



DISTRICT CONFERENCE 2017

Report of the Interim Superintendent

When I found myself unexpectedly thrust into this office on May 1st 2016, I felt my immediate main task to be to give pastoral care to the workers and churches throughout the district. So the first six months were largely given to that. Even though I couldn't visit each worker or church in person, I was able to contact all the workers and/or people responsible for the various works.

In spite of the tremendous chock created by the event leading to my being placed in office, I quickly found that our workers and church leaders were moved by the same desire; not to give way to the enemy's efforts to destroy but to believe God for the carrying out of His work in us. There was a common awakening to the need to live in such a way before the Lord; in complete dependance upon His grace and His provision. I can even say, that I discovered a heightened expectation of God's intervening in each place and in each work here in Quebec. I am so very thankful for the way that individuals and churches have opened the door to me to carry out my ministry to you.

A second discovery was that there was a great desire to have closer ties as members of the spiritual family in Quebec; to see barriers which had separated taken away and the distances that keep us apart overcome. This resonates enormously with me, so I lifted up the banner of "Family" as a rallying cry and I have witnessed much movement in that direction. I feel that we are living in a 'divine moment' that God has prepared for us to discover how he wants to work through our unity in the midst of the diversity of who we are.

CELEBRATE

A district is but an extension of the ensemble of churches and works. The Saint Lawrence District is presently made up of 19 organized churches, 9 developing churches and 4 works/church plants. This collective of 32 churches and groups celebrate the Lord in many different languages (French, English, Creole, Cantonese, Mandarin, Pharsi, Spanish and Vietnamese) and are comprised of quite a variety of cultural backgrounds.

I am proud to be a part of a district which has strategically seen to it that this cultural diversity is represented in the District Executive Committee (DEXCOM). I began this period as a member of the DEXCOM and already was happy to be able to serve as a part of such a team. But my appreciation for the group has grown significantly during these 12 months. Their support of my personally and their wise collective counsel have greatly edified me. Thank-you Judith Schroeder-Tabah (vice-president), Serge Roy (treasurer), Ernst Civil, Karoline Bouchard, Lucie Duong, Claude Noël and Désiré Mounanga for your faithful service to your spiritual family.

There are 49 workers in leadership among our faith communities or working on the district level. What a great team! Since last Conference, here is a list of those who have joined the team:

Rev. Areseneau, Steeve (Tammy)- aumônier militaire Val Cartier
Rev. Bieselaar, Jean-Christophe (Keiko) - ACM Gatineau/ÉTÉQ
Catalano, Jonathan - Fairview Alliance Church (DDO)
Cherng, Joseph (Alice) - Montreal Chinese Alliance Grace Church (Anglais)
Debanné, Marc (Cheryl) - Oasis (Pierrefonds)
Rev. Dellaforesta, John (Gina) - Laval Christian Fellowship (Laval)
Fong, Daniel (Judy) - St Laurent Chinese Allianche Church
Mortelliti, Matteo (Bethany) - le 180 (Laval)
Pearson, David (Karoline) - ACM Rimouski
Rev. Ruso, Domenic (Beverley) - le 180 (Laval)
Rev. Uong, Guy (Minh-Hue) - Living Spring Chinese Alliance Church (DDO)
Yong, Nathaniel (Suzanne) - West Island Chinese Alliance Church

Two others are almost at the point of being accredited and are already working in our churches:

Pierre-Louis, Jean-David (Marie-Islande) - Église Sanctuaire de la Grâce (Montréal Nord)
Wu, Hao - Montreal Chinese Alliance Grace Church

Most of this team and spouses were present at the annual district workers' retreat at St-Gabriel de Val Cartier, last Fall where we experience powerful moments of commitment concerning toward personal integrity as workers.

To be hired as a worker in a church does not signal an end to our training. There are four of these workers who have completed their path to ordination:

Rev. Daniel Fong - January 26 2017
Rev. Jinping Ma - May 21 2017
Rev. Ryan Lee - May 21 2017
Rev. Chia-Hsing Wu - May 18 2017

Congratulations and may the Lord annoint your lives in ministry!

Our brother, Rev. Michel Houle is transitioning into retirement from pastoral ministry after more than 3 decades of service. May God accompany you Michel, into the next steps!

