



Cambrian Calls

WINTER¹
February 23-26, 2012
Trinity United Church
Thunder Bay

62 Presbyters gathered at Trinity United Church in Thunder Bay for the Winter Presbytery, led by the Rev. Scott Gale, Chair. The concurrent Youth Event drew 31 young people, with the theme of “The S Words - Sexuality and Spirituality in the United Church.” (See p.4 for the Youth Report).

Presbyters and Youth joined with other Thunder Bay United Churches for Sunday morning worship at Trinity. The Service was live-streamed on the Internet, with a Skype connection to Pinegrove United Church, where the Scriptures were read. Cambrian Youth Minister, Sarah Bruer, in her message, using Luke 2: 22-38, asked, “What treasures, wisdom, skills, resources do you have to pass along to future generations?”

Adult theme speaker, Sheila Noyes, spoke passionately on *Dying with Dignity*. Her mother and sister experienced painful deaths. Assisted Dying is defined as providing a fatal prescription which the person takes themselves. Voluntary Euthanasia is the giving of a lethal injection to an individual at their request. Canadian law is far behind that of other countries, even the States of Washington, Montana and Oregon. While suicide is legal in Canada, assisted dying and euthanasia are not.

Accessibility requirements for public buildings in Ontario are challenges for the future of our buildings. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) will be implemented over the years leading up to 2025. Many simple changes can be made to make buildings more accessible. Check for suggestions online at www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/

KAIROS (Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives) continues this year with work on human rights, focussing on making the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples a road map to a better future. Inequities still exist. First Nations Reserve schools receive \$2,000 less per student than non-Indigenous schools. Only 41% of Reserve students graduate, compared to 77% in the rest of Canada. Such inequities contribute to terrifying suicide rates. More information and worship resources are available at www.kairoscanada.ca. The KAIROS Regional web site www.kairoscambrianagassiz.org

Joan Jarvis, Conference staff minister for Cambrian, drew attention to available print resources, including the Curriculum Guide, which reflects United Church theology, and the current issue of Mandate. Some Minutes for Mission are available in video format from the website. Conference will set up a temporary office for support staff, with the same phone number, located at Churchill Park United Church until the move to the new permanent office. In the meantime Conference program staff will work from home in April. The new location will be at St. Mary’s Road and River Road, attached to the 7-11. Regrets came from Conference President Bev Simpson, whose mother, Muriel Cross, had passed away. Muriel and her husband Rev. Bill Cross served in Cambrian at Wesley United in the 80s and 90s.

After experiencing some technical difficulties with the Presbytery website since the September Presbytery, the site is now up and running again. A brand new website is in the process of being built by web designer, Lincoln Dunn. The new site will be more extensive and interactive. Presbyters and pastoral charges will be notified with the new site is online.

MOTIONS passed:

- ★ To invite congregations to plan events leading up to the Commemorative Event “Walking Together - Sharing our Journey” on Sept. 6, in response to the cooperative project of Nishnawbe Aski Nation and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- ★ To use only Fair Trade coffee and tea at Presbytery meetings.
- ★ To empower the Executive, in consultation with the Youth Advisory Committee and others as needed, to pursue the continuation of the Youth Minister position for at least one more year.

Points of Interest:

- Great singing at Presbytery was led by Nova Cook and Alice Bloomfield, and stretch breaks by Christina Stricker.
- Camp Duncan needs a rep from each congregation.
- Congregations are reminded that if there are 100-200 families under pastoral care, 2 lay Presbytery delegates are allowed; 200-300 can have 3, over 300 are allowed 4. If this were followed, and more presbyters attended the meetings, the work of Presbytery would be more equitably shared.
- Camp Duncan Children’s Camp is planned for July 28-Aug 4 for ages 8-12. Staff and counsellors are needed. A camp for high-school age youth will be held June 28-July1 for High School age. Contact Ken Moffatt at 346-8964.
- The theme for the camp at Sunny Cove this year is “The Kingdom is like...”
- Gathering is moving to 4 issues a year as of 2013.
- The Observer is moving to a new format.
- Cambrian Calls is now on larger paper and includes the Youth Event’s own report.
- The Licensed Lay Worship Leaders’ program is already underway but others may join up until the end of March.
- Dr. Brian Stevenson is the speaker at The Ken Morrison Lecture Series sponsored by the Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship on March 20 at 7 pm in the Faculty Lounge at Lakehead University. The topic is Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Relations in Thunder Bay – our Shared Future. Panel discussion will include Mayor Hobbs
- Former Presbyter Peter Vanderkam has donated hundreds of books to the library at St. Paul’s.
- The My Neighbour, Our Community DVD, in which local people tell their stories, is available for use in congregations. Sponsored by Westminster UC and the Lakehead Social Planning Council, with technical expertise by Jim Hyder.

Worship:

A meaningful opening worship, focussing on bread, was led by the Rev. Heather Landry. Christina Stricker and Rev. Joyce Fergus-Moore led Friday evening Vespers on the Song of Faith. A pancake and sausage breakfast, provided by the Youth, preceded a joyful Saturday morning communion service, based on Psalm 139, led by Ren Amell and the Youth.

