

Presbytery Prattle

Reporting on the Yellowhead Presbytery meeting of

February 7 & 8, 2007 at Slave Lake Pastoral Charge/Parish

Worship: Rev. Wil Porat, ministry personnel at Slave Lake, led our opening worship service.

Welcome: After worship we were welcomed to St. Peter's Ecumenical in Slave Lake by **Janice Nowochin**, co-chair of the Church Council. She shared with us some of the exciting things that have been happening recently, including a proposed addition to their church!

Aboriginal Guests: A number of Aboriginal guests took time from other meetings in Slave Lake to visit us and share their experiences and perspectives on residential schools. **Lena Giroux, Hilda Hedin, Jean Potskin** and **Mary Brown** told stories of direct and indirect experiences of residential schools and the organized way in which the First Nations were stripped of their language and culture. They also shared stories of hope and stressed the importance of the church joining in the healing circles that are taking place across the country.

God Spots: Throughout the two days of presbytery, chair **Rev. Lilley Glebe** shared devotionals from the United Church's new lenten devotional book, based on the United Church's Statement of Faith, A Song of Faith. The book is available to order from Revelations.

Regional Resource Personnel Report: Greeting from the Conference were brought to us from **Pat Bourque**. She highlighted the accomplishment of 30 years of shared ministry (Anglican, Lutheran, United and others!) at Slave Lake. Connecting to our experience listening to residential schools stories, Pat recommended a new resource on racism called, From Chains to Freedom available from the United Church (cost-free!) Pat has lots of information on climate change and environmental networks and is willing to share if you email her at pbourque@anwconf.com. The big news lately is the Emerging Spirit workshop to be held at Kirk United Church on March 2 & 3.

Conference will subsidize churches with budgets under \$75,000 to send three people to go (contact Lynn Maki). Register as soon as possible!

Northern Regional Event: April 20 & 21 in Lamont. Speaker Gil Rendle from the Alban Institute in Washington, DC. Register now!

Lamont Health Care Centre Report: Rev. Ken DeMan is in transitional interim ministry at Lamont United Church and the part time chaplain at the Lamont Health Care Centre. He gave a report on the Health Care Centre. There are 14 acute care beds that are full 90% of the time and 101 continuing care beds which are full 110% of the time! (The continuing care patients use the acute care beds the 10% of the time they are empty) There is a continuing high degree of satisfaction from patients there. Funding and staffing continue to be major issues. Ken asked for prayers for the Lamont Health Care Centre and extended an open invitation to visit whenever you might be in Lamont.

New Possibilities: Edmonton presbytery has initiated a major research project called, New Possibilities. **Rev. Britt Jesson** is on the steering committee and shared some interesting statistics on the capital region. By 2030 the Edmonton and area population is projected to grow by 25%. Yet the churches in Edmonton and area are not growing. This has raised some questions: who are we as a United Church in the midst of this growth? What has God called us to do? How do we define success? After the research portion of the project there will be cluster meetings with the involved churches.

Beaumont United Church: Britt also shared with presbytery that Beaumont United Church has a new worship space being developed next to their storefront office. Congratulations!

Finance & Property and Stewardship: The division of Finance & Property and the division of Stewardship met together and shared the good news that Mission and Service Fund givings exceeded the goals for 2006! Thank you everyone! **Leslie Penny** also gave us a glimpse of the conversation that took place around stewardship and pastoral care. These two areas aren't often connected theoretically but they are deeply linked at the practical level. Also look out for the Church Modernization matching grants (\$5000) that are available to church with under \$200,000 budget!

Treasurer's Report: Our easygoing treasurer **Erin White** reported the "bad news" that we budgeted for a deficit in 2006 and instead got a surplus! This was due to \$10,000 fewer expenses than were budgeted. If only our local churches could have the same "problem."

Education and Students: A quick update on the students in Yellowhead presbytery was given by **Rev. Liz Richards**. The big news is that **Leila Curry** has finished her course work and will be commissioned as a Diaconal Minister this summer at the Celebration of Ministries service. Congratulations Leila!

Pastoral Relations: Sturgeon Valley pastoral charge (Gibbons and Coronado) is headed for a change in pastoral relations as **Rev. Nicole Imgrund** takes on a more challenging position as full time caregiver for her twins. On a more serious note, **Rev. Evelyn Rigby** from Woodland pastoral charge has had to take a leave for medical reasons. Keep well, Evelyn. We also heard that **Rev. Bob Harper** has had an accident and needs our prayers. Derick **DeLuca** was not considered to be settled to Telfordville pastoral charge, since he was only there for a brief amount of time. Telfordville is looking for another minister, as is Onoway pastoral charge, since **Rev. Liz Richard's** work is done there. We were informed that ministers now need a Level 2 Police Record Check as their security check. Ministry and Personnel committees should be informed of that, as well as the new Designated Lay Ministry guidelines. Contact **Rev. Earl Raeburn**, from Conference Office, if you need more info.

Worship – Day 2: **Rev. Lilley Glebe** led us in worship on the theme of Sharing our Abundance.

Communication: Reporting was shared by **Doreen McCallum** and **Rev. Darren Wooff**, the only members of Communication present that day. A book of information about presbytery (based on St. Paul's presbytery's book) will be compiled and given to new presbytery members to get them up to speed. **Rev. Wil Porat** was presented with a Yellowhead presbytery mug, as a gift to our gracious host!

Pastoral Oversight: We were reminded by **Rev. Wayne Shortt** that two copies of pastoral charges' annual reports need to go to Pastoral Oversight. A Conference wide consultation on Pastoral Oversight is happening, resulting in improvements in the presbytery visitation system.

Church in the World: With a name like Church in the World you would expect that there's a lot to be covered by this division! **Rev.**

Bruce Jackson led us through some of the issues discussed including: the environment, the United Church report on Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire and the 20th anniversary of the apology to the Aboriginal peoples. **Rev. Cecile Fausak** helped the congregations of the presbytery remember what we have done to mark the anniversary of the apology and deepen our connections with Aboriginal peoples.

Evangelism and Discipleship: **Rev. Darren Wooff** gave a brief account of his time on the national Evangelism and Discipleship Advisory Group. Presbytery will take some time in May to share the good news stories of our congregations.

Nominations: In case you thought presbytery has it so easy with a surplus budget, let me tell you that **Rev. Lilley Glebe's** nomination report wasn't nearly so optimistic. So far we have no one willing to take on three of the most important roles in presbytery: Chairperson, and two vacancies in Pastoral Relations. Presbytery needs some people to step up by the next meeting in May.

Announcement: First United Church in Fort Saskatchewan is celebrating their 125th anniversary on June 9 and 10. Contact **Jackie St. Goddard** for details.

Christians Development: **Rev. Sharon Foster** reported for the division. Lots of events are upcoming including an event for Sunday school teachers and youth group leaders on September 21 & 22 in Edmonton and a Junior High Rally in Stettler on March 9 & 10. We were reminded that all women are invited to enjoy presbyterial meetings and retreats, even if they are not UCW members!

Camping: We ended our meeting with a lively discussion about church camping. **Gregory Scheidemann**, the energetic new chair of Surprise Lake camp led the way with proposing a new sense of ownership by the congregations of our two camps. We talked about having ministers visit the camps during the summer, of congregations adopting camp buildings and of adult programming at camps. There was more enthusiasm than time, so discussion was postponed definitely until the meeting on May 17 in Beaumont.