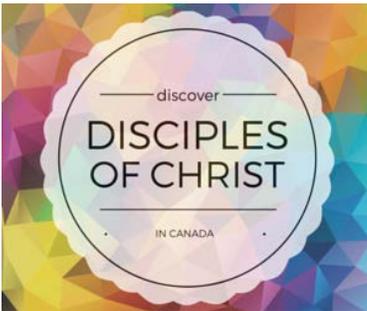


The Canadian Disciple



A Publication of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada

Published : June 23, 2016 (Guelph, Ontario)



June Prayer Partners

June 19 - Guelph Christian Church, Guelph, ON

Guelph Christian Church is a small congregation who meets in a retirement home in Guelph, Ontario. They sold their building a number of years ago and began the new work, Sugarbush Christian Church. Please pray for them as they continue to minister at the Elliot Retirement Home.

June 26 -

Eglise Evangelique Baptiste Manahaim, Laval, PQ

(Pastor Daniel Francois)

Eglise Evangelique is one of 5 congregations in the greater Montreal area. They are entering their anniversary week (end of June). Please keep these dynamic congregations in your prayers as they reach out in a unique and vibrant context

Upcoming Events

All Canada Convention

August 11-14, Milton, NS

Youth Encounter

August 8-14, JCP/Milton, NS

A Word in the Wake of Tragedy

I have been struggling to write something in the aftermath of the horrific events of Orlando. I have been unable to find the words to express both my grief and sympathy and anger. A friend said the other day, "I believe God is weeping" yet no one is saying this. I believe she is right. Whenever any act of violence, hate, and fear is perpetrated...God's heart is the first to break. At the heart of this and any other atrocity is the undeniable fact that this was an act of violence against human beings. We are called, as those who call Jesus Lord of our lives, to love each other without question and with the unconditional love of the Creator of the Universe. God's dream is for our brokenness to end, to work together for harmony and unity, not only in the faith, but across the planet. Where there is hurt, we are to bring healing. Where there is injustice, we are to seek out justice. Where there is violence, we are to be peace-makers. Friends, regardless how you feel about this act of violence, I hope that you are in prayer for the victims' families, for the country in which too many of these mass shootings happen, for our whole world which increasingly is more divided than united.

Violence is not the last word. We serve a risen Saviour, a God of Love. We are a movement for wholeness and have within us a message of hope for an aching world. We are made in the image of love. Creation was born out of an act of uncompromising compassion, limitless passion, amazing grace, and unfettered love. It's time we shook off the chains of division and separation that we have forged for ourselves and claimed our birthright...lived it not with only our words and worship but with our very lives, our presence, our whole selves. There is no more waiting. No more fear. No more excuses. It's late in the day, well past time. We are the body of Christ, incarnate love...and creation aches to experience the tender touch of compassion!

A letter penned by the College of Regional Ministers was issued this week in response to the tragedy. I encourage you to take some time to look it over, print a copy for your congregation or ministry. Join with the Disciples of Christ across Canada and the US as we pray for an end to violence. You can find a copy of the letter here: <http://disciples.org/general/letter-church-re-violence/> .

Yours in Christ, Jen

News from the West

I spent a few days this past week meeting, worshiping, listening to the stories and experiences of some of our Western friends and colleagues. I had the great pleasure of connecting with both Ron and Stuart Fraser while at ABC. It was wonderful to catch up with what has been happening with them and to listen to their visions and dreams for our shared future. I also had the privilege of spending a little bit of time with Rev Rachel Frey, President of the Western Area Fellowship, and Chaplain in a prominent Edmonton long-term care facility. Rachel shared with me her love of the ministry she undertakes as well as some of the challenges of the Western Area. With few congregations and tremendously busy leaders, the West struggles on the margins of our denomination. Please pray that we might find ways of creating real supports and connections to build up the body of Christ in the West. There are great things happening there! And a unique need for the gospel in these growing cities.

Lest I forget, Q Community (Calgary) pastored by Jennifer Watts and West Locke Christian Church are also part of the Western Fellowship, but I was unable to connect with them this time around. Winnipeg is also part of the Western Area, and although I did not visit there this time around, I will be there in mid-July to meet with Broadway Disciples United Church as they welcome the Bishop from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. It is anticipated that BDUC's next pastor will come from the Philippines through this unique ecumenical partnership of United Church Philippines-United Church Canada- Disciples of Christ.

Alberta Bible College It was my distinct pleasure to spend some time with Alberta Bible College's new President, Rev Dr Stanley Helton. Stanley has served in all three streams of the Stone-Campbell movement (Disciples, Independents, and Acapella) both here in Canada and the United States. He brings a wealth of experience both congregational and academic to the position at ABC and has big dreams to continue the proud heritage of the 80+ year old institution.

While there, I had the opportunity to have a tour of the facility which boasts a fully equipped electronic classroom, gym, great room (where a number of local congregations worship at different times in the week), archives, social rooms, a strong faculty, and beautiful grounds. Over this past year ABC was



home to approximately 75 students, but continues to provide ongoing education over the summer months through a unique PACE program which allows learners to complete their theological education at their own pace. You can learn more about ABC by visiting their website www.abccampus.ca.

