

Yellowknife United Church Newsletter

Fall 2017

Anticipating the Promised Land

The results are in... Hopefully you will recall that the Official Board of Yellowknife United Church has been engaged in the study and voting process on a number of remits that have been before the church since the 2015 General Council in Corner Brook, Newfoundland. Votes for all but one of the remits to be voted on by pastoral charges were due by June 30 last summer, and in the summer we heard from the General Secretary, Nora Sanders that all four of those remits were approved by a substantial majority of both presbyteries and pastoral charges. The votes still need to be ratified at the next meeting of General Council (GC43) in Oshawa, Ontario, but in the meantime and in anticipation of that event, things are moving forward to implement the decisions that are implied by these developments. A Remit Implementation Group was created at the General Council level to put forward an implementation date for the date of moving to the new structure that results from the acceptance of these remits. And so, the church structure as we know it, will cease to exist on December 31, 2018. The calendar year 2019 will see a new three council model of governance. Presbyteries and conferences will cease to exist. The new middle council will be known as a Region. The size, shape and makeup of the Regions will be recommended by a Boundaries Commission, which has already begun its work. We have a somewhat local representative on the Boundaries Commission in the person of Gord Waldie – the minister at St. Paul's United Church in Grande Prairie, Alberta.

I am a member of several wider church committees and communities and already the talk in these different groups is about life as a church in the new structure. For example, this week I met by telephone conference call with the other members of the Business and Technology Committee that is in the initial stages of planning for the business that will take place at the final meeting of Alberta and Northwest Conference in Sherwood Park in early May. We looked at an agenda from a previous meeting of Conference and already we can see so many changes to the wording and the flow of the meeting because of the change in governance. The conversations are a mixture of grief, wonder and excitement, but I would say that currently the excitement is a little more subdued than the grief and wonder.

We all know that this move will come not as something shiny and new, but as something of a practical choice in the face of reduced human and financial resources, and that it comes with a substantial reduction in the amount of money available to do the work of the church. So the response is subdued.

It also means substantial changes in the way we do things. I chair a conference committee that now meets by phone or video conference for four out of five of its yearly meetings. It is both a blessing and a challenge. I don't miss the travel to and from the meetings, and I can commit a few hours instead of a whole day or two and still get the work done, but the work is made more difficult by the fact that we have to work harder at building community when we can only see two dimensional images of each other, or hear voices over the telephone.

Continuing Education, which is so important in allowing us as ministers to engage in life long learning is now in the same sphere. I can and have attended webinars in the comfort of my home (where the internet connection is just a bit better than my office) and because it takes only an hour or two out of my day I can attend these opportunities more often. And the opportunities are also greatly increased. It takes far less planning to put on a two-hour webinar than it does to sponsor a three-day residential course.

I mention all of this because it points to something of what the future holds for church and church people. It's a sign of the times – with greater emphasis on the use of technology as a cost reduction tool, but also as an accessible medium on a scale that was previously not possible.

The church has always been caught in the tension between being in the culture of the time at the same as being at a critical distance from the dominant culture.

As I pondered a biblical and/or theological image of this time, I was drawn to consider the story of the Hebrew people and their long journey in and through the wilderness before they were able to move into a so called "promised land". As we heard a few weeks ago in worship, the entry into this land is much more complicated than it might have appeared a few years ago, as we walk a journey toward reconciliation and think deeply about our occupation on the land around us here. That situation and the situation we encounter as we consider our own crossing the boundary into a new land of Regions and communities of faith and electronic meetings and fewer face to face gatherings is not necessarily a land of "promise" but it is a promised land.

The challenge of course is to remember and reflect on the call to be faithful, to live in and against the dominant culture, to discern the call of God and work with our feet and eyes planted on the way of God, in the midst of all this change.

Peter Chynoweth

United Church Women's Christmas Tea and Sale

The UCW Christmas Tea and Sale will be held on Saturday, November 25, in the auditorium of Northern United Place from 2-4pm. This is always a popular event, and requires many people to make it happen. We need helpers for set-up on Saturday morning starting at 10am and people to help with the bake table and in the kitchen from 1:30-4:30pm. Please let Jeannette Hall (873-3942), Sharon Chynoweth (873-3089) or Marg Henderson (873-4428) know if you are able to help.

