



CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING

May 26-28, 2017 ‘Think on These Things’

From the four corners of Bay of Quinte Conference, staff, clergy and lay delegates and guests, began descending on Wall Street United Church in Brockville (many through torrential rains) so that we could all participate in our Annual Meeting to do the business of the Conference. The work to prepare began months ago and was ably carried out by the CAM Committee (which looks after pulling all of the many threads together) and various other sub committees including the Business Committee which looks after the technology and agenda, the Worship Committee and the Local Arrangements committee which makes sure that things go smoothly on site and ensures that the space is working okay and

that meals are delivered warm and on time.

Some of the tasks that delegates were asked to consider are approving the budget and the

greetings from the General Council office. Cheryl Jourdain and Bernice Saulteaux joined us from All Native Circle Conference as we will be working with that



Retirees

settlement report, voting for delegates to General Council 43 and voting for Candidates for Ordination and Admission.

In addition, the Rural Life Committee held a BBQ on the Thursday night before the meeting and served us a delicious country supper with speakers and musical entertainment. There were over 30 youth from Grade 7 – 12 and children in grades Kindergarten to Grade 6 who participated in programs designed for them to ‘Think on These Things’.

We were blessed to have various guests with us. We had Yvonne Stewart representing Five Oaks and Patti Talbot brought

Conference to co-host the 43rd General Council in 2018. Jackie Childerhose from Grand River Bookstore brought a good selection of material for the bookroom.

We acknowledged the land of the First Nations whose territory we were meeting on and Charlene Catchpole was here representing the Ojibway First Nation. Conference President, Don Stiles, invited us to ‘Think on These Things’ and this theme ran through the whole Conference from the graphics provided by youth to presentations by the various committees to the speeches by those preparing for ordination. Don asked delegates to



Piper, Rev. Jamie York

break into groups so that they could consider the ways that the lines in this scripture passage might apply to Bay of Quinte Conference now and in the time to come as the church as a whole decides what the future will look like.

On Friday afternoon an original play called 'Transcripts' was performed for us by Faith and Arts Ottawa. Based on real stories, 'Transcripts' follows characters adapting to radical changes in themselves and their loved ones. There was some powerful discussion with the court afterwards.

Bay of Quinte Conference had 11 people retire this year and we were lucky to be able to honour 8 of them at the Retiree's Banquet on Friday evening. Incoming Conference President, Wanda Stride, organized a delightful evening with a meal, musical entertainment and speeches by the retirees. Rev. Jamie York continued our tradition of 'piping' our special guests into the room.

Saturday began with a lovely Taize style worship that included memorials for the clergy that passed away during this Conference year. Then we got down to business hearing reports and considering and voting on several ballots. The group that went to El Salvador in March told us about their travels and we learned about the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) from Romeo Saganish, MP, Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik-Eeyoa riding northern Quebec with a powerful presentation.



*Local arrangements co-chairs,
Sue and Trevor Hutton*

The Annual Meeting wrapped up on Sunday with more discussion on the theme and tidying up business. And finally, the Celebration of Ministry Service ordained Janelle Shaw, Edward Wells, Lynne Gardiner and Michael Putnam and admitted Richard Hamilton to ministry in Bay of Quinte Conference with Malcolm Sinclair of First Metropolitan United Church in Toronto delivering the sermon. Wanda Stride was covenanted as our Conference President for the 2017-2018 Conference Year. *Submitted by Judy Ormshaw*

OVER EIGHTIES!

The congregation of Edith Rankin Memorial United Church in Kingston has honoured its "over Eighties" every year since 1962. On Sunday, May 7, 2017, we served dinner to 160 members of our congregation which included 68 of our Classics (over eighties). The party included an hour of beautiful harp music as we gathered for punch as well as toe tapping post dinner entertainment by our choir, showcasing a musical tribute to Canada's 150th Anniversary.

Over Eighties Club – Edith Rankin Memorial



MEET THE PRESIDENT!

Rev Wanda Stride



Rev. Wanda Stride

Friends, I greet you in the name of Christ Jesus, our source of love and hope. I am the minister at Woodville Pastoral Charge in Kawartha Highlands Presbytery.

