

HISTORY, COMMITTEE ON

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consent Recommendation

That Recommendation Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 (identified by the ►) be adopted by consent.

► Recommendation No. 1

That the congregations be encouraged to celebrate Heritage Sunday on February 19, 2017, or on another Sunday, as a means of celebrating the unique faith journey and heritage we enjoy as Presbyterians. (see p. 10.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 2

That the Assembly recognize the 2016 winners of the history prizes:

- Academic: *Still Voices – Still Heard* launched a biographical history on October 31, 2015, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Presbyterian College, Montreal,
- Memoir: *Sunsets and Gentle Breezes* is a memoir of life as I found it by Margaret Jean Taylor.
- Congregational: *Congregational History* for Haney Church, Maple Ridge, British Columbia.
(see p. 10.1.2)

► Recommendation No. 3

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church actively promote the “Solus Christus” event to take place in Winnipeg, Manitoba on October 29, 2016, and encourage their members to either attend this event or to join via internet. (see p. 10.1.3)

► Recommendation No. 4

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church promote the “Soli Deo Gloria” event in celebration of the 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation to take place at Knox College in Toronto on Saturday, October 28, 2017, and encourage their members to attend. (see p. 10.1.3)

► Recommendation No. 5

That the congregations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada be encouraged to contribute to the National Presbyterian Museum and that they be assessed \$50 by their respective presbyteries to this end. (see p. 10.1.4)

► Recommendation No. 6

That with thanks to God and in celebration of the clergy and church workers who have retired in 2015, the 2016 General Assembly, on behalf of our entire denomination, includes a moment of recognition for these faithful representatives of Jesus Christ and diligent servants of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. (see p. 10.1.4)

REPORT

To the Venerable, the 142nd General Assembly:

The Committee on History firmly believes in the importance of preserving Presbyterian history right across the country. We know, as well, that preservation of church records is a legal requirement of our denomination. Our history is alive in the buildings in which we worship, in the beauty of our stained glass windows, in our books, records and other artifacts. Preserving them is another way in which we Presbyterians can be good stewards, standing behind our faith and ready to pass all of these things on to the generations who will follow us. The Committee on History is one of the older committees of the General Assembly. First established on the 21st of June 1879, the committee has been in continuous existence ever since.

The committee is responsible for reporting on the National Presbyterian Museum and highlighting the work of the Archives. It meets twice a year (usually in November and February) and is fortunate to have members from across Canada who provide a balanced and insightful regional perspective. The committee includes: Dr. Kenneth Munro from western Canada; the Rev. Anita Van Nest, the Rev. John Vaudry and Ms. Marilyn Repchuck from central Canada. The committee also enjoys the support of the Rev. Dr. Stuart Macdonald (Knox College representative), and the Rev. Dr. Barry Mack (Presbyterian College representative), the Rev. Dr. Ross Lockhart (VST representative), as well as Ms. Kim Arnold (Archivist), Mr. Bob Anger (Assistant Archivist), and the Rev. R. Ritchie Robinson (member by correspondence) from the east coast. The Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod (President of the Canadian Society of Presbyterian History), and the Rev. Angus Sutherland (convener of the National

Presbyterian Museum Advisory Committee) also attend meetings of the committee. The Rev. Peter Bush, a previous member, continues his important role in the Reformation @ 500 Project and as editor of *Presbyterian History*. We are thankful for his ongoing involvement and service to the committee. The convener gratefully acknowledges the participation, and insights of all members. At this time we wish to express our thanks and gratitude to the secretary, Mr. Barry Cahill, for his diligence. Unfortunately, we regret that Mr. Cahill recently resigned and we welcomed Dr. Kenneth Munro to this role.