Since just over two years, four workers and former workers have entered glory:

Mabel Quinlan -January 10 2015
Jean Heidement - November 12 2015
Rev. Jesse Jespersen - March 5 2016
Joakim Rios - October 12 2016

PARTNERSHIPS

C&MA - Mennonite Brethren:

This Conference marks the 20th anniversary of the creation of IBVIE. 2016 saw the finalizing of a long process leading to the official fusion of IBVIE and ETEM which resulted in the creation of a single school; École Théologique Évangélique du Québec (ÉTÉQ). The members of the Saint Lawrence DEXCOM are our

(C&MA Quebec) representatives on the corporation in a partnership with the Mennonite Brethren of Quebec. Four of the eight members of the Board of Directors are from our family: the superintendent (Michael), Rev. Hérault Alphonse, Rev. Mathurin Boignant et Claire Sauvé. The first steps in the reorganization process are behind us and things are going forward toward the development of a strategic plan. I encourage you to visit the ETEQ booth to discover more.

SLD - WCD

We have just come to the end of a three year partnership with the Western Canadian District which as seen \$20,000/year be poured into our efforts of developing new leaders and existing workers in DSL. Oh how this has been encouraging to see how much our brothers and sisters in Alberta have a heart for us. We are hoping to negotiate an extension to this partnership.

SLD - Eastern and Central Districts

The three Eastern districts of the C&MA in Canada have been working together on several levels. The main area is in the New Ventures. Dave Enns is the point person in this dossier. I really appreciate Dave's energy and his flexibility when working together. The 180 Church in Laval is the fruit of the New Ventures initiative. From now on, all new works in our district will be channelled through New Ventures. Please read his report.

SLD - CMA in Canada

Since the beginnings of the St-Lawrence district, the other Canadian districts have contributed, through Canadian ministries funds, to the finances of our district operations. These funds are diminishing, but their support is being manifested in other forms.

One of these is the office that Lorilee Jespersen holds as missions mobilizer. Her report shares with us several very exciting developments. The passion that Lorilee brings concerning the importance of intercessory prayer is contagious. Now is the time for us in Quebec to become involved in the mission aspect of our family!

Troy Wiesner works in developing young leaders and is involved in a number of projects that relate to his mandate. Please read carefully his report for more details and let your excitement grow for what God is doing!

Troy and Lorilee are a real blessing to us in the SLD

Monika Muller Breault is doing an excellent job in her efforts to bring back to life women's ministries in our district. If you think the facts reported in her report are exciting, take the time to talk with some women who have already met with Monika or have attended an event for women.

Cheryl Smith Debanné, as her report indicates, works to coordinate ministry to children. Instead of re-inventing the wheel, she works with other proven organisations in this area. She offers herself as a resource person for our family of churches.

When I began in this office, Bethany Mortelliti had just begun her work as communications person. Even though she is working on a 10 hour/wk contract, Bethany has been able to bring so much creativity and expertise to her role. So, we have seen some great improvements in this area. Thank-you so much, Bethany.

Being sprung into this role, as I was, I am extremely thankful for Allan Hack in his role as administrative assistant to the superintendent. What a workload he has borne, and almost always with a smile! I appreciate immensely his companionship. Also, I want to testify to my gratefulness toward Céline Bastien Genest in her role in the office. It not always easy to juggle the tasks given her that don't fit neatly into the time she is allotted.

CONCLUSION

In 2011, we adopted a strategic vision for our district (please consult the annexed document)

As a part of this vision we find the following declaration concerning the role of the district:

District Mission

To support our faith communities (local churches) in their mandate to be communities of faith (churche) transformed by Jesus Christ, transforming, through the power of the Holy Spirit, their community, Quebec, Canada and the world to the glory of the Triune God.

Those who work for the district work to serve the churches together. I know that all the present team are motivated with a servant's heart. It has been my privilege to work with such people. It has been a great source of joy for me to have been called to serve you during this period of transition.

"On mission together", the theme of this conference reflects an important next step; an opportunity that we dare not miss as a spiritual family. It is the deep aspiration of my heart for us in the Saint Lawrence District. A family does things together, completing each other in order to accomplish commun goals.

"O Lord, show us our part in your Kingdom work for this day!"

Michael H. Gagnon