What an honour it is to be the incoming president for Bay of Quinte Conference! And in these times of remits and change, what a daunting challenge!

Over the past year I have spent many hours in discernment with friends, colleagues, fellow pilgrims in El Salvador, trying to hear God's call for

us, trying to decide a focus for our ministry over the next year. What became louder and clearer, is that despite the changes happening (or not) around us, there is one thing we know for sure: we gather as the body of the risen Christ, faithful, ready to serve, to love, and to help build God's realm in our little corner of the Earth. This much we know.

So I want to hear your particular stories, the story of Christ's work in your presbytery, what makes God's mission unique in your part of the world. As I visit presbyteries over the next year I hope to collect those stories of our love for God, to learn how Christ has inspired all of you to bring peace, justice and mercy to God's children and creation.

When we gather at conference next year, we will have a better understanding of God's call to the United Church of Canada. It may be the last time we gather as Bay of Quinte Conference. Depending on the remit vote, it may just another glorious year celebrating God's presence in Eastern Ontario. Whatever our understanding is, let's make next

year's focus a celebration of Christ's goodness and work through our churches.

I hope to take your stories, and with the help of other song-writers and poets in our midst, create songs that we can sing together. With the help of talented movie-makers, set those songs to visual presentations that reveal the faces and landscapes of our stories. And with the help of other musicians, hear artists that represent the cultural diversity and splendour of God's presence in our communities.

So celebrate with me this year, even through the uncertainty and potential sadness. Let's lift up the stories that inspired our ancestors, even as we carry them into the future, as unfamiliar and even scary as it may look right now.

This is a time of uncertainty in so many ways, but not in the way that matters most: God loves us. That will never change. Let's celebrate that deep and wonderful knowledge! Let's celebrate together, Christ's eternal presence among us.

Submitted by Wanda Stride

SAY CHEESE!

In February, St. Mark's United Church, Cannifton, collected money for the purchase of cheese for the breakfast program at Harmony Public School. On Tuesday, March 21st, St. Mark's members were very pleased to visit Harmony Public School to present a cheque in the amount of \$439.50, enough funds to provide every student with a serving of cheese!

The "Say Cheese!" campaign was part of this year's Mission-by-the-Month calendar. In March St. Mark's focused on the Mission & Service fund, and in April will be collecting Canadian Tire money for camp Quin-Mo-Lac. Each campaign is celebrated as part of weekly worship.



Pictured above: Janet Shandraw, Food for Learning Breakfast coordinator at Harmony, Joan Anderson, Gloria Scott, Sheila Parks, members of St. Mark's, Louise Gunning, Principal at Harmony, Elaner Pound, member of St. Mark's, and Rev. Ryan McNally, minister at St. Mark's.

Submitted by Rev. Ryan McNally

MISSION TRIP TO

The reasons we went were varied. Some went to help. Some went to learn. Some went to deepen faith. Some were strong-armed by their daughters.

Whatever the reason, 24 faithful Bay of Quinte Conference souls traveled to El Salvador over the March Break, 2017, eager to meet our partner church and to build relationships. When we returned seven days later, we were rich with experience, friendships, and commitments to stand in solidarity with our Salvadoran brothers and sisters in Christ.

Fifteen-year-old Rachel Vollmer from Lakefield United Church was amazed at how quickly friendships formed, even with people who did not speak the same language. "We had in common one thing: God. The power of the Holy Spirit works in mysterious ways," she said.

Port Perry's 17-year-old Quinton Weyrich agreed. "This trip made me realize how secular Canadian society is, in comparison to this nation where every passing bus seemed to bear an image of Jesus or the Virgin Mary. I'm not sure how I feel about that, but it's definitely something I've been noticing a bit more now."

The group of 12 youth and 12 adults stayed at the Centro Gabriel para la paz, a civil-war orphanage turned retreat centre in the hills surrounding the capital city of San Salvador.

