the need for change as God's challenge for us to discern where God is leading us, we will continue to decline." The church, he said, needs to reach out in redemptive ways, and cease to be concerned about our own survival; we must 'lose our lives so that we can find them.' The Court extended an informal invitation to Kempton Hewitt to do some continuing education with the Presbytery when he returns to Algoma next summer. The Faith Formation Committee will follow up.

NEW BUSINESS

- On behalf of the Court, the Chair extended condolences to Tom and Norma Orr on the death of Tom's sister Christena McClelland.
- Bruce McLeish offered a portable communion set to anyone who might need it.
- The Chair advised that there are five "Thirst for Change" t-shirts for sale at \$20 each. These represent the work of a group of London Conference youth who hope to educate the United Church about water issues.
- The Chair reminded the Court that the book display would be closing after lunch and thanked former ARC Director Norma Orr for offering to manage the display at Presbytery.

CLOSING

- **Moved, seconded and carried** that the powers of Presbytery be extended to the Executive until the next full meeting.
- **Moved and carried** that the meeting of Algoma Presbytery adjourn at 12:03 p.m.

Larry Burton offered a prayer of thanks for the work done, the meal about to be shared and the people who had prepared it.

Chair Nancy Ferguson extended courtesies to the women and men of John Wesley who had been our hosts for the two days offering a ministry of hospitality.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of Algoma Presbytery will take place February 19 and 20, 2010 at a location to be named.

Appendix A

CORRESPONDENCE

Received since October 15, 2009

From	Topic	Action
Matthew Stevens	Reconciliation & Training Event in Orillia	Forwarded to Presbytery
Rev. John Porter	Algoma Festival Choir	Forwarded to Presbytery
Matthew Stevens	Grow Your Congregation Event: Bruce Sanguin	Forwarded to Presbytery
Matthew Stevens	Five Oaks Program Listings	Forwarded to Presbytery
Sarah Shepherd	Call for Action to support Affordable HIV/AIDS Meds.	Forwarded to Presbytery
Matthew Stevens	"After School Initiative"	Forwarded to Presbytery
Matthew Stevens	Resources for Changing Times/Envionics Congregational Reports	Forwarded to Presbytery
Rev. Stadelbauer-Sampa	Notice of Appeal Hearing	On file
Matthew Stevens	General Secretary's Weekly Letter	To Presbytery
Five Oaks	Winter & Spring Programs	On file
Lisa Di Veto	November Bulletin Insert	To Presbytery
Peter Kingsbury	Licensed Lay Worship Leaders/Sunday Supply	To Pastoral Relations, E&S, Pastoral Care & Outreach, file
Virginia Morato	General Insurance Plan for UCC	To Finance & Admin.
Matthew Stevens	This One is About God's Name	To Presbytery
London Conference Office	Youth Networking Event	To Presbytery
General Council Office	Church Life Amid H1N1	To Presbytery
London Conference Office	General Secretary's Weekly Letter	To Presbytery
Rev. Heather McLean	Appeal Hearing	On file
General Council Office	Children in Foster Care	To Presbytery
London Conference	General Secretary's Weekly Letter	To Presbytery
General Council Office	Bells for Climate Justice	To Presbytery