

Erie Presbytery

"All ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over." (Matthew 14:20)

From the Chair

Matthew's gospel reminds us that life celebrated, gifts shared, brokenness held lovingly, and gratitude to God are all seasonings of abundant life with God, and that by grace, when we do these things, we discover we have so much more than we ever thought we did. We have much to be thankful for.

This year, in our worship and meeting times together, we have been intentional about naming our blessings, identifying those things we are to hold on to by faith, and those we are to let go of. We have enjoyed meeting our new regional neighbours, hearing from our inspiring Conference President, the Rev. Heather Leffler, planning for endings and new beginnings, and living faithfully into the unknown.

We heard from representatives of all streams of ministry as we prepared for, and finally voted on, Remit #6. We identified things we thought the Boundaries Commission should know about us; that as a rural presbytery we function more like a family than a court, and that our roots and care for one another run deep. A letter thus was sent to the Boundaries Commission. We are grateful for their challenging and grace-filled work this past year.

Two of our members were trained and affirmed as facilitators of the United Fresh Start program. Guest presenters enlightened us on the Skylight Festival happening this summer at Five Oaks, as well exciting seasonal events at Ryerson Camp. Two of our members, Ted Smith and Robert Lawson, were named to the Transition Commission.

My sincere gratitude to all who have shared their gifts in the ministry of Erie Presbytery this past year. To our committees, their chairs, our lay representatives and ministry personnel, our congregations and pastoral charges, and to our ministry partners, who give generously of themselves in this work that we share of being the Body of Christ, to you my thanks.

Pastoral Relations (Chair, Jennifer Canning)

While small in numbers the Pastoral Relations Committee of Erie Presbytery is mighty, working diligently and prayerfully to assist faith communities with their JNAC reports and connect communities and ministry personnel

Human Resources (Chair, Adrienne Robertson)

This team fielded nominations and supported the work of the standing committees of presbytery.

Administration/Finance (Chairs, Harold Wall & Norma Cronkwright)

Included in the Admin commission is the treasurer and property chairperson. Other members include: Remits/Proposals, Records and Archives. The chair of our commission is responsible to support and oversee those members as well as arranging for churches to host plenary meetings this past year.

Erie Presbytery was pleased to offer financial support to Matthew Lindsay toward his trip to Leipzig, Germany as an attendee to the International Youth Gathering and then as a Steward to the 26th General Council Meeting of the World Communion of Reformed Churches in June/July. Matthew was one of seventy stewards chosen from around the world. We also learned from Jennifer Canning who shared of her trip to Israel/Palestine.

Property (Chair, Ross Gowan)

During the past year the Property Committee has overseen the sale of 3 church properties: Balfour Street and Oakland church sanctuaries and the Cayuga Pastoral Charge manse. We have also approved the severance and sale of Wilsonville church and Oneida manse properties which are in process. We have also approved and moved forward to Hamilton Conference grant applications for church

modernization or technology enhancement by Springvale, Mount Zion, Oneida, Garnet, and St. George congregations, as well as loan applications by Oneida, and St. George Pastoral Charges.

Pastoral Oversight (Chair, Barrie Bain)

Due to limited membership on this committee and changing health scenarios for our team members, the triennial visits for the pastoral charges with newer ministerial leadership has lessened.. The past couple of years have required considerable time and energy to assist congregations working towards church partnerships and amalgamations.

Education & Students (Chair, Jayne Carmen)

Erie Presbytery is pleased that OM Candidate, Robert Lawson, will be ordained at the Hamilton Conference meeting in May. At the present time there are three other OM candidates and one DLM applicant. Two Inquirers are progressing through their discernment. Erie has seven Licensed Lay Worship Leaders, and we hosted our first LLWL educational/networking session at Five Oaks last Fall. Information will be forwarded to other Hamilton Conference Presbyteries who may wish to register their LLWL's for this workshop this year.

Mission & Outreach/Life & Public Witness (Chair, Barbara Fullerton)

This group made us aware of presentations and resources of interest available to congregations. They helped us to discover what it means to be the church in the world in hands on, tangible ways.

Faith Formation: (Chair, Sheena Marini)

This group provided information regarding faith formation opportunities for people of all ages.

Mission & Development of Erie Presbytery (Chair, Randy Mackenzie)

Mission and Development Council of Erie Presbytery is an incorporated Body acting in the Province of Ontario in the region of Erie Presbytery of the United Church of Canada. It currently holds investments and cash of approximately \$450,000. The M&D Mandate includes, but is not exclusive to, promoting the welfare of the Churches and Missions of the United Church of Canada; to provide financial assistance where necessary to establish new congregations, support projects designated as Mission Projects and approved by Erie Presbytery, and to receive, hold, invest and use such monies received from contributions, bequests and various prescribed funds for the forgoing purposes.

Grand River Bookstore

We appreciated the book displays that are thoughtfully put together and the wonderful book reviews at each of our plenary meetings.

Five Oaks:

Representatives from Five Oaks continued to bring us good news at our plenary meetings. Their new vision as a multi-faith spiritual resource center for all is a gift. The Acorn Restaurant is a popular lunch spot offering delicious local cuisine.

Nations Uniting:

Vicky Aldersley, on behalf of Nations Uniting, invites us to come meet, learn from, listen to, and build community with our indigenous sisters and brothers by participating in a variety of workshops, learning circles, and fellowship opportunities.

Our Persistent Friends:

Our gratitude to Peter Hartmans and Diane Matheson-Jimenez for kept us connected to the work of the wider church. Their wisdom has helped us navigate the processes of transition.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Cathy Dilts

Chair, Erie Presbytery 2017-18