



GENERAL COUNCIL NEWS

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MODERATOR NOMINEES INTRODUCED BY CHILDREN

by Jeff Cook

Children at Council offered a creative and engaging introduction to the nominees for Moderator at the United Church's 40th General Council on August 12.

Before the nominees' speeches, children came on stage to the theme music from the *Pink Panther* movies. Claiming to represent the GCIA (the General Council Investigation Agency) they searched the stage area to ensure that it was safe and secure before the nominees arrived.



The United Church of Canada

Children at Council dressed as special agents.

Moderator David Giuliano and General Secretary Nora Sanders had to be "scanned" by a security wand when they came on stage. Inspector Clueless, played by Cheryl Perry from Kelowna, then interviewed Giuliano. Looking in her file, she said that he did not look anything like his photograph.

Giuliano took the file and showed the commissioners that it contained a photo of former Moderator Peter Short. "I seem to be working with old intelligence," said Clueless. "Perhaps the United Church needs to update its website."

When Clueless asked Giuliano if he was the current Moderator, he replied that he was for "three more sleeps."

"Do you know there are eight people who have publicly declared that they want your job?" Clueless asked, referring to the nominees for Moderator. Giuliano responded by raising both hands in joy.

Each nominee's speech was introduced by a video clip featuring some of the Children at Council, who had interviewed each nominee earlier in the week.

The children introduced each nominee by telling such things as whether nominees knew how to cross their eyes, what was the most extreme thing they had ever done, what their favourite junk food and dessert were, whether they had ever had any broken bones, and what super power they would like to have.



MODERATOR NOMINEES ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

by Jeff Cook

The eight nominees for Moderator of The United Church of Canada had their opportunity to speak to commissioners to the 40th General Council on August 12.



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Jim Angus

Jim Angus, from British Columbia Conference, said the church must be courageous in a time of declining membership and finances. “We must step out of our comfort zone and take some risks as the United Church,” he said.

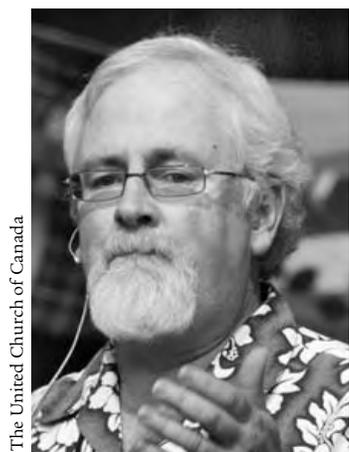
Angus recalled that his father told him to every day tell a good

story. “I am praying to God that we as The United Church of Canada will tell a good story,” he said.

“We need to walk arm in arm as a diverse church,” he noted. “We need to listen to the wisdom of our youth and our children,” said Angus, a former President of British Columbia Conference who is involved in Aboriginal ministry work at the national level.

“We need to do our work as the church from the heart,” he told the Council.

“May we be united and come out of this and rejoice together.”



The United Church of Canada

Ross Bartlett

The Rev. Dr. **Ross Bartlett**, from Maritime Conference, used the symbol of a boat to talk about the challenges and opportunities facing the church. Bartlett said the church is no longer the “majestic cultural ocean liner” that used to be eagerly awaited at many ports.

The church is now “smaller, less pretentious, and it’s a little scuffed up,” he said.

Bartlett noted that, although it can seem safer to stay in safe ports, “boats, whatever their size, are not meant to stay tied at port.”

The church must sail into the tough seas with hope and joy, said Bartlett, who serves St. Matthew’s United Church in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and is a former President of Maritime Conference. The church must “dream a new dream, sing a new song, and paint a new future.”



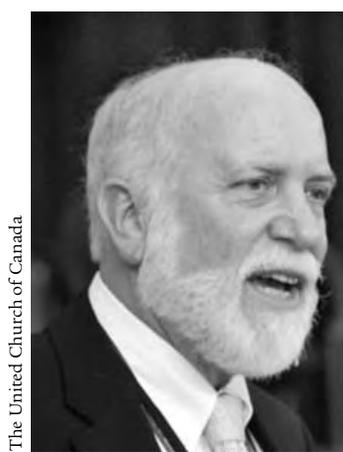
The United Church of Canada

James Christie

The Rev. Dr. **James Christie**, from the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario, said he offered the church “the gift of hope which is found in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. That is the only hope for the United Church or any church,” he said.

