

2022 Report on the Work of our Denominations
The Highlights of the Highlights
as gathered by Leslie Ross

Written reports on the work of our denominations are presented to congregational board and Parish Council meetings. These are then posted on the Denominational News page of the Parish's website (<https://norththompsonpc.ca/about-us/denominational-news/>). This report is taking the highlights or giving briefer descriptions of what is provided in those reports.

Our Representatives

The Rev. Bruce Chalmers is the clergy representative to all three denominations. For the Church of St Paul, the Rev. Keith Peterson is the lay representative to the Territory of the People; Glenn Andrews, BC Synod; and Leslie Stirling, the Pacific Mountain Regional Council. Leslie Ross is the lay representative from Trinity Shared Ministry to all three.

All Three Denominations

All three denominations have commented or taken action on many events, issues, and situations.

Prayers, pastoral letters, statements, and/or ways to support humanitarian relief were made for the following:

- the situation in Ukraine
- a world-wide petition for the ending of the Korean War
- the Buffalo grocery store and Uvalde school shootings
- the mass stabbings in James Smith Cree Nation and Weldon

Resources and public comments were made available for themed months and days, such as Asian Heritage Month, World Refugee Day, National Indigenous Day of Prayer, and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

The three denominations were signatories to letters and statements addressed to the federal government regarding how charities work with non-qualified donees and to ask for there to be a more just system for migrant workers in Canada.

Resources and/or video messages from the pastoral leaders were provided for Lent, Easter, the Season of Creation, and Advent/Christmas.

Along with the Presbyterian Church in Canada, our three denominations prepared Advent meditations involving the four leaders of the denominations having conversations on the Advent themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. They introduced the theme in a meditation on the Monday via YouTube, and on Thursdays two of them had further conversation via zoom with registrants being able to ask questions and make comments.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) held its 11th Assembly from August 31st to September 8th in Karlsruhe, Germany with the theme “Christ’s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity.” The Assembly is the highest governing body of the World Council of Churches and meets every eight years.

The WCC central committee serves as the main decision-making body of the WCC between assemblies. It meets every other year. The 150-member body is elected at the Assembly. The representatives from our denominations are

- Rt. Rev. Riscylla Shaw from the Anglican Church of Canada
- National Bishop Susan Johnson from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
- Rev. Dr. Hyuk Cho from The United Church of Canada

National Bishop Susan Johnson was also elected to the Executive Committee.

The Anglican Church of Canada

The Territory of the People is still accepting donations for the Lytton Fire Fund and the Nicola Valley Flood Fund.

The Most Rev. Lynne McNaughton, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon, appointed Bishop Jane Alexander to be the Assisting Bishop of the Territory of the People beginning February 1, 2022.

National Indigenous Archbishop Mark MacDonald resigned as of April 20, 2022. Pastoral letters concerning this resignation were shared via e-mail, at worship, and on the Parish’s website.

The Most Rev. Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, visited Canada from April 29th to May 3rd. The following is from a statement he made prior to his visit: “The visit will be an opportunity to listen, to lament and to pray for justice, healing and transformation in the relationship between the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island and the Arctic, and the See of Canterbury and the Church of England.” During his visit, he met with Anglican Indigenous people and Indigenous leaders in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan; Six Nations Reserve near Brantford, Ontario; and in Toronto, Ontario.

The Territory of the People Assembly was held at St. Paul’s Cathedral in Kamloops from May 27th to 29th. The theme, “Come and See!”, based on Isaiah 43: 19 grounded the work of the Assembly. The weekend was filled with worship, reports, community building, conversation, discussion, decisions, elections, challenges, and meals. Our Parish’s representatives were the Rev. Bruce Chalmers, the Rev. Keith Peterson from the Church of St Paul, and Leslie Ross from Trinity Shared Ministry. The Rev. Chalmers chaired the Resolutions Committee, and Leslie Ross served on it. For a more complete account of the Assembly, read the Denominational News Report for the June 21st Parish Council meeting.

Bishop Barbara Andrews was a witness to a part of Pope Francis’s visit to Canada.

