

May 2011

To: **Members of the 86<sup>th</sup> Maritime Conference**

Dear Friends:

“**FROM NOW ON**” is the theme for this annual meeting, May 26-29, 2011. We will express our passion for rural ministry in the Conference. We will be using a “new-to-us” approach to theme conversations called “Open Space Technology” which is more completely described on the enclosed pages.

This letter contains all the “**need to know**” information required to be prepared to fully participate in the Annual Meeting.

Hopefully you have already been well informed of the decision of the Conference Sub-Executive to not mail the Pre-Conference Booklet. The reports to Conference have been posted on the website as they arrive in the Conference office. You can find them at: <http://www.marconf.ca/AnnMeet2011.php>. The full booklet will be printed as usual this year, and will be waiting for you upon arrival at the Annual Meeting. It is also available as a complete PDF document on the website if you have the desire and ability to download it to your computer or portable device. This change should save the Conference \$2500 annually. In future years we will work towards reducing the size and number of individual books and will rely more heavily on the internet to communicate these materials. This approach will be phased in over a few years. If you are not a comfortable user of the internet, you are encouraged to develop relationships with people and/or organizations that will provide you with access. It is still expected that each Conference member **will have read** this material carefully before it comes on the floor of Conference.

We would remind you of the following:

1. If, after reading the reports to Conference you are concerned that there is **something missing** from the Agenda, please contact the Executive Secretary immediately at [dhewitt@marconf.ca](mailto:dhewitt@marconf.ca) or 506-536-1334. This courtesy will assist the Annual Meeting Planning Committee in making appropriate adjustments to the Agenda in advance of the meeting, rather than adjusting “on the fly.”
2. The meeting will be held at the Tantramar Veteran’s Memorial Civic Centre (hereafter known as the “**Arena**”), 182 Main Street, Sackville. For those not staying in Residence and requiring parking, there is parking at the Arena. There will be a shuttle service between the University residences and the Arena for those who have requested it on their registration form.
3. Each day of our meeting will have a **different focus and a different approach**. The seating arrangements in the Arena will be changed each day. It will not be possible to leave personal items in the Arena overnight.
4. You have received forms for **registration** and for **accommodation** requests from the Secretary of your Presbytery. Please check to make sure that you have forwarded them to the appropriate places as noted on the forms. Only those registered will have a registration packet and name tag ready upon arrival.

5. **REGISTRATION WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE ARENA ONLY!** This change saves money, saves volunteers from the need to transfer registration materials from the Gym to the Arena, provides better parking and a more accessible building. Registration for Youth Forum and Intermediates at Conference will also take place at the Arena.
6. No scented products please!
7. **Moderator Mardi Tindal** will be present throughout the meeting, and will be holding a “Town Hall” gathering at Sackville United Church on Thursday afternoon between 3 and 5 p.m. Please plan to arrive in Sackville early enough to participate in this gathering.
8. Please plan for a **variety of temperatures** and remember that we do meet in an arena and the floor surface will be cold. There is a significant amount of walking during the meeting.
9. Conference materials will be displayed on the **projection screens**. The Reports to Conference booklet will be distributed at registration, along with additional materials that arrived after the deadline. Please bring **this material** with you to the Arena — it will be constantly referred to during the sessions.
10. Please bring a copy of **More Voices** with you to worship, if you have one.
11. **Choir:**
  - a. All are welcome to join the **Sunday Worship** Conference Choir to assist in leadership of hymns and service music. Please attend the rehearsal at Sackville United on Saturday at 4:00 p.m.
  - b. Choir leadership of worship music for **Friday and Saturday** morning worship is also welcome! Please come to the arena at 8:30 a.m. each morning for practice. Bring your own copies of More Voices and Voices United.
  - c. We need a group of good **drummers** to lead worship on Saturday morning. If you would like to share your talent with us, please bring your drum to the Saturday morning practice, 8:30 a.m. at the arena.
12. **New Delegates Orientation** and **Table Group Facilitator** Training will take place in the Avarad Dixon Building (opposite Windsor Hall) room G10 at 3:00pm on the Mount A campus.
13. As usual, the **Book Display** will be available from U.C.R.D.
14. Set up time for **display tables** in the Arena is Thursday, May 26 from 1 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
15. In line with our *Going Green*, please remember to **bring a mug** for use during the meeting.
16. The **Conference Office** will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday and Friday; and from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday. The Conference Office will be closed on Sunday and Monday.
17. **Regrets:** If you cannot attend, please let us know—your absence will be recorded and our lists accurate.
18. **Leaving Early:** If you must leave Conference early, we ask that you secure the permission of Conference. A form will be available from the Tellers Table near the penalty box. Please give it to the Steering Committee.
19. **Alternate Delegate:** If you cannot attend for any reason, this mailing should go to the person appointed in your place. Please check at once with the Secretary of your Presbytery.

We look forward to greeting you and the large Conference family again on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May. Matters important to the church, your faith and the well-being of people of our region will be discussed and decisions made. Please prepare yourself to be open to God’s spirit as we seek to respond faithfully to the challenges and opportunities of this time.

Annual Meeting Planning Committee