Having seen Paul’s ability to reduce his life to one thing, I began to wonder if others in Scripture had been able to do the same thing. I came across the words of the Psalmist: “One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple” (Psalm 27:4). What’s remarkable for the Psalmist is that he is besieged by life-threatening circumstances, yet he is able to find that “one thing”: to reflect on and trust in the magnificence of God.

So what is the “one thing” for The Presbyterian College? We have classes in theology. We worship in chapel. We instill skills and understanding for ministry. We build Christian community. But to what end? Surely it is for the same reason that the writer of 2 Peter identifies: “to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” Theological education is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end, and that end is that we might be formed and deepened in the knowledge of God’s grace in Jesus Christ and all that it entails. Community matters because it is the place where we can live out our identity in Christ. Theology matters because it can help us engage in the mystery of Christ and how that mystery relates...
to the world in which we live. Skills and understanding in ministry matter because they equip us for the building up of the body of Christ to live out of the blessing of Christ.

I want to thank all those who have partnered with us over the year in prayer, financial support and encouragement. At a time when many think theological education is on the way out, we hold a vision of being and becoming a dynamic place of learning and formation for all those who believe God is at work in the world and want to join in that work. In the midst of our work we trust that it will all be grounded in that one thing.

Dale Woods
Principal

Renewing Facilities/Facilitating Ministry

REV. DR. ROLAND DE VRIES

Students returning to studies in the Fall of 2017 would certainly have noticed changes to our facilities here at The Presbyterian College. The summer was a very busy period of renovation and construction, made possible through the contributions of generous donors and also through a grant from the Enabling Accessibility Fund of the Federal Government.

On the second floor of the administration and classroom wing, there were changes in three areas. Most important, for students, we completed a renovation of the upper common room which saw new flooring, new blinds, and new furnishings. But of course we kept those awesome retro couches (!) and even brought in a retro-style carpet to match—so it still feels much like the old common room.

The second floor also saw the creation of a new office for the Clerk of the Presbytery of Montreal, a new office for the college’s Leadership Centre, and new offices for a new tenant—the McGill Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (formerly known as the chaplaincy office of McGill). We are grateful for the opportunity to make full use of our facilities, and doing so through a connection with the chaplaincy office has been a positive move for the college.

Another very noticeable change that the whole college community has noticed is in the chapel, where we have installed audio-visual equipment along with Wi-Fi. This has allowed for the respectful use of images and video in worship, and will also serve as an important training space for worship leadership in the twenty-first century. A side benefit of this change is that the chapel now serves as an additional classroom or workshop space—already our In-Ministry Year students have participated in a children’s ministry workshop in this fully-equipped space.
Finally (!) the biggest piece of the construction puzzle has been the creation of a new entrance, along with fully accessible washrooms, in the residence/cafeteria area of the building. It is now possible for the public to enter the cafeteria without also accessing the residence itself, and the college now has accessible washrooms on the main level. This change also means that the cafeteria and kitchen may be leased to a restaurateur, and it is our hope and expectation that the cafeteria will be up and running again in 2018.

Continuing renewal and refurbishment within our facilities is important not only because it maintains those facilities, but because it allows those facilities to serve our mission with and for the church—a mission of training women and men for faithful leadership in the Church of Jesus Christ. You are welcome to stop by and check out the changes for yourself and if you are here in Montreal, that would be easy. If you’re from further afield, well, you are always welcome to come for a visit!

The Presbyterian College Annual Fall Retreat

Students, staff, and faculty enjoy Presbyterian College’s annual retreat along with the United Theological College and the Diocesan College in the Laurentians
A Growing International Student Body:

Rev. Oliver Kondeh Ndula and Mr. Silvio Esteves

The Rev. Kondeh Ndula is a Pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon and is currently in a qualifying year for the Master of Sacred Theology, through The Presbyterian College.

It is a privilege to share a few highlights about myself within The Presbyterian College newsletter. I am an ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC). I was called to the Ministry in the year 2004. From 2004 to 2007, I received theological formation in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary Kumba, in the South West Region of Cameroon. Upon graduation with a Bachelor of Theology degree, I was authorised to serve as an assistant pastor, which I did for two years before I was ordained in December 2009.