McKernan Christian Church (DoC) Three hundred kilometers north of Calgary lies the city of Edmonton, home of McKernan Christian Church. Situated in a quiet residential area, McKernan is home to a great community of faithful followers who come from all over the city. Worship is a blend of contemporary and traditional elements, and the warm sanctuary is intimate and welcoming. After worship we gathered in the downstairs area for some homemade cookies (courtesy of Velma!) and other refreshments and had a chance to chat and get to know some of the people. At our table alone were folks who spoke French, Dutch, and German...and even a friendly face from Nova Scotia was present in the crowd. The McKernan community is dedicated to reaching out into the local area through clothing drives, baby items, food, among other things. They are also helping demolish an outdoor ice rink across the road in the community space and will help to rebuild after the demolition. Pastor Ed Stover and his wife, Duwan, have a deep love for this community and have faithfully served here for 15 years. There are times when life is not easy (as in every congregation), but there is energy and excitement here, Pastor Ed says, as McKernan

discerns how it will follow God's call to be a people with a heart for mission. Please pray for the McKernan congregation...indeed all of our Western brothers and sisters, as there is often a feeling of isolation and disconnect from the rest of Disciples. As we move forward in Canada, let's be intentional about strengthening the ties that bind us together as one body!



Campbell Stone United Church Pastor Danah Cox is a lively and passionate leader who is dedicated to bringing the gospel to life in new and relevant ways. If the few folks I met from Campbell Stone (Cindy, Eleanor, and Jennifer) are any indication of what the rest of the congregation is like, any visitors would be welcomed with a big hug, enthusiastic smiles, and an instant warmth that speaks loudly of a ministry of radical hospitality! Nestled in the south-west end of Calgary, Campbell Stone partners with the St Andrews Centre to bring unique and profound spiritual experiences to a Disciples-United Church (and beyond) constituency. Using his gifts as a former restaurateur and artist, Danah has created a deeply reflective spiritual practice in a multi-part program called Palates. Participants engage over a

series of weeks on a variety of topics, beginning always with a shared meal (cooked by Danah himself), discussion, and reflection. As the weeks go by, Danah and others build on participants verbal and pictorial reflections on the topic, producing first a piece of artwork which incorporates themes, images, and learnings from the group. With further engagement and discussion, the composition takes shape in vivid colours and metaphors, prompting deeper reflection and understanding. Finally, the finished piece is turned into a colouring page for folks to use in their own practice. Although this quick description does not do Palates justice, it is an incredible journey of self-discovery and deep spirituality. Danah will be leading a workshop in Nova Scotia this August at our All Canada Convention. Pray for the Campbell-Stone community as they find their way as only one of two joint United-Disciples congregations in Canada. Many blessings on their ministry and ecumenical witness in Calgary!



Disciples of Christ-Roman Catholic Dialogue

Part of my recent travels to Alberta included taking part in some of the ancillary meetings of the Disciples-Roman Catholic Dialogue. This group has been meeting since 1977 at the instigation of the Vatican to look for ways of developing deeper visible unity in the church universal. In his remarks at one evening event, Monsignor Juan Usma Gómez (Vatican) stated, "we [the Catholic and Protestant

churches] have been separated for 300 years. We do not know each other. It will take time to get to know each other again. We are not here to negotiate our faith but to begin to restore the unity of Christ's Church that we have broken."

The following is an excerpt from the Dialogue's news release which highlights some of the

important ecumenical work being done in this area of the vineyard:

“The Fourth Session of the Fifth Phase of the Disciples of Christ-Roman Catholic International Commission for Dialogue took place in Calgary, AB, Canada, from June 17-22, 2016. The general theme for the present phase of dialogue is “Christians Formed and Transformed by the Eucharist.” After an introductory meeting (Nashville, January 2014); the Commission approached the topics related to what it means to be “Formed by the Eucharist” discussing “The Structure of Liturgies among Catholics and Disciples” (Rome, June 2014) and “The Significance of Eucharistic Catechesis – ‘Knowing by Doing’ ” (Bethany, WV, June 2015). The 2016 session approached topics related to “Christians Being Transformed by the Eucharist,” focusing on the general theme “The Eucharist and Relationships within the Church.” The overall goal of the dialogue, which started in 1977, is the full visible unity between the two communions.

According to the agreed proposal, the Commission will continue to explore the topic “Transformed by the Eucharist” by addressing the theme “Living the Sacraments” at its next meeting (Puerto Rico, 2017). Each day of the dialogue began and concluded with prayer together led alternately by Disciples and Catholics.