HERITAGE SUNDAY

Many congregations have designated a “Heritage Sunday” to celebrate the vibrant and dynamic faith legacy that is ours within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The committee enjoyed hearing various ways congregations commemorated Heritage Sunday. Some celebrated past events and individuals within their own church family, while others profiled the ministries of missionaries or church activities outside of their own congregation. The committee suggests February 19 as the date for Heritage Sunday in 2017, but congregations are encouraged to choose an anniversary Sunday or other date that is most appropriate for their own needs.

Recommendation No. 1 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the congregations be encouraged to celebrate Heritage Sunday on February 19, 2017, or on another Sunday, as a means of celebrating the unique faith journey and heritage we enjoy as Presbyterians.

HISTORY PRIZES

Every year the committee awards history prizes in three categories: congregational, academic and memoirs. This year we have three submissions. There also is special mention of a book recently published, written in Chinese: *North China Theological Seminary in the light and shadow of history* (China International Culture Press) researched by Dr. A. Donald MacLeod. Congregations and individuals are encouraged to submit publications for consideration. Submission should be sent to the Prize Committee, Presbyterian Church Archives by December 31, 2016, to be considered for the 2017 history prizes.

Recommendation No. 2 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the Assembly recognize the 2016 winners of the history prizes:

- Academic: *Still Voices – Still Heard* launched a biographical history on October 31, 2015, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Presbyterian College, Montreal,
- Memoir: *Sunsets and Gentle Breezes* is a memoir of life as I found it by Margaret Jean Taylor.
- Congregational: *Congregational History* for Haney Church, Maple Ridge, British Columbia.

REFORMATION @ 500 ANNIVERSARY PROJECT

The Committee on History was entrusted with oversight of five events or “Solas” to mark the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. (see A&P 2011, p. 271–72, 28). The 2012 General Assembly approved the proposed dates and themes:

2013 Sola Gratia	(Grace Alone)
2014 Sola Fide	(Faith Alone)
2015 Sola Scriptura	(Scripture Alone)
2016 Solus Christus	(Christ Alone)
2017 Sola Deo Gloria	(For God’s Glory Alone)

A sub-committee of the Rev. Peter Bush, convener, Dr. Ken Munro, and Mr. Bob Anger, has been entrusted with oversight of the Reformation Anniversary Project. This project is supported by a bequest to The Presbyterian Church in Canada and a grant from the Ewart Endowment for Theological Education.

The first Sola “Grace Alone” took place on November 3, 2013, in Vancouver at St. Andrew’s Hall, VST. Dr. Paul Stevens and the Rev. Frances Savill were the keynote speakers. The panelists were the Rev. Mary Fontaine, Dr. Diane Stinton and the Rev. Dr. Stephen Farris. The event was coordinated and chaired by the Rev. Peter Bush. A summary of the event was featured in the April 2014 issue of the *Presbyterian Record* and a discussion guide was produced at presbyterian.ca/2014/05/13/grace-alone-study-guide/.

In 2014 Sola “Faith Alone” took place on November 1, 2014, at St. Columba Chapel, Atlantic School of Theology, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The keynote speakers were the Rev. Tim Archibald, and Dr. Anna Robbins. The panelists

were the Rev. Dr. Cynthia Chenard, the Rev. Dr. Laurence DeWolfe, the Rev. Charles Cook, and Dr. Anne Marie Dalton. A discussion guide picking up on themes from the 2014 event has been distributed.

The 2015 event was “Sola Scriptura” which took place on October 31, 2015, at Presbyterian College in Montreal. The Saturday event was twinned with a Friday, October 30 event sponsored by Presbyterian College. On Friday, Dr. Edith Humphrey of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary spoke on the theme of scripture. The speakers on October 31 in the morning were the Rev. Dr. Roland DeVries and the Rev. Jennifer Cameron. The afternoon’s presenters were the Rev. Sybil Mosely (Livingstone Church, Montreal); the Rev. Dr. Kay Diviney (Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul); Dr. Hillary Kaell (Concordia); and Dr. Jason Zuidema (Institut Farel). Audio/visual recordings of the lectures are on the website, centre4leadership.ca/index.php/2015/11/14/sola-scriptura-lectures-video/.

