

# THE CONFERENCE CURRENT

THE MARITIME CONFERENCE  
CHRISTIAN LIFE & GROWTH COMMITTEE

April 2009



[www.marconf.ca](http://www.marconf.ca)

## Christian Life & Growth Committee

### Highlights

The **Outdoor Recreational Ministry Unit** is busy preparing for Camp STUFF 2009, a training weekend for staff and board members. This group of 80 young adult staff and Board members will gather at Camp Abeqweit, PEI.

Congregations recently received a poster identifying our camps and giving information on designing your own congregational Earth Camp.

It was reported that 524 items were borrowed from **AVEL** since June '08 & from 112 pastoral charges. Twenty-three new titles have been purchased. *"Of note is the addition of adult faith curriculum material from Wood Lake Books. We have purchased three programs, based on current books by Marcus Borg and Bruce Sanguin, with leader's guides written by Tim Scorer. I feel very happy to have these to offer our churches"* says Coordinator, Marilyn Burrell.

Visit AVEL on the web. You can now order your educational resources online.

<http://www.marconf.ca/avel/avelpage.htm>

The **Computer Use & Education Unit** is gearing up for work at the Annual Meeting. They offered skill building workshops in the fall. An early winter storm complicated delivery of the workshops.

The **Children, Youth & Young Adult Ministry Unit** is being re-structured with a three year emphasis on children's ministry. The unit is mandated to a) explore offering regional Sunday School workshops, so teachers can be supported and offered new tools to listen, teach spiritual practices, and nurture hope in our children, and; b) to spark "holy conversations" about the effectiveness of Sunday Schools in changing times and explore the creation of new approaches to faith formation/Christian Education." (Christian Life & Growth Committee October 2008).

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### Travelling Curriculum Box

If you would like a hands on look at samples of recommended curriculum and other faith formation resources for children and youth, please contact Janice MacLean. We have a Box that we will send to you.

**Intermediates at Conference 2009.** We are fond of asking, "Where are our youth?" We know there are 120 who are interested in IAC 2009. This program has grown in strength and number. We have the youth. We need leadership. We need facilitators – especially males. See <http://marconf.ca/pdf/2008-IAC-form-facilitators.pdf> for information & an application form.

### Godly Play Introductory Workshops

Godly Play is an imaginative method for sharing scripture stories with children. In this workshop you will experience a full Godly Play Session, hear two stories & learn more about using Godly Play in your Sunday School, worship or VBS. Janice has offered day long Introductory Workshops in many Presbyteries. Please contact Janice MacLean if you would like to arrange a workshop for the Fall.

**CELEBRATING SPORTS VALUES**  
For Worship Resources and an All Ages  
Faith Formation Event  
Please see  
[www.breakawayweekend.ca](http://www.breakawayweekend.ca)

## Presbytery News

We invited Presbytery CLG Committees to share news with us.

Highlights: Miramichi & Chignecto hosted a Godly Play workshop; Pictou held a Presbytery wide Choir Festival and an Elder's Workshop; St. Croix, reported combined efforts to offer children & youth programming as well as Book Studies & Advent retreats; South Shore has done a Presbytery wide survey of Sunday Schools asking what kind of training would interest people. All of these Presbyteries are supporting delegates to various youth programs.

All Committees stated their great challenge was finding consistent and active members. Some also expressed frustration in *"getting people to respond to information that is shared and educational opportunities that are available."*

### A Word from the Chair

*"The desert is a dangerous place. People don't go into the desert unless they have to."*

These are the words I say as I slowly sift my fingers through the sand of the desert bag. I've just finished telling the story of Jesus' temptations in the desert. Sitting with me, mesmerized by the shifting sand, are adults with special needs. With a hushed voice one says, "It was like I was in the desert."

Indeed. Haven't we all been in the desert at one time or another? Personally and collectively, haven't we all been in a place where the harsh elements around us - those things over which we have no control - have challenged our faith and tested our spirit?

The mandate of the Christian Life and Growth Committee is "... to support creatively the communities of faith of Maritime Conference by discerning gifts, nurturing leadership, developing strategies for transformation through Education, Worship and Communication." In other words, our job is to provide faith-formation tools that will help you develop deep roots for water and broad canopies for shade so that you are better equipped for your passage through the desert, wherever and whenever that desert may be.

Our scriptures tell us that many wonderful things happen in the desert. We need to be prepared...

More information on Emerging Spirit, being the church in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, affordable Sunday School Curriculum, and resources for adult study were requested.

Thank you for your response. We'll stay in touch!

#### CHILDREN'S MINISTRY REPORT

Read the full report and recommendations at  
<http://marconf.ca/clg.htm>  
 (or call Janice M. for a copy)

## Annual Meeting 2010

Will our children have faith? To the extent that we do and pass it on! The Christian Life & Growth Committee is pleased to be working on the theme for the 2010 Annual Meeting of Conference. The theme, "Come and See" is inspired by the Children's Ministry Report. The theme will focus on faith formation and discipleship.

Nigel Weaver, a member of the Core Planning Team, recently reflected: *"We envision something different – a shift from an emphasis on information about the church to faith formation as the church. Can we use the traditional practices of faith together around the table while we do annual meeting work?"*

The Committee has received funding from Maritime Conference Bequest Funds and General Council Learning in Community Grant to help with planning.

Stay tuned for more information.

#### COMMUNICATION FACTS & FIGURES

**71% of pastoral charges use e-mail to receive information;**  
**83% of those have access to high-speed;**  
**51% publish a newsletter;**  
**69% receive the Maritime Conference Wednesday Announcements;**  
**73% use the Conference Web Site**  
**40% of pastoral charges have a web site.**