The meeting in Calgary provided the Commission with the opportunity to make various different local contacts. The Ecumenical Officers of the Archdiocese of Edmonton and of the Diocese of Calgary, respectively Mr. Julien Hammond and Deacon Adrian Martens, co-hosted a meeting with the parishioners of St Mary’s Cathedral after the Sunday Holy Mass presided by the Most Rev. David Ricken and attended by all the members of the Commission. Likewise, on Monday, June 21, after a Celebration of the Lord’s Supper by the Disciples that included the Rev. Dr. Jennifer Garbin, Regional Minister of the Disciples of Christ Canada, members of the Campbell-Stone United Church of Calgary heard some information about

the dialogue itself and had the opportunity to interact with the members of the dialogue. The Commission was greeted by the Most Rev. Frederick Henry, Catholic Bishop of Calgary at a meeting which included the staff of St. Mary’s University and Alberta Bible College. The Commission expressed a word of thanks and appreciation to the Sisters’ Community of the

Faithful Companions of Jesus for their support and hospitality during the meeting.

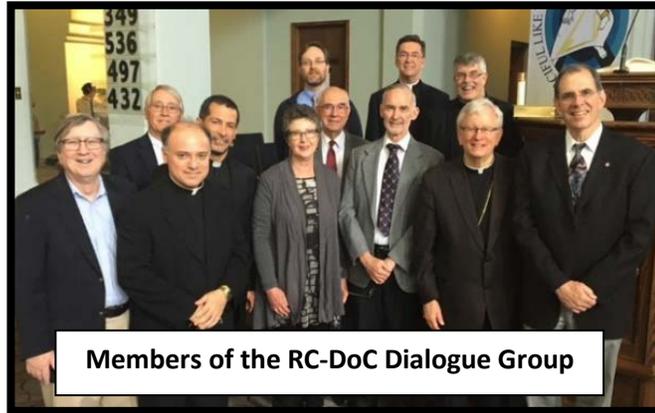
In reflecting on this meeting of the dialogue team, Bishop Ricken shared, “I am learning a great deal about dialogue, most of all that real dialogue involves a deep

listening to the other. It is in the deeper listening and in asking questions which are respectful and revelatory that real progress can be made in ecumenical conversation and in shared action. Our meeting and conversations with local communities of Disciples of Christ have been very helpful in seeing various expressions of Disciple life and mission.”

At the end of the meeting, the Disciples’ Co-Chair, Dr. Williams affirmed, “Once again, the dialogue of this Disciples-Catholic International Commission has led to a deeper understanding of each other’s traditions and a fuller appreciation of the place of the Eucharist in both of our churches. From this session our hope for the renewal and greater unity of the one church is increased.”

(the full press release and documents related to the Dialogue can be found at:

<http://councilonchristianunity.org/2016/06/23/catholics-and-disciples-commission-for-dialogue/>)



Congratulations to all of our graduates across the country! May God bless you richly in you future endeavours!

A Call for Stories, Updates, & Connections

One of the great legacies handed down over generations of Canadian Disciples is our eagerness to share stories from our corners of the vineyard. *The Canadian Disciple* from its inception in the early-mid 1900s onward featured inspirational moments, calls for prayer and support, and special events that helped us connect to one another coast to

coast to coast. As we journey into God's future, it will be vitally important that we share these stories once again. Please send your anecdotes, photos, important events, challenges, and updates from your ministry to Jen at rm@canadadisciples.org to be included in future editions of *The Canadian Disciple*. <>

Ontario Celebrates Together: Fellowship Sunday

Beautiful sunny weather welcomed dozens of people to a weekend of family camp organized by the OACC Camping Program committee. Campfires, Bible study, games, and good food, made for a great introduction for some of our younger Disciples to get a feel for what it might be like to come to camp when they are a little bit older. It also gave some of our parents and past-camp-age folks an opportunity to rest and enjoy this great facility one more time.

Closing out the week was a potluck lunch followed by a joint worship. People from across the province came to reconnect with each other and the campgrounds. Music was provided by the Winger praise band, the message was brought by RM Jen Garbin, and leadership at the table by Rev Justin Schwartz (Hillcrest). Thank you to all the organizers of this great event. It is good to come to

this sacred place where the breeze flows through the canopy of leaves, the warm sunshine, abundant nature, and faithful attendees...reminding us that God is ever-present and rejoices when we come together as one.



General Announcements & Invitations

- Notice: The Canadian Disciple will be published bi-weekly going forward. Next edition due out July 8.
- To receive the Canadian Disciple in your email, please send your request to rm@canadadisciples.org or sign-up on our website www.canadadisciples.org.
- Yearbooks are available to order. Please visit <http://disciples.org/yearbook/> to place your order.
- Please take a look at our website to see if your congregational information is up to date! If it is not, kindly send your edits to rm@canadadisciples.org.

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All Canada 2016 Mission Project

You can Help the Homeless!

by bringing items to the

ALL CANADA CONVENTION 2016

Liverpool, Nova Scotia
August 11-14, 2016

Towels, Sunscreen or
Gift cards for Sobeys or Superstore

Be Creative!

Give with all your ♥

If you can't make it to the Convention and would like to contribute to this mission project, please contact Debbie Weatherhead by email
dbweatherhead@gmail.com



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