Cambrian Youth Minister, Sarah Bruer, reported that she had visited all 30 congregations in 60 days in the Fall, talking with 235 people, and had attended other youth gatherings. A Skyped Christmas

worship service involving 78 youth from Marathon, Emo, Sioux Lookout, Kenora, Thunder Bay and Winnipeg was a great success. Youth are keeping in touch through Facebook between other events. Youth Alumni are also involved.

Remit 6:

The Court voted that the 1940 Statement of Faith, the New Creed and A Song of Faith are cherished, honoured, or living statements of our faith to be included in the Basis of Union, and the results of the vote be forwarded to General Council.

Cambrian Commissioners to General Council 41 are: Clergy - Rev. Scott Gale, with Warner Bloomfield as alternate; Lay - Nova Cook, with Jim Jackson as alternate. Youth to GC will be Gabby Tomlinson, alt. Abigail Bloomfield. Youth Forum: Christina Eady.

Four pastoral charges were visited in 2011. A notice of motion was presented (for the September meeting) that Presbytery will begin the process of disbanding the Ear Falls United Church due to lack of viability in all areas.

Pastoral Relations:

- Deadline for settlement application is April 1.
- Police Record Checks need to be up to date; application should be made prior to the expiry.
- Sabbatical Leave was approved for Rev. Frances Flook for August & September 2012 and January 2013.
- Minimum housing allowance for Thunder Bay is now \$12,3000 to \$14,000.

Education and Students:

- ◆ Hubert Den Draak was approved as ready for appointment.
- ◆ Brian Jackson, Kai Koivukoski and Anne MacDonald were re-licensed as lay worship leaders.

The My Neighbour, Our Community project was introduced by Rev. Ed Prinselaar. It is a DVD made by videographer, Jim Hyder, depicting the social, and economic hardships in Thunder Bay. The DVD includes five vignettes of individuals. It was a joint project of Westminster United's Questers group and the Lakehead Social Planning Council. It is available free by contacting Westminster United Church or the Lakehead Social Planning Council.

Mission & Service: Thanks were given to Eileen Rice for her many years of work for M & S. On Saturday evening, Dave McMaster's Hat raised \$631.08 for the M & S Fund.

Finance: General Fund expenditures in 2011 were \$144,609, ending the year with a net balance of \$27,393. Budget for 2012 is \$137,300. At the end of 2011 the Extension Fund stood at \$142,532. There are outstanding loans of \$38,090. Paul McAlister has now finished his term as Treasurer.

Vacancies exist for 2 UCW reps, a Y.A.A.Y. (Youth Adults And Youth) rep, Camp Duncan Convenor, and M&S Convenor.

Theological Reflector, the Rev. Barb Miller, calling on Presbyters to trust in the spirit and take a moment with God, to feel the Holy Presence, led us through the spirit-filled moments and decisions of our time together.

YOUTH REPORT

(reported by Jessica Copeland)

Over the course of this gathering of the youth for February 2012, we discussed the Big "S" word, Sexuality in the United Church. This year we had 31 youth participating in our program. We had the pleasure of having 5 young adults take time out of their busy lives to be young leaders and 9 adults who keep coming back year after year to lead us in all we do.

Over the weekend, we had 3 big topics in our theme time. First we had Jesse, from the sexual health clinic, discussing healthy sexuality. At first the youth didn't believe we could talk about sex in the church, ever. But as the conversation began, we all opened up. The youth responded very well to our theme. With the sexual health nurse, we discussed the medical / scientific aspect of everything. Our presenter, Jesse, made the conversation far from the area of awkward. We all had a chance to learn, having fun.

The second theme time we had was sexuality and the church. We started this session by listening to songs that had a message about love or sex, then linking them to verses in the bible. With this activity, the youth reacted well because they got the chance to recognize different kinds of relationships in songs and the bible. This began on the thought train of "how does God come into our sexuality and relationships?" A lot of the youth began to put the pieces together and understand where their church and God actually come into sex. Until now we never had a clue how to bring up sex to the church – now it's opened new pathways for conversations to come. Also on that theme we partook in activities as teams, discussing what the United Church has had to say about sexuality – such as same-sex marriage, divorce, abortion, pornography, objectifying individuals, and accepting individuals regardless of their sexual orientation.

In our last theme time together, we discussed sexuality and decision-making. This theme brought a huge amount of discussion amongst the youth. So many of them brought forth many great ideas involving safe sex, sexual orientation, abusive relationships and the decisions that come along with these situations.

Our theme this year was an overall hit with the youth. They received a voice they never knew they had. The themes like these bring us closer in many more aspects than just our friendships. We gain a higher understanding of each other and the world around us with all its pressures.

Many thanks to hosts, the Rev. Randy Boyd, Trinity United Council, and all who provided the delicious meals, as well as the Rev. Heather Landry, and the St. Paul's United Church Board.

Cambrian Calls may be downloaded from the web site.

Cambrian Calls Plus! (with pictures) is on-line a few days after the meeting.

www.cambrianpresbytery.org

Safe journey home!

See you at Conference in Winnipeg, May 31-June 3!