Christie said the church must confront the demons of racism (“which we know all too well in this country”), materialism (“which commodifies everything and transforms citizens into consumers”), and militarism (“which issues in empire and squanders the youth of our planet”).

The church’s agenda is to offer hope for unity among the churches, peace among religions and community among the nations, said Christie, who is Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Winnipeg and President of the Canadian Council of Churches.



The United Church of Canada

Richard Hollingsworth

“It is a big agenda, but we can do it,” he said.

The Rev. **Richard Hollingsworth**, from the Bay of Quinte Conference, thanked the United Church for welcoming him 38 years ago as a “Bible-belt pacifist misfit” from the United States.

Hollingsworth said that as he has been listening to commissioners at the General Council he has “learned once again what a wonderful church we are.” He said the United Church must continue to live in right relations with First Nations people, to celebrate and welcome the gifts of gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgendered people, to work for peace and justice, to honour youth and those with physical and mental challenges.

He also said it will be difficult to continue to do everything we want to do as the church. “We will have to make some difficult and painful choices,” he said. A former President of Bay of Quinte Conference, Hollingsworth has pastored Braeside Pastoral Charge in Ontario for the past 18 years.

Hollingsworth said the church needs to be grounded in joyous worship. “Let us go into God’s glorious future, singing and dancing as we go,” he said.



The United Church of Canada

Maya Landell

The Rev. **Maya Landell**, from London Conference, said that God is a restless, transforming presence in the church. “I have been nudged and challenged and pushed and kept up at night by God,” Landell said.

“The image that calls to me for our church as we go down to the potter’s house,” she said, “is that there is an upward

climb on the other side.”

Landell said the climb will be difficult at times due to the shifting context of the church and society. On that climb we look for answers and a way, she noted, but there are also “times when we’ve glimpsed the kingdom of God.”

Landell is a minister serving the Innerkip-Eastwood Pastoral Charge, Ontario, and is the President-Elect of London Conference. She said the church lives “between the wonder and trust of our tradition and the change we are yearning for.” She said the “young and restless” are challenging the church to make choices so that it can move forward on its journey.

Landell called the church to “go forth, break

bread, share the story, and make a difference,” and “to choose life.”



The United Church of Canada

Stephen Mabee

The Rev. Dr. **Stephen Mabee** said the church must centre itself in the call to love God with our hearts, minds, soul, and strength and to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. “That is the place we can step back to when we get lost and get confused,” Mabee said.

He said God seeks us out and calls us “so that we become actors in God’s actions in this creative world.”

In order to love, the church needs to be open and receptive to new ways of relating to the world, Mabee noted. He said the church is challenged to be a community of “love, justice, and mercy” that can transform the world, ending racism, colonialism, and empire.

The church should “light the way to a new world, causing old empires to fade,” he said.

Mabee has held many voluntary offices at all levels of the United Church. Semi-retired, he currently ministers at St. John’s Halton Hills in Ontario. He said the role of the Moderator is to “make sure that things go on,” to support and encourage people, and to ensure “that people are honoured.”



The United Church of Canada

John Thompson

The Rev. **John Thompson**, from the All Native Circle Conference, said he believes the United Church is at a pivotal point in its life. “I believe that God is calling us to a shift in focus to embrace a new vision,” he said.

Thompson said that living in a time of dwindling membership and money presents a “unique challenge and opportunity” for the church.

“We have come to a place where we must learn to live in harmony with all of God’s creation,” he said. “Life and people must be given priority over profit and greed.”

Thompson is the Chair of Keewatin Presbytery, a member of the National Aboriginal Ministries Council, and ministers in Oxford House, Manitoba. He said the church must live by principles of humility, sensitivity, openness and inclusivity, honesty, courage, truth, and love.

He said the church can learn from Indigenous people who “hold a vision that can bring renewal, healing, and wholeness to themselves, the church, and the whole of creation.”

Thompson noted that the church must be open to new hope and to life in all its fullness.

Mardi Tindal, from Hamilton Conference, said the church must live from a sense of “the reality of God’s abundance.”

Tindal said, “When we think something is scarce we act in ways that create scarcity. When we believe in abundance we act in ways that create abundance.”