The lush forest setting offered us a quiet sanctuary in the middle of this bustling, noisy Central American country. It also offered a place for quiet reflection as some group members learned of horrific violence and loss - from stories of the civil war, but also stories of today, as a younger generation of Salvadorans live with the reality of gang violence.

Jean Stairs is minister at Edith Rankin United Church in Kingston, a congregation that recently became partners with Emmanuel Baptist Church (IBE). While visiting mission sites in a remote rural community, Jean met a young mother who had been beaten by the local police.

"(The police) assumed she was assisting some gang members," Jean said. "In actual fact, she was being polite with the gang members in order to stay safe and not be subjected to violence from them!" The young woman's cuts and bruises were still visible on her face, two weeks after the incident. "I witnessed (IBE) Pastor Miguel's anger at the injustice."

While her church had already proven its commitment to IBE, this particular incident demonstrated a new level of that partnership. "It is important to remain vigilant, advocate for the oppressed and for us to stand in solidarity with them in their hopefulness that



The BQ delegation and locals

EL SALVADOR

transformation toward peace is possible.”

El Salvador can be the first or third most violent country in the world, on a given week. People here still live behind locked gates and barbed wire fences as rival gangs and police fight for control of the streets and communities. Last year the murder rate peaked at one per hour. This violent reality has prompted some local leaders, like IBE’s Miguel Castro, to devote their lives to creating a culture of peace.

Emmanuel Baptist Church, much like many Canadian churches, is not a huge congregation. Anywhere from 40 to 100 people can gather twice a week to worship and pray. But the work of this small church is far-reaching and important. They are developing and staffing ten mission sites, both urban and rural, with chapels, community youth centres and schools. Our group was able to witness two rural communities, and learn about the scholarship fund administered by the church, and Lidia Mendes, Pastor Miguel’s wife. This year individuals, churches and presbyteries from the west end of Bay of Quinte Conference sponsored eight students ranging in age from seven to 15. After this trip, Edith Rankin has also made a five-year commitment to raise several thousand dollars annually.

In communities where

workers can earn \$3 a day working at coffee plantations, the scholarships are essential for keeping children in school. Education is important, and so is dignity.

Juan Jose Romero is mayor of Mercedes Umaña, a rural municipality south east of San Salvador. He told us that over the past two years they have built a library and



Bay of Quinte participants in the El Salvador Mission Trip

created a symphony orchestra. We visited a bakery run by young men. With all these efforts, and by helping to keep children in school, the gang presence in that community has been virtually eliminated, according to Mayor Romero.

Edith Rankin’s Nick Gazendam also witnessed the power of the “Peacemakers”, a group of young leaders in a school affiliated with IBE. “They and other youth from the church spent many hours with us, sharing music, laughter, tears, and limitless

hugs. These young people are the leaven that can transform this place.”

Our guide and host, Juan Ramón Valencia Portillo, demonstrated the love of his people with humour, and a uniquely generous spirit. Many on this trip will remember his face as he took pictures, organized trips and made sure we were safe. He stayed with us sometimes 12 hours each day, knowing that his wife Lady Conde was dying of cancer.

The generosity of our hosts, their capacity for love, hospitality and their deep faith, may be the main takeaway for our group. Despite their struggles, their own vulnerability, they sacrificed time and scheduling to be with us, to learn about our lives, and to share their own experiences.

“I will always remember Miguel, and I think anyone who has met him knows that nothing more needs to be said,” said 17-year-old Hope Pascoe from Newcastle United Church. “(I see) God at work everywhere and present in every moment as a result of what I experienced on this trip.”

Bay of Quinte Conference is planning to send another delegation to El Salvador in the next two years. If you are interested in visiting our sister church there, please contact the conference office.

Submitted by Wanda Stride

BAY OF QUINTE CONFERENCE STEWARDSHIP FESTIVAL!

Following several months and hours of planning, the second Stewardship Festival in Bay of Quinte Conference came to fruition. Saturday, May 6th, 2017 Stewardship Enthusiasts and others interested in Stewardship Mission & Service gathered at Edith Rankin Memorial United Church in Kingston Ontario.

