

147th (2022) Synod Meeting Highlights

The Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario (le Synode du Québec et de l'Est de l'Ontario) met online on Friday, October 14th and Saturday, October 15th, 2022 for the 147th meeting. 29 members were present with 8 visitors.

The Moderator of the 146th Synod, the Rev. Shahrzad Kandalaft, opened the meeting with worship at 2:00 pm Friday afternoon, including the celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The Moderator spoke on hope – our hope in Jesus. Following opening worship and the constitution of the court, a memorial time was held recognizing the teaching and ruling elders from the presbyteries within the bounds whose death occurred just prior to or since the Synod last met. The Synod elected and installed its Moderator, the Rev. Sybil Mosley from the Presbytery of Montréal.

Friday afternoon business

The following reports were received and considered:

- The Committee on Business
- The Treasurer presented the 2021 Financial Report, the reviewer's report, and a 2022 year to date with projection to the end of the year.
- The Finance convener presented the 2023 expenditure budget, presbytery assessments, and a five-year forecast. The Finance report was adopted with an expenditure budget of \$93,771.00.
- The synod webservant shared statistics from the synod website.
- The Regional Resourcing report was presented, and two grant requests were approved for submission to the Life and Mission Agency for their consideration:
 - (1) \$20,500 for the Mission Promoter position in the Presbytery of Montréal, and
 - (2) \$10,000 for the Executive Director position at Camp d'action biblique, andIn addition it was agreed that the balance of \$30,500 be held in abeyance for use by the Presbyteries of Ottawa and Seaway-Glengarry for an anticipated ministry position or otherwise.
- The Mission/Robert Fund report was presented, and the synod agreed to grant power to issue to the Synod Council, for 2023, to disburse the proceeds from the fund as soon as possible after the Consolidated Fund investment portfolio report for 2022 is received
- Reports were received from the Presbytery of Ottawa on their oversight of the Gracefield Christian Camp and Retreat Centre; and from Camp d'action biblique within the Presbytery of Quebec.

The synod adjourned at 5:30 pm and reconvened at 7 pm. A time of worship was held, led by members of the Presbytery of Québec.

Guest Speaker

Following worship, the Rev. Peter Bush, guest speaker for the 2022 synod meeting, was invited to address the synod. He gave two theme talks, one on Friday evening and the second on Saturday morning. Each theme talk session included small group discussion and a time for questions and answers.

Friday evening Theme Talk

The first Theme talk was entitled: "Being Faithful Among the Ruins" (Psalm 86, Rev. 3:7-13). The ruins are evident – more wars and more refugees than we can count easily; economic pressures leaving 15% of

Canadians at some level of food insecurity; and congregations shrinking and even closing. The people of God have been here before – what can we learn from them about the path to being faithful among the ruins?

Saturday morning worship and business

Prior to the Saturday morning theme talk, the synod gathered for a time of worship led by the Moderator. Following worship, an additional Regional Resourcing report was presented. With the unexpected death of Cheryl Gaver in April 2022, the grant originally approved for the position of Presbytery Ministry Animator was not fully disbursed. The synod agreed to submit to the Life and Mission Agency for consideration two requests for the unused funds in the amount of \$3,400 to CAB and \$12,318 for the Mission Promoter. In addition, it was further agreed that additional requests for the remaining funds of \$2,625.15 be received for consideration by the synod council by November 15, 2022.

Climate Change Video

Following the above business, a preview of the Climate Change video was shown to the Synod. The video is part of a series created following the 2021 synod conference entitled “Climate Change: What Can I Do? – Christian Caring for Creation”. The videos feature the plenary sessions by speaker Dr. Norman Wirzba, as well as the Town Hall Panel. The video portion previewed by the synod was entitled ‘Eating our way to heaven’ which was the final plenary session by the guest speaker. The videos are available on the synod website, as well as a link to suggested Lunch and Learn programme, which includes a list of print and digital resources, ways to support through volunteer or monetary donations, advocacy suggestions and the comments received following the breakout room sessions held during the conference.

Saturday morning Theme Talk

Guest speaker Peter Bush presented his second Theme Talk: “Getting Rid of the Idols” (Jeremiah 7:1-15, Matthew 11:25-30, Revelation 3:14-22). Many “solutions” are on offer to address the problem of church decline. An “idolatry of programs” has slid into the life of the church. This presentation will speak to patterns of life and leadership that help free us from such idolatry. Patterns that seek to live into Jesus’ promise, “Come to me all you who are heavily burdened and I will give you rest.” (Matt 11:28)

Prior to adjournment, the courtesies report was received. The thanks of the synod were extended to everyone who attended the 2022 online synod meeting; to all who had a part in the running of the synod meeting, to all who oversee various tasks in between synod meetings, to all who helped create the climate change video, and to everyone for their service to the church at the congregational, presbytery and synod level.

The synod adjourned at 11:54 am on Saturday morning. It was agreed that the synod will meet next in 2024 on Friday and Saturday, October 18th and 19th, with the location to be determined by the synod council.