Since leaving seminary, I have served the PCC for 10 years, eight of which were in the rural suburbs of Bafut as parish pastor and one year in the cosmopolitan town of Buea as Pastor of Molyko parish and Chaplain to the University of Buea. These years have been filled with exciting moments of having to meet and work with all kinds of people, as well as challenges ranging from the absence of basic social amenities such as potable water, electricity, good educational facilities for my children and good roads linking the congregations of the parishes where I served in Bafut to the nearest urban center, Bamenda; to the very demanding work load in the over two thousand five hundred members mainly student cosmopolitan parish of Molyko alongside University Chaplaincy functions. Due to the size of the congregation in Molyko, together with the Associate Pastor, we led two services each Sunday, weekly Bible studies, and counselling sessions.

It was in Buea that my journey to Canada began. Sometime between the months of March and April 2016, six pastors of the PCC (myself included) were called to the Synod office in Buea and given guidelines to begin a process that will end in studies in Canada for two of the pastors who may eventually be selected. I happened to have been one of the two eventually selected to benefit from a Scholarship to study at The Presbyterian College, Montreal. Thus, I was relieved from my pastoral functions in June 2016 to process my documents and travel to Canada. For reasons best known to God, I failed to procure travel documents and so could not travel with my colleague and friend, Rev. Mrs. Mforlem Prudence, whose papers went through. When it had become clear that I would not travel, at least in the 2016/2017 academic year, and six months doing nothing, my church reassigned me to Bali in the North-West Region of Cameroon as Parish Pastor and this time with additional functions as Presbyterial Treasurer for the Presbytery, a position I was to hold from January to August.

Meantime, thanks to the interventions of the Principal of The Presbyterian College, Rev. Dr. Dale Woods and the Cameroonian High Commissioner to Canada, H.E. Solomon Azombi, my file which, at one time was rejected, was reopened. After some further delays that led to the cancellation of my initial entry academic year, I was finally granted travel papers in August 2017. Thus, I arrived in Montreal on August 30th, 2017. My appreciations go to the authorities of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, the authorities of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, and my colleague and friend, Rev. Mrs. Mforlem Prudence for all the sacrifices to ensure the success of this endeavour, as well as for standing by me throughout the difficult moments of this journey. I am married to Mrs. Mawo T. Stephanie and we are blessed with four boys.

Mr. Silvio Esteves is currently a first-year Master of Divinity student at The Presbyterian College.

Many pastors go to Divinity school immediately upon finishing their Bachelor degree and pursue ordination within a few years. For me, it will take much longer.
My story of call begins in 2005 when I was a young man of 33. I had the opportunity to participate in Christian Leadership training in Maui, Hawaii. It was one of the most gratifying experiences of my life, with the opportunity to be trained along with people from over 20 nationalities. Upon my return to Brazil, I felt called to pursue ordination and to serve Christ's church as a minister. Since I was blessed with the ability to speak Portuguese, Spanish, and English well, I felt that I should be formally trained in North America, where my language skills could be better used.

For two years, my wife and I worked long hours at a ski resort in Colorado and we were able to save money for my theological training. An unfortunate technicality meant that I was unable to study at the PC(USA) Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia where I had hoped to attend. With our work visa about to expire, I applied at a small Pentecostal Bible College, also located in Atlanta. I studied there for three semesters.

When I was nearly out of funds, my Pastor encouraged me to apply at another PC(USA) school—Columbia Theological Seminary. Despite being barely able to afford to pay the Bible College I was in, out of respect for her, I submitted my application. I was called for an interview. When asked how was I going to pay for the three years Masters of Divinity program, I told my interviewer I had money for only one semester, and explained I was hoping to use some of the credits from the Bible College to shorten the study time.

Only two days later, I received a phone call from the Professor who had interviewed me. He carried both good and bad news: Columbia had found a person who would sponsor me by paying for all my tuition, but they would not be able to accept any credits from the other institution. In 2008, now thirty-six years old, I began my studies from zero again, but I was very happy.