Two of our most sought after items at the sale are our antipasto and pepper jelly. They are both ready and waiting for the day of the sale. Thanks to everyone who came out to help in the preparation.

We are looking for donations of baked goods and Christmas crafts, decorations, and dishes. These can be dropped off at the church between 10am and noon on the day of the sale.

Christmas Bazaar – Saturday December 2nd

The Stewardship Committee will be hosting a Christmas Bazaar on December 2 from 10am-3pm in the auditorium. We have 30 tables booked for the sale offering a wide variety of items just in time for Christmas.

Rental Policy

The revisions to the rental policy and rental agreements for those who use rooms booked by the church, have been made and implemented.

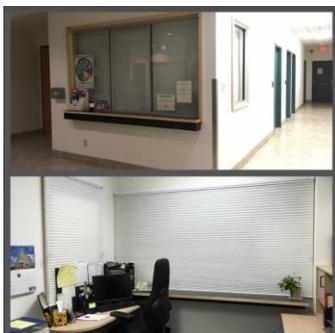
Coldest Night of the Year

The fundraising walk for the Salvation Army and the work it does for the homeless population in Yellowknife will be on Saturday, February 24th, 2018. Think about supporting this important cause by joining the church team, or by donating. More info will be available closer to the date.

Canadian Diabetes Association Clothesline

You may have noticed the big red bins for the Clothesline at the Fieldhouse, Trevor's Independent, and the Co-op. The CDA uses these bins to help fund a research lab, D-Camp for kids with Type 1 diabetes, and ultimately finding a cure for diabetes. These bins are used mainly for the collection of clothing items, bedding, etc.

Yellowknife United Church is responsible for looking after the collection of items and transporting them to a storage trailer. Since undertaking the project in February 2016, the church has received over \$10,000 in revenue. Many thanks to our volunteers: Ken and Jeannette Hall, Barb and Emery Paquin, Norma and David Jarvis, Laurie and Bill Gault, Karen and Gordon Hamre, Peter and Sharon Chynoweth, Sophie Call and Kelly Hessian, Betty and Rod Parrell, Audrey and Gary MacDougall, Sean and Janice Daly, Terrilyn Hayden and David Janes, Marg and Lloyd Henderson, Tanner Dumont, Peter Workman, Karen Wilford, and Stuart Oldham. The volume of items received is increasing and we need more people to help with this project. A wide variety of options for dividing the work are possible and lack of a truck is no deterrent. For more information please contact either Terrilyn Hayden at 765-0514 or Marg Henderson at 873-4428.



New Yellowknife United Church Office

Yellowknife United Church Events



Charlotte Cliffe-Phillips and Deyzha Guray Valdriz Baptisms at Yellowknife United Church



United Church Women

Annual Christmas Tea & Sale

(No admission charge for the sale!)

When: Saturday, November 25, 2017

Where: Northern United Place Auditorium

Time: 2 pm to 4 pm

Cost for Tea: \$5 / adult
\$2 / children under five



Shop for some baking, antipasto, pepper jelly, and other Christmas items! Enjoy our delicious tea with sandwiches and goodies.



Christmas Bazaar!



Northern United Place



December 2

10AM to 3 PM



Sunday School

The Sunday School program is off to a great start again this year. With three dedicated teachers, children are in good hands every Sunday morning upstairs at Northern United Place while parents and caregivers worship together downstairs. Sandy Little, Joanna Wilson and Kathryn Walker teach one month at a time, and are joined once a month by Elizabeth Brace for a joyful Music Sunday filled with instruments and song. Sunday school lessons can be based on the Whole People of God curriculum, sometimes follow the seasons of the church, or can simply be inspired by daily events in the world around us. It can be challenging to create lessons that reach the range of ages present on any given Sunday -- typically from 3 to 12 years of age -- so parents of very young kids are encouraged to stay with their children until they have settled into this environment. We also count on the lovely spirit of collaboration that exists in class as the older kids help with and watch out for the younger ones. It is a beautiful expression of what it means to be the Family of God.