The Rev. John Vaudry, a member of our committee reports:

Saturday, October 31st began with a lecture on Sola Scriptura: A Baptismal Defense by Dr. Roland De Vries, the newly installed Director of Pastoral Studies of the Presbyterian College. He focused on baptism as union with Christ, and explored the way that our experience of baptism drives us to seek understanding of our identity in Christ. Our baptism precedes our engagement with the scriptures and sends us to the scriptures to answer that age-old question: “Who am I?”

The Rev. Jennifer Cameron of St. Columba Presbyterian Church, Belleville, Ontario then spoke on the authority of the Bible in the life of the Christian and in the church. It was refreshing to hear this often academically treated subject discussed from a purely pastoral perspective.

A thought-provoking panel discussion was included in the program, featuring pastors and scholars from the Montreal area who represented several different traditions. This panel provided an illuminating mix of academic and pastoral perspectives on Scripture, as well as moving personal testimonies to God feeding his people through his Word.

The 2016 event will be “Solus Christus” which will take place on Saturday, October 29, 2016, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Keynote speakers will be Dr. Wendy Peterson, board member of NAIITS and the Rev. Peter Bush, Westwood Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Panelists include the Rev. Brad Childs of First Presbyterian, Regina, Saskatchewan; Dr. Irma Fast Dueck of Canadian Mennonite University, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Dr. Patrick Franklin of Providence Seminary, Otterburne, Manitoba; and the Rev. Germaine Lovelace of First Church, Kenora, Ontario. To join via internet, e-mail: five.solas@live.com for instructions. This event is being linked to a synod gathering taking place on Friday, October 28, 2016.

Recommendation No. 3 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church actively promote the “Solus Christus” event to take place in Winnipeg, Manitoba on October 29, 2016, and encourage their members to either attend this event or to join via internet.

We are grateful to Knox College who will be hosting the fifth Sola celebration on Saturday, October 28, 2017. This event will be the finale to the five Solas and take place in the 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation.

Recommendation No. 4 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the General Assembly and the courts of the church promote the “Soli Deo Gloria” event in celebration of the 500th Anniversary year of the Reformation to take place at Knox College in Toronto on Saturday, October 28, 2017, and encourage their members to attend.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN 2016

The Committee on History recognizes and honours the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of women in The Presbyterian Church in Canada this year.

BIRTHDAY OF CANADA IN 2017

The Committee on History looks forward to marking the 150th birthday of Canada in a special way in 2017.

NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN MUSEUM

The National Presbyterian Museum is located within St. John’s Church, 415 Broadview Avenue, Toronto. It contains a vast collection of interesting and informative items. From rare communion tokens to items sent by

missionaries from around the world, to the largest collection of church plates in our country, as well as some of the oldest books ever used in seminary education in Canada, to the opportunity to walk into a pioneer chapel, the museum is a treasure waiting to be explored by its guests. After touring the museum, visitors are extremely positive in their comments and often remark that they wish they had known about it years earlier. It is hoped that awareness of the museum will continue to grow in our denomination. Both residents of, and visitors to, the Greater Toronto Area should make a visit to the museum a priority. The museum welcomes visits from individuals, families as well as church groups. Guided tours are available by contacting Ian Mason or Al Clarkson at 416-469-1345 or museum@presbyterian.ca. Operating and promoting the museum has occurred because of many selfless and hard-working individuals. Mr. Ian Mason and Mr. Al Clarkson are the “front line” workers at the museum. Their dedication and enthusiasm for the museum is essential and contagious.

The Museum Advisory Committee consists of Ms. Kim Arnold, Mr. Al Clarkson, the Rev. Duncan Jeffery, Mr. Ian Mason, Ms. Barbara Nawratil, Ms. Marilyn Repchuck (convener of the Committee on History), the Rev. Maureen Walter (minister of St. John’s Church where the Museum is located) and the Rev. Angus Sutherland (convener). The committee is aware of discussions presently regarding options for the future of St. John’s Church in Toronto. Within the next 3–5 years we may need to find a new home for the museum.