Anglican bishops from around the world gathered for the 15th Lambeth Conference from July 26th to August 8th. With the theme of ‘God’s Church for God’s World – walking, listening and witnessing together,’ the conference explored what it means for the Anglican Communion to be responsive to the needs of a 21st Century world. Primate Linda Nicholls was chosen by her fellow primates in the Americas region to serve on the Anglican Communion’s Primates’ Standing Committee.

On August 18th, the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem released a statement condemning an Israeli raid on St. Andrew’s Anglican/Episcopal Church in Ramallah.

Prayers and reflections were offered by regional, national, and international bodies of the Anglican Communion upon the death of Queen Elizabeth II. The Anglican Church of Canada broadcast a national memorial service from St. James Anglican Cathedral in Toronto on September 20th, the day following her funeral.

Dennis Saddleman, a member of the Coldwater Indian Band, read his poem “Monster” at the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Ceremony in Ottawa on September 30, 2022.

Effective October 1st, the Rev. Louise Peters was appointed interim priest for the Three Rivers Ministry in Prince George.

The Rev. Dr. Kyle Norman began his position as Rector of St. Paul’s Cathedral, Kamloops and Dean of the Territory of the People on October 1st. His installation service was on Friday, October 21st.

The Primate Linda Nicholls published reflections for Emancipation Day and Remembrance Day.

The Rt. Rev. Christopher A. Harper, Diocesan Bishop of Saskatoon was named National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop and Presiding Elder of the Sacred Circle with pastoral oversight over all Indigenous Anglicans.

The Territory of the People will hold the election for a new Bishop from March 31 to April 2, 2023.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

The Southern Interior Region of the BC Synod produced a joint online worship service for Transfiguration Sunday. Both our congregations and the Rev. Bruce Chalmers participated in the service.

The BC Synod hosted a short Prayer Vigil for Peace for Ukraine and the World via zoom on Friday evenings throughout the spring and summer.

The BC Synod continued to hold online monthly meetings for lay leaders as well as the more regular online gatherings for rostered ministers.

The 2022 National Convention was held online from July 15th to 16th with the theme “Let There Be Greening”. This theme was based around Revelation 22: 1-2. In her report, the National Bishop apologized to the members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community for the ways that the church has not lived up to its commitments and to the ways it has treated this community in the past and even presently. She acknowledged there have been times members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community did not receive welcome, had been denied sacraments, vocation, marriage rights, and when proper gender identity had not been affirmed.

Lutherans Connect posted a series of on-line devotionals:

- for Lent and Holy Week with the theme “Tending the Vineyard”
- from July 22nd to August 29th with the theme “Wise Ones and Wisdom Seekers”
- for Advent with the theme “A Joyful Noise”

National Bishop Susan Johnson wrote a letter to the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, The Honourable Marc Miller, MP, encouraging resolution of the Stoney Knoll First Nation land claim.

In September, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada moved into its fourth year of the Living our Faith initiative. For the first three years, the themes were pray, read, and worship. The fourth year will focus on love. Over the course of the year, reflections will be shared via social media and ELCIC News.

The BC Synod Council began publishing a newsletter providing highlights of its meetings starting with its Fall 2022 meeting.

At the BC Synod lay leaders’ zoom gathering in December, a presentation was made about the Welcome Angels project which is a new initiative sponsored by ELCIC to help congregations connect with those planning to come to Canada or are newer to Canada. Information can be found at <https://welcomeangels.org/>.

Bishop Kathy Martin will be taking a sabbatical in early 2023.

Anglican and Evangelical Lutheran

The Assembly Planning Committee decided to postpone the joint Assembly of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada that was to be held in July.

Both Canadian Lutheran World Relief and the Primate’s World Development and Relief Fund were set up to receive donations in response to the flooding in Pakistan.

Information was shared about the newly launched website lifting up the work towards full communion between the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, The Anglican Church of Canada, and The Moravian Church. The link to the website is <https://www.anglicanlutheran.ca/partnerships/moravian-church/>.

The Primate and National Bishop released a letter to the churches about the United Nations World Interfaith Harmony Week held from February 1st to 7th; a message for Earth Day, which was held on April 22nd; a letter prior to World Food Day, which was held on October 16th; a statement for Transgender Day of Remembrance, which was held on November 20th; and a letter for National Housing Day, which was held on November 22nd.