Folks arrived early for registration and snacks and at 9:30a.m. Marilyn Rodger, Bay of Quinte Conference Stewardship chair, began with the introductions of speakers: David Armour – United Church Director of Philanthropy, Susan Graham Walker - Educator, Giving's Communication Stewardship, Carolyn Ruda - Montreal and Ottawa Conference Stewardship Chair, Jackie Harper - Programs and Youth staff of Bay of Quinte Conference, Caroline Giesbrecht - generalist staff of Bay of Quinte Conference. Jean Stairs, minister at Edith Rankin Memorial brought greetings for the day and described how the new addition to their church was benefitting the community in the west end of Kingston. Recognition of the Land was also offered. Donna Bignell served as Equity monitor for the day. The Christ Candle was lit by Paul Sales our Financial Development representative while Carolyn Ruda provided a reading. Paul also played piano for the Worship Service which followed. Worship was led by

Caroline Giesbrecht, with the scripture being read by Charlotte Hoy.

After worship, David Armour, Philanthropy, spoke to us on "Stewardship that Works" the joy of using proven practices to connect discipleship to stewardship. This reminded us of the New Creed and how it says it all.

Susan Graham Walker presented Inspire! Invite! Thanks! This is a new giving program for congregations. She described everything you need to know about the introduction of the new 'Called to be the Church' We Sing Thanksgiving 2017 - 2018 Congregational Giving Program which has just been received by all congregations of all Conferences within Canada.

The workshop providers:

- Blair Hicks, Lawyer, "Living Wills and how they might affect our family"
- Jill Bates, Bay of Quinte Conference Mission & Service Enthusiast, recently returned from Kenya and Morogoro
- Kathleen Bertrand, delegate to recent trip with Bay of Quinte Conference latest trip to El Salvador.
- Our Special Gift panel
 - Amanda Collins - kidney Donor to a 5 year old child
 - Don Bricklow - who had received a 22 years olds heart 3 years ago.
 - Ian Robb - a double lung transplant 14 years ago



Lunch was provided by the Edith Rankin Memorial catering team. Homemade chicken and beef meat pies, salad and lemon dessert with coffee and tea topped off the meal.

Jackie Harper, Conference Minister for Programs and Youth, was recognized by Bay of Quinte Stewardship Committee on her impending retirement with an outdoor arrangement of flowers in honour of all she has contributed over the years to the Stewardship Mission & Service work within The United Church of Canada.

The closing worship sent everyone homeward bound in overload mode from a day crammed full of thoughts and information.

UCW BAY OF QUINTE CONFERENCE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

The AGM for the 55th year of the UCW was held this year in Renfrew on April 26th, 2017. There were close to 30 that stayed the night before in Arnprior at the Galilee Retreat Centre. Trinity St. Andrew's Church in Renfrew is a lovely spacious location. The theme was "Celebrating Spirit" and the theme song was VU 380 – "She Flies On". And we did, starting with greetings from UCW Upper Valley President Lee Torvi, Trinity St. Andrew's Minister, Andrew Love, Sheryl McLeod and First Nations greetings from Roberta Della Picca.

The offering this year, of \$893.00, was given to International Children's Awareness in Cameroon.