During the past year, the museum has been delighted to host visitors, including a delegation from Taiwan, who not only enjoyed their visit, but helped to identify some objects that had previously been uncertain. The museum also went out to various locations on ten separate occasions providing a small sampling of what might be seen in a visit to our site. On one of these outings, we hosted an organ concert and hymn sing harking back to the year 1900, using the 1897 Book of Praise. This took place at the former St. James Church in Thamesville, Ontario. The museum was delighted to receive some important new artefacts relating to Presbyterian history, including items from the life and ministry of the Rev. Donald Walker MacKay, dies for a Scottish communion token, some communion cards, an 1850s communion table, items from the Boy’s Brigade, a precentor’s chair from Saint Gabriel Street Church, Montreal, and many others. We value the items churches and individuals offer us and are pleased to commemorate closing churches by including items from their buildings in our collection.

Although it is the National Museum for The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the museum receives no annual funding through the church. Its operating revenue is completely dependent upon the modest interest from the Dr. John Johnston Memorial Fund, and donations from visitors to the museum. Securing an ongoing basis of financial support is absolutely vital if the museum is to continue. We are deeply thankful to those congregations that have been willing to contribute \$50 each year from their budgets to support the museum. We are the repository of memories and artefacts relating to the past activities of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and we seek to enable the church to remember all congregations that have closed. We cannot do this without the financial support of the church.

Recommendation No. 5 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That the congregations within The Presbyterian Church in Canada be encouraged to contribute to the National Presbyterian Museum and that they be assessed \$50 by their respective presbyteries to this end.

Please note that the mailing and email addresses for the Museum are:

National Presbyterian Museum
180 Danforth Ave
PO Box 35007, Ellerbeck Postal Outlet
Toronto ON M4K 3P5

presbyterianmuseum.ca

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING CLERGY

In thanks and celebration for those who have provided many years and often an entire career of faithful service to The Presbyterian Church in Canada, it is our hope and desire that future General Assemblies will continue this action.

Recommendation No. 6 Adopted/Defeated/Amended

That with thanks to God and in celebration of the clergy and church workers who have retired in 2015, the 2016 General Assembly, on behalf of our entire denomination, includes a moment of recognition for these faithful representatives of Jesus Christ and diligent servants of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

THE ORAL AND VISUAL HISTORY PROJECT

The mandate of the project is: To celebrate and learn from the faith and polity of our church's ministerial and lay leaders, "The Oral and Visual History Project" will create a permanent, ongoing, oral and visual record. Based on the digital video recordings from individual interviews, the ultimate goal of the project is to provide access that is both archival and web-based.

The project is being spearheaded by a sub-committee with three specific parts: 1) the collection of interviews; 2) the processing of the interviews; and 3) the presentation of the interviews in archival and web-based venues. Our goal is to have 80 interviews reflective of the gender, ethnic, and regional dynamics of our denomination. This work commenced in Vancouver at General Assembly, 2015 and will continue in 2016.

PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY

Two issues of *Presbyterian History* are published each year and go out in the PCPak in January and September. The January 2016 issue included an article by Chris Redmond from Waterloo, Ontario, *John Somerville and the Presbyterian Book of Praise* as well as *A Review Six Books on Human Sexuality* by Peter Bush.

Presbyterian History is well served through the conscientious and creative insight provided by its editor, the Rev. Peter Bush. He welcomes suggestions for topics as well as feedback. Articles can be submitted directly to him at peterwwpres@mts.net. Many of the articles can be accessed online at presbyterian.ca/newsletters.