Two years later my brother called from Brazil with the sad news that our father was very ill. Our family—my wife, myself and our two sons—returned home only to find my dad being kept alive artificially. It was a difficult time for us as he passed away only a few days later. After time with my mother, it seemed right to return to seminary so I could finish my studies. The US consul denied our visa application, arguing that we had purposely arranged to overstay our allotted time. Worse, the American government refused to even authorize us to return long enough to gather our possessions from the apartment we had been renting.

I remember well the day in March 2012 when my Seminary colleagues graduated. My broken heart prevented me from being as happy for them as I would have liked to have been. Three years of theological training, our entire savings spent on tuition and living expenses, and I had nothing to show for it. Sadly, it seemed that God was trying to stop me from pursuing what I believed to be my calling to become a Pastor. Not letting myself be defeated, I succeeded in obtaining a Management Master’s degree from UniCesumar, an important Brazilian university, through hard work and the generosity of a Presbyterian brother (Prof. Wilson Mattos) who owns that university.

Fast forward five years, in September 2017, now 44 years old, I arrived in Montreal with the dream of pursuing ministry still burning brightly. Once more, we saved our money and sold our home, ready to start from scratch again. The good news is that The Presbyterian College agreed to use some of my credits from Columbia, and within two years, I anticipate earning my M. Div. It is my deep desire that God will provide a church in Canada that will call me as their pastor.

Whether one is 25 or 45 years old, the best time for anyone to become a pastor is in God’s time. As I reflect on the past decade, I can see how God was caring for us in all moments, and I am glad for everything that happened, both the good and bad times. Serving as an Elder for my church while back in Brazil helped me to gain experience. If it is God’s will, I will serve as a minister, much more prepared than I was in 2005. If “life” happens to me again, I will still serve my local church in any way I can. If there is something I have learned in my years of theological studies, it is that it is God who directs us. Therefore, let not my will, but God’s will be done.

Finally, nobody comes to Seminary alone. You need the support of friends, family, and sometimes the generosity of strangers. In that regard, my many thanks to Rev. & Mrs. Humberto Esteves, to the Second Independent Presbyterian Church in Maringa in Brazil. Also, the University Presbyterian Church, Alaska; the First Presbyterian Church in Green Coves Springs, Florida; the McKenzie/McLellan/Mitchell fund of The Presbyterian College, that not only support me with their prayers, but also financially. Christ’s church has a great need for ministers, and I encourage you who are reading this right now to support the call for future ministers like myself.
What Am I Doing Now?

Catching up with Rev. Dr. Todd Statham, 2003 Graduate of The Presbyterian College

Submitted by Todd Statham

Rev Dr. Statham lives in Kelowna, BC, with his wife, three kids, four horses and one dog. He is the Christian Reformed Church campus minister at UBC-Okanagan and graduated from PC in 2003.

I served in Malawi with International Ministries/PCC from 2011 to 2014. When folks ask me what I’m doing these days, I tell them that I’m still a missionary, but now in a strange and dangerous place: the university campus. Since October 2016, I’ve been employed by the Christian Reformed Church as pastor to the Okanagan campus of the University of British Columbia (UBCO). The older word for my job is “chaplain.” After Christendom, I’m a missionary. At UBCO, chaplains of any faith aren’t recognized by the administration, which means I work from a backpack and smartphone out of the campus Starbucks—or, on bad days, out of Tim Hortons. Yet with all the intellectual, social and pastoral challenges on campus, I feel prepared by God’s past provision. What a blessing that I can combine into one job my training from The Presbyterian College and pastoral experience with my academic and teaching background (I have a Ph.D. from McGill and have taught at several colleges). Even the decade I spent living outside of Canada comes in handy when reaching out to international students on campus, many of whom are struggling with a culture shock I’ve known only too well. Indeed, one of the highlights of my first year on the job was having twelve international grad students (half of whom aren’t Christian) over for Thanksgiving, introducing them both to a Canadian cultural tradition and to the reasons why we’re thankful to God for all his gifts.