Every year, a happy tradition at our church is to have the children and their teachers bless the congregation with a fun and touching Christmas pageant, typically in mid-December. You won't want to miss it again this year!

If working with kids interests you, if you value the passing on of principles of good and compassionate living to the next generation, and you would like to try your hand at teaching or assisting in Sunday School, please contact the Sunday School Superintendent, Sophie Call, at call_sophie@hotmail.com.



Book Club

After a break for the summer, the church Book Club is back up and running. We meet the first Sunday of each month after church (about 12:30) at Javaroma with a mix of church and non-church attendees to discuss books with a religious or spiritual theme. Book Club is organized by the church's Christian Development Committee.

We will be reading *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elizabeth Gilbert for our December 3rd meeting. In her early thirties, Elizabeth Gilbert had everything a modern American woman was supposed to want—husband, country home, successful career—but instead of feeling happy and fulfilled, she was consumed by panic and confusion. This book is the story of how she left behind all these outward marks of success, and set out to explore three different aspects of her nature, against the backdrop of three different cultures: pleasure in Italy, devotion in India, and on the Indonesian island of Bali, a balance between worldly enjoyment and divine transcendence.

All are welcome to attend Book Club – you can attend just once or attend every month, our membership is flexible. For more information, contact Barb Paquin at 873-4314.



At our June meeting, the Book Club had the pleasure of meeting with author Tracey Lindberg (top left) at the Fat Fox Cafe to talk about her novel *Birdie*.

Birth of a Family Film Night

As the third event in our reconciliation efforts, the church is working in partnership with the Native Women's Association, the Law Society of the Northwest Territories and the Canadian Bar Association (NWT Branch) to bring members of the community of Yellowknife together to view the film Birth of a Family and have a discussion on the Sixties Scoop and the current child welfare system.

Birth of a Family is the touching story of four Dene siblings from northern Saskatchewan who were removed from their mother, a former residential school student, as young children and put into separate foster homes. They grew up not knowing each other and losing touch with their birth family and culture. Through the efforts of the eldest sibling, Betty Ann Adam who is a reporter in Saskatoon, the four met for a week in Banff, Alberta and tried to re-establish themselves as a family. The National Film Board filmed the family discussing what they know of their history and mother, visiting an Indigenous Cultural Centre and tourist attractions in Banff, cooking, celebrating and having difficult conversations.

After the screening, a panel discussion will be held to address questions such as the role of residential schools in the Sixties Scoop, what has changed in the indigenous child welfare system since the 1960s, and how culture can be regained. Panelists will include a social worker, lawyer, cultural education specialist and Betty Ann Adam who will be flying in from Saskatoon for this event. Marie Wilson, former member of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and member of Yellowknife United Church, will moderate the panel.

This free public event will take place in the church auditorium on Thursday, November 23, at 6:30pm. Childcare will be provided. For more information contact Karen Wilford at 873-3004.

Warm Feet for the Street

We continue to be involved with the Christmas sock program. Every year we donate 50 filled socks to the men at the Salvation Army shelter, which are very appreciated. Look for the insert in your Sunday bulletin for how you can be involved in this project.

The youth are hosting on a bake sale to raise money for the Christmas sock program and need baked goodies. The sale will be after church on an upcoming Sunday. Please bring your baked donations to church that day and pass them along to Kathryn Walker.



Abdi

The Outreach Committee celebrated the end of Abdi's first year in Yellowknife with a potluck feast at NUP in September, to which the congregation and the Somali Community were invited. Abdi continues to work as a dishwasher at the Fat Fox, where his cheerfulness and hard work is appreciated. He is living in an apartment at NUP and has developed many friendships in the Somali community. We continue to have a relationship with Abdi, though the United Church is no longer financially responsible for him.

Some members of the Outreach Committee, and other church members, are also members of a group of five working to bring two Eritrean youth from a refugee camp in Egypt. Though this is not officially an action of the Outreach Committee it does mirror the work we have done to bring Abdi to Canada and to support him through his first year, and may be something other United Church congregation members are interested in getting involved in in the future. If others are interested they can contact Joanna Wilson at Jowilsonca@yahoo.ca