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY

The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History (CSPH) met for its annual meeting on September 26, 2015, at Knox College. Thanks was extended to the Rev. Jeremy Bellsmith for his enthusiastic fulfillment of the duties of Secretary-Treasurer during this past year. Ms. Elizabeth Millar of Mount Allison University Library acted as the editor of the Society's papers since 2005 and edited over 45 papers during this term. Her resignation was regretfully received and she was thanked for her careful and diligent work.

Presenters for the day were as follows:

- Mr. Bob Anger: "Struggle to Achieve: Rev. James Nisbet and the Foreign Missions Committee of the Canada Presbyterian Church"
- Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod: "'Your ringing testimony to the cause of truth': Machen and the PCC's Andrew Grant in a 1925 Partnership to Save 'true evangelical Christianity'"
- Megan Baxter: "Now We Unite: Religion, Service and Ideal Womanhood in the CGIT in the Interwar Years" (Canadian Girls in Training)
- Student presenters (Knox College students and graduates):
 - Ian Marnoch: "Continuity and Discontinuity in the *Book of Praise* – 1997 edition"
 - Matthew Lingard: "The PCC and Two World Wars: Shifting Attitudes and Responses Toward Warfare"
 - *Jessica Cho: "The Re-examination of Kathleen Stewart's Ear Infection Treatment" (at the Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School, Kenora, Ontario) (*Knox College graduate)

The meeting this year will be held on September 24, 2016, at Knox College. A call for papers is being circulated. Suggested theme includes: the recognition that 2016 will be the 50th year of ordination of women within The Presbyterian Church in Canada. A collection of papers presented in previous years can be found at cspH.ca/papers.html

The Rev. Dr. A. Donald MacLeod continues as president. The CSPH exists to serve the church, providing much needed perspective and insight so that the church may continue in the future to serve the cause of Christ in Canada.

ARCHIVES

As a denomination we are in an enviable position with our archives. The Archivist, Ms. Kim Arnold, and the Assistant Archivist, Mr. Bob Anger, continue to provide dependable, meticulous and hardworking service. The committee commends them for the exceptional service they provide to The Presbyterian Church in Canada! The Committee on History appreciate the help of volunteers. Mrs. Betty Arnold after 29 years of service as Archives volunteer has retired. Thank you so much Betty and we will miss you. The Rev. Dr. Robert Anderson continues to volunteer his service with us.

This has been another busy year in the Archives. In addition to the daily work of appraising, preserving, cataloguing and responding to church-related research requests, here are some of the highlights Archives staff has provided to the church during this reporting period: records management for the national office and congregations, assessing best practices for managing digital records, arranging for the ongoing microfilming/digitizing of congregational records, creating new resources regarding care of church records, revising and updating The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives website, networking with seminary students regarding their assignments on church history, applying for an annual government grant to host a summer photo cataloguing project.

Bob Anger completed a three week trip to Jobat, India to appraise and collect historic records for the Archives relating to the India-Presbyterian Church in Canada mission connection.

In April, 2016, Ms. Kim Arnold will be traveling to an Archives Conference in Dundee, Scotland where she will be speaking regarding The Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives residential schools work and our connection to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. By sharing our story in this way it will help to fulfill the Presbyterian Church in Canada's responsibility to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report and their "94 Calls to Action".

CONCLUSION

The Committee on History is very grateful for the time, wisdom and assistance provided by The Rev. Stephen Kendall, Clerk of General Assembly; The Rev. Don Muir, Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly; Ms. Terrie-Lee Hamilton, Senior Administrator, General Assembly Office, as well as Mrs. Elizabeth Bartlett and Mrs. Frances Hogg, General Assembly Office.

The committee is excited about the activities and projects listed in this report. We invite Presbyterians from coast to coast to share in these initiatives, and we welcome your suggestions. We also encourage you and your churches as you preserve and celebrate your own unique Presbyterian Heritage. As The Presbyterian Church in Canada journeys into the future it is our desire that the church remember that prayer and intentional church development, blessed by committed people and the hand of Almighty God, can accomplish great things!

Marilyn Repchuck
Convener