She said the church needs “to learn to live within the limits of resources in God’s natural order” but to recognize the abundance that exists within that order. Jesus meant it when he said that people could have life and have it abundantly, Tindal said. She added that living in abundance would require us to “listen deeply” to the spirit, to creation, and to one another.

An adult educator, author, and video producer who has served in several roles at all levels of the church, Tindal is currently Executive Director of Five Oaks Centre.

“My style of leadership is both contemplative and active,” she said. She noted that her priorities as Moderator would be right relations with the people of the land, with creation, and with youth. “Jesus showed us that there is abundance in community,” she said, “Everyone has gifts to offer to God’s abundant healing.”

The General Council will elect a Moderator on August 14.

ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PENSION PLAN

by Jim Cairney

The General Secretary of the General Council is being asked to initiate an investigation into whether the United Church Pension Plan could be more ethically responsible in its investing.

The Council voted to “direct the General Secretary, General Council to seek independent legal and financial opinion as to what would be required for The United Church of Canada Pension Board (UC-CPB) to adopt the socially responsible investment criteria of The United Church of Canada as their own investment criteria.”

This is to avoid investing in any company that

- has ignored or failed to take into account the needs and interests of communities affected negatively by its operations or planned operations
- has ignored or failed to take into account the needs, interests, and rights of Aboriginal communities affected by its operations, or planned operations

Council further directed that the legal opinion determine whether UCCPB investments in extractive (i.e. mining) industries may be screened based on companies’ adherence to international standards on human rights, environment, and Indigenous peoples’ rights, including the international standard of the right to free, prior, and informed consent.

The Council voted to direct the General Secretary to then report back to the Executive of the General Council; the Justice, Global and Ecumenical Relations Unit; and the originating body (Maritime Conference Church in Action Committee) for consultation and action.

Don Hunter, Chairperson of the Permanent Committee on Finance of the General Council, told the Council that the pension plan already has a social responsibility investment policy with ethical screening practices. However, by law, the ethical screening cannot overwrite the rights of pensioners.

The Rev. Fay Wakeling, of Montreal and Ottawa Conference, said, “We know there is resistance in looking at it.”



Mardi Tindal

The Rev. Russell Daye, of Maritime Conference, said he had read the correspondence on the issue, and has “seen some resistance from the Pension Board.”

The proposal is in response to the fact that the pension plan holds stock in Goldcorp. The Maritime Conference Church in Action Committee has tracked human rights and environmental violations of several Canadian mining companies operating in Latin America, including Goldcorp’s Marlin mine in Indigenous Mayan communities in Guatemala. The committee has kept abreast of mining activities in communities surrounding the Marlin mine through correspondence and regular delegations there.

Background material for the proposal says, “As conditions for the Indigenous Mayan communities there have continued to worsen, including serious health concerns, we were alarmed to discover that The United Church of Canada Pension Fund has significant investments in Goldcorp.”

“Our money is being used to oppress Indigenous peoples in Central America,” said Daye.

The motion also zeroed-in on the holding of Goldcorp stock. “Given that the UCCPB currently holds investment in Goldcorp which does not meet the ethical investment standards of the United Church,” it directed the Executive to encourage the UCCPB to take steps:

- to engage with affected Mayan communities and their representatives to ensure that the UCCPB understands the perspective of the communities regarding Goldcorp positions and statements
- to include a member of the Maritime Conference Mining the Connections Working Group in any engagement process with Goldcorp, since it is a highly informed United Church of Canada group with in-depth knowledge of the history and present situation of Guatemala and strong relationships with communities affected by Canadian mining companies
- to encourage the Pension Board to undertake shareholder advocacy with companies in which the United Church Pension Plan invests where concerns have been expressed regarding environmental, social, and human rights impacts

The action was undertaken by commissioners meeting August 11 in one of three decision-making commissions at the Council.