The United Church of Canada

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council (PMRC) continued to hold monthly online Town Hall meetings.

The Anti-Racism Common Table of The United Church of Canada posted an open letter to the church about opposing symbols of hate in protests. Other leaders and groups within the church also made statements regarding the protests across Canada in February.

The United Church of Canada wrote two letters to the Honourable Melanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada. The letters urge Canada to work with like-minded countries to hold the government of Israel accountable for violations of international law and specifically to

- denounce the government of Israel's plan to forcibly expel the villagers of Masafer Yatta and press the government of Israel to rescind this decision; and
- denounce the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh and call for an immediate independent investigation into her killing that holds those responsible accountable.

Moderator Richard Bott broadcast a video message for Pentecost and published a reflection on the work and experiences of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis during the last year.

Leslie Ross attended the Financial Forum held by the PMRC via zoom prior to the Annual Meeting of the PMRC to present a financial update and provide information about the 2021 audited financial statements, investments, and property.

The Pacific Mountain Regional Council Annual Meeting was a hybrid meeting held from June 9th to 12th with representatives attending in person at the Prince George Conference and Civic Centre and as visitors on the land of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation and online using the Whova Platform and Zoom. The Rev. Bruce Chalmers and Leslie Ross (representing Trinity Shared Ministry) attended the PMRC meeting in person, with Leslie Stirling (representing Church of St Paul) attending remotely. The theme was "Rooted and Grounded in Love" from Ephesians 3: 14-21. Keynote speaker was Jeff Chu. Deborah Richards became President of the PMRC. To celebrate becoming an Affirming Region, an outdoor dinner barbeque was held with locals invited to the meal.

One of the five proposals presented came from the North Thompson Ecumenical Shared Ministry. Its title was "Recognizing Ecumenical Shared Ministry Specific Circumstances". Leslie Ross presented the proposal and responded to the questions asked for clarification. In it the NTESM was asking that the PMRC Ends Policy be revised to ensure the nature and needs of ecumenical shared ministries are included and supported. The need and support for this proposal

was affirmed by comments made publically and in private conversation including by those serving on the Executive. It passed and will become part of the work of the PMRC Executive.

For a more complete account of the General Meeting, read the Denominational News Report for the June 21st Parish Council meeting.

The United Church Women celebrated their 60th anniversary from July 11th to 15th in Membertou, Nova Scotia. The theme was “Continuing in Hope” based on Hebrews 6: 19.

The 44th General Council opened on February 14th. The theme was “Who do you say I am?” from Matthew 16: 15. It was held virtually with a number of sessions between then and when it closed on August 7, 2022. Leslie Ross participated in the opening worship. The United Church of Canada elected the Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Kwisa’lak, by acclamation as its 44th Moderator on July 23rd. She will be the church’s spiritual leader for the next three years. She was installed at the closing worship service of General Council 44 on August 7, 2022.

Two events hosted by the Black Clergy Network were held to mark Emancipation Day. On July 31st, a panel discussion was held with the theme “Emancipated, But Still Working for Freedom”. A worship service “Working Towards Freedom” was broadcast on Emancipation Day, August 1st.

Leslie Stirling and Leslie Ross attended the lunch and Service of Celebration for the Ministry of Zion Union United Church in Ashcroft on October 8th. This was the official closing of this congregation that was formed in 1925 by the joining of the Presbyterian (1892) and Methodist (1897) congregations.

The Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne, Kwisa’lak, visited United Church partners in the Philippines in mid-October. She was the preacher at the United Church of Christ in The Philippines’ Cosmopolitan Church on Sunday, October 23rd, which is Indigenous Peoples Sunday in the Philippines.

Through October and November, the United Church hosted a series of events for its 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism.

At the PMRC’s November 2nd Town Hall meeting, Jennifer Henry from the General Council Office shared the work the National Church is doing with regards to the Strategic Plan. After much reflection and discussions with the Indigenous Church, they are using the term “call” rather than “mission” as call and vision statements are being developed.