

Fall Presbytery meeting

Trinity United, Prince George, Oct. 19-21, 2018

I attended the last presbytery meeting for Cariboo presbytery. There were about 20 others attending. Rev. Doug Goodwin, the Conference executive secretary was there, as well as representatives from 10 of our pastoral charges.

Friday evening started with a Memorial celebrating the saints of Cariboo presbytery, including Paul Davis, Barb Dalby, Jim Wazylenko, Jack Witte, and many others.

We saw some slides of past presbytery gatherings from over the years, including a very young looking Rev. Jenny who I didn't even recognize. We heard some stories of memorable presbyteries of the past, including driving through some fierce snow storms.

We celebrated becoming an affirming presbytery, waving our rainbow flags!

Saturday morning we heard from all of the pastoral charges. The reports were all quite positive. Morgan Ryder from Houston continues to lead worship in Burns Lake, Vanderhoof, and Ft. St. James once a month, as well as her home congregation in Houston. St. Andrew's in Quesnel is continuing to discern perhaps hiring a part time minister after years of being lay led. Kim McNaughton, our student minister in the Robson Valley leads worship once a month in Valemount and McBride. Rev. Dee McEachern (retired) offers communion monthly in both communities and is their pastoral charge supervisor.

Kim McNaughton gave the Youth and Young Adults (YAYA) report. Evolve, an annual youth event, will again take place on the November 11th weekend.

Marianne Dekker presented the financial report. Much discussion followed as to what will happen to the designated funds that are currently in the presbytery account. It was decided that the money in the Candidate Support fund (just under \$3000) would be dispersed to the current four candidates for ministry. The remaining three designated funds would have separate amounts set aside, in trust, to be managed by Trinity United in Prince George. These funds are: Connect North (the live streaming system), Festival of Faith, and Affirming Ministry initiatives in the Cariboo. The remaining funds will go to Pacific Mountain region at the end of 2018. Yes, we will be part of Pacific Mountain region in 2019, which is the area of BC Conference as well as Whitehorse and Banff.

Rev. Bob Fillier gave a report as our conference executive representative. Understandably, they have been meeting a lot in the last few months, trying to come up with a workable plan for the future. The first meeting of Pacific Mountain region will take place May 31-June 3 somewhere in the lower mainland. Representatives from all Communities of Faith will attend. The executive for the PMR will be elected at this meeting.

Our two representatives that attended General Council 43 (Rebecca and Bob Fillier) gave a report on the highlights. Both of our presbytery's proposals (rural ministry and pastoral charge support for lay led congregations) were adopted by GC. Quite an achievement!

Rev. Linda McLaren presented a report on a conference she attended in May on White Privilege.

Doug Goodwin facilitated a discussion on 'Where do we go from here?' After hearing all our questions, he gave us an overview of what has been happening. The national church body will continue to be called 'General Council'. There will be 16 regional councils. The new executive director will be determined early in 2019. This person's job will expand to include 'Chinook Winds' region which is southern Alberta. We had an overview of the new financing formula. A lot of time was spent discussing the differences between clusters and networks, the new groups that could be formed to 'replace' presbyteries. Clusters will be close geographically to meet in person, ideally. Communities of faith will gather together to provide mutual support, encouragement, visioning, strategic planning, and the like. There would be travel help from the region. Networks, on the other hand, would be gatherings of people of similar interests. They would do this on their own behalf, probably online. An example might be 'White privilege'. Funding could be provided by Pro Vision.

A Festival of Faith is in the planning stage for the spring of 2019. The presbytery executive will meet to discuss possibilities for clusters in the future.

Hal and Ros Giles joined us in the afternoon, to reconnect with those they knew from many past presbytery meetings.

After dinner, we watched the film 'Indian Horse' based on a novel by Richard Wagamese about experiences in the residential school system. It was very moving.

It has been my privilege to serve as your lay rep for several years. I will continue to try and keep you informed of wider church events.

Janet Whalley