Being a Reformed campus minister gives me a wider not narrower scope for campus ministry. God cares about students, yes, but he also cares about what they study and who is teaching it; Christian faith is personal but not private or individual, being acted out in local congregations—what students don’t always want to hear!—and the fallen world where God plants us as ambassadors of his kingdom. So this means (among other things) that I actively support my evangelical colleague in his work in evangelizing and discipling undergraduate students, lead a core group studying the Apostles Creed, facilitate a cluster of Christian profs who meet to discuss a faith-based research project, and sit on a university committee addressing mental health among staff and students.

This position has required me to transfer into the Christian Reformed Church, and it’s taking some time getting used to the Dutch way of being Reformed! But I’ve got good connections with the Presbyterians in Kelowna and am looking forward to speaking at Presbytery in March 2018. Please keep me in prayer, and if anyone is interested in finding out more about my work, or how to support campus ministry at UBCO, contact me at wellspringubco@gmail.com.

Convocation 2018

Convocations of The Presbyterian College have historically been held on Thursday evenings. However, due to a scheduling conflict at The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Convocation 2018 will be held on

Tuesday, May 8th.

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Appointment of New Director of the PC Leadership Centre

Tim Keener is a minister with the Evangelical Covenant Church of Canada. He has previously served in ministry in the United States and in France. Tim’s first orientation was in organizational management (BSBA Welch College, Nashville, TN) and his primary interest is the intersection of organizational studies and sacred ministry. He earned an MA in Practical Theology from Ashland Seminary (2014, Ashland, OH) with an emphasis in Mission, Evangelism, and Congregational Renewal and holds a graduate certificate in Congregational Vitality from North Park University (Chicago, IL). Tim collaborates in Congregational Vitality initiatives in North America and Europe and he and his family currently attend St-Peter’s Anglican Church in Montreal.

Reaching Out to Young Adults: Dependable Strengths

REV. DR. DALE WOODS

The mission of The Presbyterian College is to help form and equip faithful and effective leaders in the church and the world. Over the past few years, we have had a passion to do more to engage the leadership abilities of young adults. We have set a goal to touch the lives of 1,000 young adults by helping them reflect on their own vocation and the gifts God has given them. In November, we gathered 20 participants to take part in a program called Dependable Strengths. Ten of the participants also trained as facilitators to run this program in their own congregation or community. It was interdenominational and included people from across Canada.

(contin’ed page 8)

Our Dependable Strengths Leaders: Tom Vais and Sally Peters
We received numerous comments such as:

“We all have a lot of strengths we must explore in order to make the world a better place for us all. If you have an opportunity to attend such a workshop, don’t miss it.”

“It helped me to unearth hidden strengths and gave me the desire to use my strengths with bigger goals.”

“I felt affirmed by God that I’m thinking and considering the right thing to lead me to flourishing.”

“It gave me an increased sense of hope.”

“It increased my awareness of call, revealed overlooked talents or skills and gave me increased hope.”

“It confirmed my calling and gave me empowerment moving forward.”

These programs are much more than programs. These are places where God works and speaks a word of encouragement, the Spirit gives insight into who we are, and the grace of Christ confirms we are loved and called. We are privileged to be part of such a holy space.

I would like to thank Knox Presbyterian Church, Ottawa that gave us a gift of $2,500 to support this program and for the grants we receive from the Ewart Foundation. If you would like to support the Leadership Centre in this kind of work, we would be glad to suggest various ways you could do so. Please contact our Development Officer, Tahra de Laloo, at tdelallo@pcmtl.ca.

Dependable Strengths group training to become Facilitators
A Gift of Music

Submitted by the Rev. Lydia MacKinnon

Barbara Fris (L) and Faith Daley (R)

Often the most delightful things come to us as complete surprises! I was attending worship at Calvin Presbyterian Church, Halifax, in January, 2016, and at the fellowship hour after the service, I was speaking with Barbara Fris.