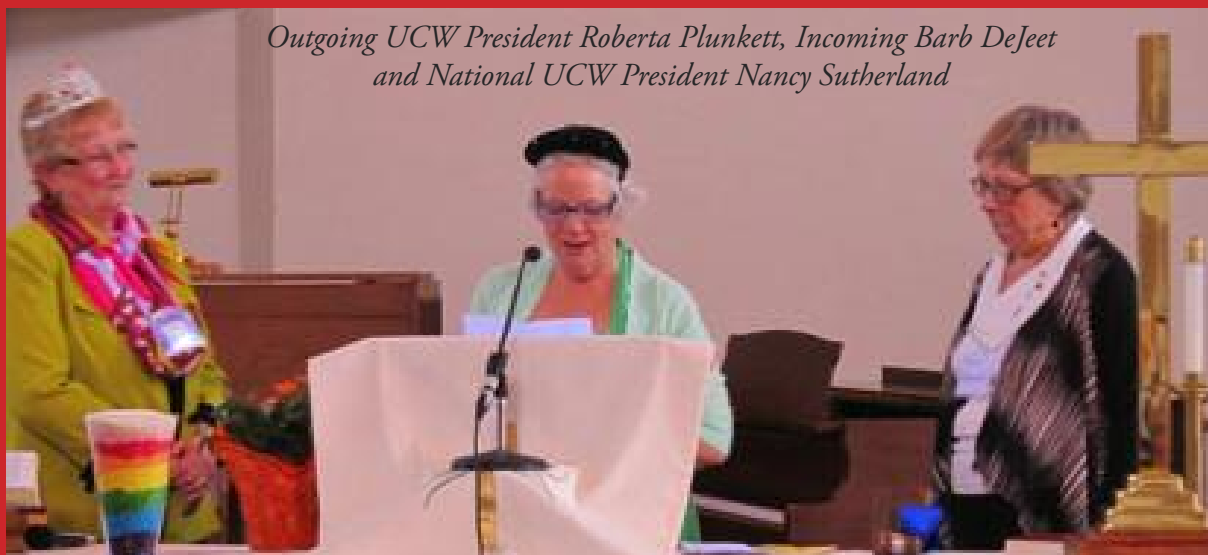
Worship was presented by Four Winds Presbyterial using the parable of the Good Samaritan. Our guest speaker was Jeff Lehoux who works with the International Children's Awareness group that visits Cameroon at least once a year. The group is made up of 15 to 20 core members. The funds raised by the group go towards helping the people that live there empower

themselves with vocations that can be taught to others and for them to be more self-sustaining. Jeff is a retired Army Veteran who helps bring together other retired veterans with skills to help build bridges in flood areas. Since 2009, 16 schools have been constructed using local labour who are paid less than \$1.00 a day for 18 hours of work. To visit you require a visa. It is not a country that has had a lot of exposure to the rest of the world but slowly they are being helped with critical areas that are adding to their quality of life. You can't go with the thought of what you want to do. Go to see what is needed and then try to get help to make it happen. A local coffee called SNARK is sold by the group with 10% of the profits going back to ICA.

Communion and the Offering were next followed by a Fair Trade report from Marilyn Rodger. We were reminded that 10% of all sales go to Mission & Service and in 2016 that totaled over \$1,000.00.

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Outgoing UCW President Roberta Plunkett, Incoming Barb DeJeet and National UCW President Nancy Sutherland



We were brought greetings from Camp Lau-ren by Joanne Hartnett. All camps are in need of ongoing support financially and physically. Kawartha Highlands SURPRISED us with their version of YMCA. And we joined in the fun.

Greetings were brought from First Nations by Pam Martin and greetings from our National UCW President, Nancy Sutherland, reminded us of the 55th Anniversary Celebration in Vancouver in July. Also our contributions to Mission & Service for all Canada in 2016 were \$1,304,134.00 with \$35,475.00 coming from UCW Bay of Quinte.

Other items covered were:

- Betty Turcott has a new book, soon to be released, which is called "And She Said". Watch for it....
- Treasurer, Kay Moore, gave the report for 2016 business. She reminded us to send donations for "Shannen's Dream" to our UCW Presbyterian President.

- Four Rivers presented the In Memoriam by adding several colours of sand to a vase each representing all the work done by those who helped make UCW what it is today.
- Nominations were led by Nancy Sutherland. The UCW Presbyterian Presidents and Portfolio officers for 2017/18 were installed.
- Attendance was 106 ladies and the book sales for the day were \$610.30.
- Upcoming events for this year are:
 - Quin-Mo-Lac – Sept 8-10 hosted by Kawartha Highlands
 - Mid-Week – October 24th in Bobcaygeon
 - 2018 AGM hosted by Four Rivers – location TBA.
- The day was closed with Courtesies by Penny Culverson, Presbyterian President of Hills & Shores.

Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Philippians 4:8

Deadlines for 2017

Submit CR news and photos for

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November Observer - Sept. 26

– or send as soon as possible to
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