COMMISSION DECISIONS ON MINISTRY ISSUES

by Jeff Cook

The United Church’s 40th General Council approved a number of actions relating to various ministry and congregational issues on August 11. Among the actions approved were:

- directing the General Secretary to evaluate the pastoral relations process, particularly the needs assessment process, with a view to reducing the time and workload that this adds to the life of the congregation and to the presbytery
- referring to the General Secretary a request to review “the implications of implementing” a policy allowing sacraments elders to serve pastoral charges at times when the order of ministry personnel are absent for an extended time
- establishing a policy that the duties of the presbytery/district pastoral relations committee include engaging potential interim ministers in a formal process of exploration about their suitability for working with congregations in transition, and the possibility of being available throughout the United Church
- directing the General Secretary to consult with diaconal ministers to determine the most appropriate mechanisms for supporting and encouraging diaconal ministry within the church’s life and work
- maintaining Albright Gardens in Beamsville, Ontario, as a residence providing affordable housing for United Church pensioners

- requiring that presbytery accountable ministries, as well as pastoral charges, contribute toward the cost of moving expenses for candidates or members of the order of ministry
- asking that the wording in *The Manual* be made more explicit regarding the policy requiring two Sundays' notice to receive and act upon the report of a joint needs assessment committee
- clarifying the policy that the transfer committee has discretion to accept, reject or return an application for transfer
- eliminating the age restrictions for candidates for the shorter course, a fast-tracked course for people who are 35 years or older and/or with particular family or financial responsibilities when they are entering theological studies
- ensuring that the rights of Section 87 of the Indian Act, which gives an exemption from taxation, be protected for status Indians employed by the United Church on Indian reserves and participating in the United Church's national payroll system
- adopting a proposed policy statement for the admission of ministers from other denominations to the United Church. The policy would require those admitted to be in essential agreement with the doctrine of the United Church, understand the ethos, polity, and history of the United Church and ensures that the church will verify "through appropriate procedures" the "character and competence of applicants."
- establishing a promotional campaign to raise awareness about current youth and young adult networks

These motions were approved by commissioners meeting in one of three decision-making commissions at the 40th General Council.



COUNCIL DEFEATS MOTION TO HELP CHURCHES HONOUR SALARY INCREASES

by Jeff Cook

The 40th General Council decided that sometimes it's more responsible to defeat a motion rather than refer it to the Executive of the General Council.

The motion in question would have directed the General Council to provide financial resources to pastoral charges unable to honour required salary increases. Referring the decision to the Executive "perpetuates our fear of making some really hard decisions in the life of our church," said the Rev. Pix Butt, from Montreal and Ottawa Conference.

Dave McCormack, from Montreal and Ottawa Conference, said commissioners needed to fulfill their role as elected decision-making representatives. He said that referring the motion would be "giving it to someone else [other] than those elected to come here."

"We really need to grow up here," said the Rev. Matt Gallinger, from Montreal and Ottawa Conference. "We need to make a difficult decision."

Rejecting the option of referring the motion, the Council then voted against the motion.

"This proposals asks us to spend a million dollars we don't have," said McCormack.

"We have to come to grips with the fact that we don't have the money to look like we used to," said Butt. She noted that her congregation just sold its building and doesn't yet know where it will move.

The motion was dealt with by commissioners meeting in one of three decision-making commissions at the Council.



LA CONTRIBUTION DES FRANCOPHONES AU 40^E CONSEIL GÉNÉRAL

par David Fines

La petite communauté francophone de l'Église Unie du Canada est très bien représentée à ce 40^e Conseil général.

Nous trouvons tout d'abord, comme le demande la constitution du Conseil général, les deux déléguées représentant la composante francophone qui ont été élues par le Consistoire Laurentien : Darla Sloan et Nicole Hamel, respectivement pasteure et laïque, toutes deux membres de la paroisse unie Saint-Pierre à Québec. Elles siègeront aussi à partir de cet automne sur l'Exécutif du Conseil général pour la durée de deux termes de trois ans.

On y trouve aussi Anne-Marie Carmoy, également de la paroisse Saint-Pierre, en tant que membre du comité organisateur. Thierry Delay, pasteur de l'église unie Saint-Jean à Montréal, quant à lui y est présent comme membre élu au sein de la délégation du Synode Montréal-Ottawa, tout comme Stéphane Vermette, qui fait partie de la délégation du Synode de Bay of Quinte, dans le Sud-est de l'Ontario. Cette liste se complète de deux membres de l'Unité nationale des ministères en français (UMiF), Pierre Goldberger, son ministre-exécutif, et David Fines, responsable des Communications publiques.

