

NIAGARA PRESBYTERY

The goal of Niagara Presbytery is to strictly adhere to The Manual to do the business of the church and support ministry personnel and the faith communities under the Pastoral Oversight of Niagara Presbytery.

Faith communities continue to be strong supporters of the Mission and Service arm of the church.

As was the case with all presbyteries, not only in Hamilton Conference but across the country, Niagara Presbytery spent a good amount of time discerning the direction of the church, specifically reflecting and then voting on the remits coming out of General Council 42. Under the excellent leadership of The Faith and Order Committee, we made our way through all of the remits and have transmitted the decisions of the court to the GCO.

The Faith and Order Committee also organized the fourth annual pulpit exchange in January. This exchange, which is Niagara Presbytery's way of marking the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, has grown every year with ever widening participation on the part of both congregations and ministers. While promoting community-building, the exchange was once again warmly received by all those participating.

The ministry of children, youth, and young adults has become a primary focus. Supporting this focus are the Education and Students Programs, Brock Chaplaincy, Cave Springs Camp, and Vacation Bible School. In October 2016, Niagara Presbytery hosted The Niagara Youth Festival which saw 220+ youth, young adults, and their accompanying adults take up residence in a number of churches across the presbytery. With keynote speaker Andrew Root, Sunday morning preacher The Right Reverend Jordan Cantwell, and worship leadership from Pat Morrison, the weekend was inspiring, challenging, exciting, and fun. Plans are already well underway for the 2017 edition that will see Amanda Drury as the keynote speaker, Kofi Hope as the Sunday morning preacher, and Pat Morrison is back as the worship leader.

In April 2017, three congregations, Silver Spire, First-Grantham and St John's-Stevensville, partnered to welcome Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come as the keynote speaker at a weekend conference in response to The Calls to Action contained in the 2016 Truth and Reconciliation Report. Over the three-day period, participants heard about and reflected on issues of land agreements and broken treaties, the legacy of the Residential School system, and Murdered and Missing Aboriginal Women. Each of the sessions, as well as the Sunday morning worship, was recorded by Niagara Online Worship and is available on their website.

Finally, Niagara Presbytery is exploring how we continue to do the work of presbytery in this time of change and uncertainty. It is recognized that regardless of the decisions taken by the church around the various remits there is going to have to be some change to both the structure and the work of presbytery. And so, we continue to examine the work of committees and working groups, seeking places where efforts can be combined and processes streamlined.

Submitted by:

The Rev Bill Thomas
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