Cette équipe a été enrichie de la présence de Marie-Claude Manga, pasteure tout nouvellement nommée à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, en tant qu'invitée spéciale au Conseil général pour la présentation, mercredi, du rapport *Une Vision pour les ministères en français*.

Juste avant de parler de ce rapport, sans doute pourrait-on ajouter à ce groupe les noms de quelques membres anglophones de l'Église unie, francophiles et apportant leur appui indéfectible à la cause des ministères en français, notamment David Lefneski, pasteur à l'église de Sud-ouest à Montréal, membre du Comité de liturgie du Conseil général, ainsi que Rosemary Lambie, secrétaire-exécutive du Synode Montréal et Ottawa, ou encore Faye Wakeling, membre élue de la délégation de ce synode.

Et sans doute pourrait-on regretter à ce Conseil général, contrairement au deux précédents, l'absence de jeunes francophones au Forum jeunesse.

Ces francophones s'étaient donné rendez-vous tôt à Kelowna, avant même que ne débute le Conseil général pour préparer la stratégie de présence possible. C'est ainsi que le groupe a tenu deux rencontres très constructives la jour avant l'ouverture ; un moment de partage multilingue avec des membres des ministères interculturels et pluralistes avec lesquels ils partagent le rôle du levain de la parabole, et un autre échange avec des représentants du Cercle des Premières Nations qui sont en même temps « leur inspiration » et « leurs meilleurs alliés » dans leurs revendications légitimes. Aussi Anne-Marie Carmoy est allée rencontrer le Forum jeunesse. Le français est aussi visible – et audible – à ce Conseil général tout d'abord par deux kiosques qui exposent, l'un une panoplie de ressources éducatives et liturgiques en français et bilingues de même que le travail de la revue *Aujourd'hui Credo*, le mensuel francophone de l'Église unie ; et l'autre le nouveau recueil *Nos Voix unies*, le tout premier livre de chants et de cantiques édités en français par l'Église unie. De nombreux chants de ce recueil ont été d'ailleurs utilisés par l'équipe d'animation liturgique lors des cultes du matin, et puis chantés par toute l'assemblée qui les découvre avec grand plaisir, grâce au travail de David Lefneski, président du Comité de composition de *Nos Voix unies*, au sein du Comité de liturgie.

Enfin, des membres de cette délégation ont animé deux des ateliers du soir en français et en anglais. Lundi soir, David Lefneski justement, avec la complicité de Thierry Delay, proposait une rencontre d'initiation aux chants et de prières du recueil *Nos voix unies*. Et le lendemain soir, Pierre Goldberger, accompagné de Darla Sloan et Nicole Hamel ont animé une discussion sur le développement de ministères en français. Mentionnons aussi que cette dernière, Nicole Hamel, en tant que vice-présidente nationale du réseau S'affirmer ensemble avait lancé, mardi, une invitation à tous les membres du Conseil général LGBT (Lesbiennes, gais, bisexuels et transgenres) et leurs ami-es à un moment de rencontre... qui a reçu très bon accueil ! Vous en aurez bientôt des nouvelles.



COUNCIL RECOGNIZES APOLOGY TO JAPANESE UNITED

by Jim Cairney

An apology by British Columbia Conference to a Japanese United Church in Vancouver in June 2009—decades after its property was confiscated without consultation or compensation—was recognized by the 40th General Council meeting in Kelowna, British Columbia.

The Rev. Doug Goodwin, Executive Secretary of British Columbia Conference, explained to the Council that there had been a thriving Japanese congregation in Powell Street United Church before the outbreak of World War Two.

When Canada entered the war against Japan in 1941, all people of Japanese origin or descent were interned in camps away from the west coast, and the Japanese church's property was put into the trusteeship of the United Church.

Although the war ended in 1945, the internees were not allowed to return to the coast until 1949. Not all returned. Some stayed in other areas of Canada.

When the members of the Powell Street congregation returned following internment, they found a church building that was now being used primarily for storage and no longer adequately maintained, said Goodwin.

The Japanese congregation began to worship at First United Church, then Fairview United, and Renfrew United. Two decades later, it found a permanent church home as Vancouver Japanese United in the former St. Luke's United building.

Meanwhile, in 1953, the United Church sold the Powell Street building to Welfare Industries, a service society of First United Church. The following year, it was sold to a Buddhist society for a temple, which it still is to the present day. In neither of these sales did the Japanese congregation have any decision-making power, nor did it benefit in any direct way.

Through the years, various attempts were made to have the grievance addressed.

"An apology to the Japanese congregation doesn't fix everything," said the Rev. Dan Chambers, President of British Columbia Conference, "but it brings us along the road to healing and a balanced relationship."

"We are pleased that it was done in a Christian way," said Mits Hayashi, a member of Vancouver Japanese United.

Chizu Uchida told the Council she was baptized into the Powell Street congregation in 1927. While today, many former members are in other parts of the country, or have passed away, "they would all be happy to hear, as we are presently, that this apology has been made," said Uchida.

"Who had the authority?" asked Uchida. "Was it head office in Toronto, or did First [United] do it on their own? First United Church was the custodian of Powell Street, so it was not theirs to sell!"

Past-president of British Columbia Conference, the Rev. Hilde Seal, told *General Council News* that part of the tragedy is that the Powell Street congregation members—sent to internment camps with only one suitcase—had used the church to store personal effects and family treasures. They had thought their belongings would be safe. Afterwards, nobody could tell them what happened to their belongings, said Seal.

The June apology by British Columbia Conference said that, "We recognize and now confess that the church's actions in regards to the sale of the Powell Street church were deeply flawed and dishonouring of the living congregation that called it home. We confess that the church, too, was tainted by the prejudices and fears of that era, and that even best intentions were warped by often-subtle forms of racism."



MOTION ON VOTING BY ADHERENTS DEFEATED

by Derek Carlisle

Commissioners attending the 40th General Council in Kelowna, British Columbia, have defeated a proposal that would have extended voting privileges at congregational meetings to all adherents.

A proposal from the Saskatchewan Conference called for the adoption of a policy that would see adherents granted the same voting privileges as congregational members in all matters. The United Church *Manual* identifies adherents as those who are “attached to a congregation and who contribute regularly to its life and work while not being a member thereof.”

The background of the proposal outlined the decline in church membership in Saskatchewan and noted that there is a tendency for people to be more “disinclined to formally join anything.”

Danna Armstrong, of Saskatchewan Conference, spoke of long-time United Church adherents who have made tremendous contributions to the church. She added that many have come from other church backgrounds and tend not to join because of sentimental attachments to their previous congregations.

Roy West, of Newfoundland and Labrador Conference, spoke of another phenomenon whereby rural congregation members in his province are increasingly relocating to St. John’s. Once they establish themselves in the city and find a church, West said they are looked on as adherents instead of voting members of their adopted congregations.

Saskatchewan Conference commissioner, the Rev. Leigh Sinclair, spoke of the need to include more adherents in the official congregational tent. “Christendom is dead. We are in a new culture,” she said. “People don’t care to be members of a club. It is much easier to sell them to do work in the church without becoming members.”

Other commissioners appealed for a continued focus on membership in the United Church. “If we adopt this motion, what is the reason to become a member? We would, in effect, take away any reason to join,” said Catherine Stewart Savage from Hamilton Conference.

Adherents may still receive voting privileges at meetings on temporal matters (secular affairs pertaining to the life, work, and finances of the congregation), based on approval by their individual congregations.

In other matters, Council voted to

- encourage the General Council, Conferences, presbyteries, and congregations to recognize traditional territory of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit neighbours at meetings
- amend *The Manual* to include diaconal ministry representation on the Conference Education and Students Committee or its equivalent
- permit electronic voting at meetings, provided that a conference call or electronic meeting forum (e.g. e-mail chatroom, webcam simulcast) are held simultaneously
- direct the General Council to host a national consultation in the next three years with gay, lesbian, transgendered, and two-spirited members of the United Church to discuss homophobia and heterosexism in the church
- encourage the United Church to welcome transgendered people into membership and ministry and to learn about the realities of the transgender experience and expression
- designate an annual “Season of Creation” and a “Children in Care” Sunday in the upcoming liturgical year

A proposal from Alberta and Northwest Conference encouraging pastoral charges to commit to green initiatives was amended, then passed. References were removed to setting up and maintaining a national web-based registry to track energy usage by congregations. Caryn Douglas, of Conference of Manitoba and Northwest Ontario, summed up the sentiments of many commissioners in saying that while she was passionate about the issue of environmental change, she was resistant to setting up church-administered databases. Douglas advocated for more environmental work with ecumenical partners.

These decisions were made by commissioners meeting August 11 in one of three decision-making commissions at the Council.

CHILDREN LEAD WORSHIP

by Jeff Cook

During morning worship Children at Council reminded commissioners to the United Church's 40th General Council that they are the hands of God.

"We encourage you to join hands with those around you," said Michelle Williams from British Columbia Conference. "We invite you to look at the hands you're holding and know these are God's hands."

Children at Council led the Council in singing *The Potter Song*. During the song commissioners were invited to shake hands, clap their hands together, do "their finest dance move" and sing that they were "all God's hands."

The children then enacted the story "In God's Hands" written by Lawrence Kushner and Gary Schmidt. In the story, a rich man named Jacob (portrayed by Kate Gibson from Alberta and Northwest Conference) and a poor man named David (portrayed by Lauren McAuley from British Columbia Conference) discover a miracle in the sharing of loaves of challah. The loaves are baked by the rich man and eaten by the poor man.

"Now you understand that you are God's hands," says the rabbi (portrayed by Megan Donald from British Columbia Conference).

Commissioners then shared challah at their tables. Worship concluded with everyone singing "I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me."



PRÉSENTATION EN PLÉNIÈRE DU RAPPORT DE L'UMiF

par David Fines

Les francophones présents au Conseil général s'étaient bien préparés pour la présentation, pour la première fois en 25 ans, d'un rapport détaillé sur l'état des ministères en français au sein de l'Église unie, rapport qui s'accompagne d'importantes recommandations.

Ce rapport, intitulé *Une Vision pour les ministères en français* a été présenté hier matin en plénière par Stéphane Vermette, président du Conseil d'unité de l'UMiF, avec sa passion coutumière, inspiré par le récit des Actes des Apôtres de la rencontre entre Philippe et l'eunuque éthiopien. Il était accompagné sur l'estrade d'une douzaine de personnes des ministères francophones, interculturels et autochtones.

Parmi elles, Marie-Claude Manga, invitée spéciale au Conseil générale, après le visionnement d'un court vidéo sur la présence de l'Église unie dans la ville de Québec, a captivé l'assistance alors qu'à partir du récit de *Tabita*, inspirée de son histoire personnelle ; elle a démontré à toute l'Église que de nombreuses autres *Tabita* n'attendent seulement qu'on leur tende la main, n'attendent que d'être invitées à faire route avec nous. Quant à Darla Sloan, elle a présenté à l'assemblée les signes actuels qui la poussent à l'espérance, particulièrement la transformation de l'église unie anglophone de Sainte-Adèle en paroisse francophone, et de celle de Saint-Jean-sur-Richelien en paroisse bilingue. Notons que c'est là que Marie-Claude Manga exercera son ministère à partir de novembre prochain.

En toute fin de présentation, Stéphane Vermette a invité Ellen Jacobs de la nation Ojibway et membre du Groupe de travail sur les ministères interculturels à prendre la parole.

« Comme je suis fière des ministères en français, » a-t-elle dit, en parlant du long chemin et de la

résilience de la communauté francophone. Puis elle a terminé, en français, en s'exclamant : « Je tiendrai vos rêves dans mon cœur ! »

Les principales recommandations du rapport proposent la création de cinq nouveaux ministères en français à temps plein au cours des cinq prochaines années ainsi que de nouveaux programmes de formation en français autant pour les futurs pasteurs que pour les personnes laïques. Le vote sur ce rapport devrait avoir lieu vendredi.



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on the 2nd floor

Welcome To *General Council News*

General Council News is being posted daily on The United Church of Canada's 40th General Council website gc40.united-church.ca, and sent as an e-newsletter to individuals, congregations, and news media that have requested it.

Each day a single printed copy will also be delivered to all table groups for commissioners to share. The final edition of *General Council News* will be available online within 24 hours of the closing of General Council on Saturday, August 15.

General Council News reporters will be covering the highlights and significant happenings of the 40th General Council, rather than recording everything that happens each day. All General Council News stories may be reproduced freely.

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