As Barb and I were talking, she said to me, “I’m coming down to your churches to put on a concert.” Immediately I was enthused and excited. Those of you who know her know why I felt that way.

I’ve known Barb for a long time—ever since she was nine or ten. Her parents were Dutch immigrants and they found a church home at Calvin Presbyterian Church. While attending university in Halifax and later throughout my teaching career, I attended Calvin. Barb and her family were already there. It was evident to Riet Vink, a fellow immigrant from Holland and the director of the Junior Choir, that Barb was gifted with a beautiful voice. She encouraged her and was instrumen-tal in helping Barb recognize that she had a special gift as, later, did Graham Bowser who led The Calvinaires, a group of young people who sang and conducted evening services around the province. It was initiated by the minister of Calvin, Rev. Dr. A. O. MacLean.

The young girl became a renowned opera singer. Barbara began her musical studies at the Nova Scotia Teacher’s College and went on to Dalhousie University and the University of Toronto. She later completed postgraduate work at the Accademia dei Rozzi, Siena, Italy.

Barb sang at a Command Performance before Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. She has appeared in most of the major Canadian opera houses and throughout the United States and Europe. In 2008, she was honoured by the Luminato Festival as “one of Toronto’s most artistic, creative and inspiring women.”

In 2015 Barb retired from her operatic career. She and her husband, Robert, returned to Nova Scotia. Everyone is delighted to have her in the Choir at her childhood church, Calvin.

I have the privilege of serving two congregations in the Presbytery of Cape Breton (Mira Pastoral Charge)—St. Columba, Marion Bridge and Union in Mira Ferry. When I brought back the news that Barb and Faith Daley were coming to put on a concert for our Pastoral Charge, folks were en-thusiastic and eager to have them come and expressed their appreciation for Barb’s and Faith’s thoughtfulness and kind-heartedness.

Faith Daley, a native of Cape Breton and the Organist at Calvin, was most happy to come with Barb to be her accompanist for the concert on May 26, 2017. Union Church was chosen as the venue for the concert since it has a larger seating cap-acity than St. Columba.

It was a splendid concert! Barb’s exquis-ite voice and her warm, friendly man-ner, along with Faith’s inspired playing, added up to an evening that was simply unforgettable. After the concert, a recep-tion was held in the church hall where almost every person who attended spoke with Barb and Faith to personally thank them for coming and for the superb music we had enjoyed.

As Barb and Faith were both sharing their talents with us free of charge, the Kirk Session of the Mira Pastoral Charge decided not to keep any of the proceeds of the concert, “Beautiful Creation,” but to donate them. It was quickly decided that the funds would go to The Presbyterian College. Barb and Faith were immensely pleased, not only that the proceeds were going to help others, but that The Presbyterian College had been chosen to be the recipient. As a result of their enormous generosity and kindness, we were able to send $1,300 to the College. Their unexpected and wonderful gift to our congregations ended up being two gifts—the gift of the concert and a gift to The Presbyterian College as well.

Thanks be to God for Barb’s and Faith’s musical gifts and for their generous natures!
In Honour and In Memory

Submitted by Mrs. Marion Stroet, daughter of the late Reverend Oliver Nugent who was a graduate of The Presbyterian College in 1937

For our family, 2017 has been a milestone for many reasons—150th anniversary of the Confederation of Canada and on a personal level the 50th anniversary of Expo 67 which provided a memorable job and an unforgettable educational experience for me and other university students across Canada.

2017 was also the 80th anniversary of my Dad's graduation from The Presbyterian College! Thus 2017 provided a meaningful reason to make a donation to the theological college he loved so dearly. He had the opportunity to study there because the minister at New St. James Church in London, Ontario saw something in him and four other young men of the congregation that could be effective in spreading the good news of God's love in Christ to others. These young men entered the ministry and their church supported them spiritually and financially. So when I heard about the financial campaign of The Presbyterian College this year I thought it a perfect time to make a donation in loving memory of my Dad.

More importantly, it made me think that such donations are an encouragement to the men and women of today who have responded to the call to serve our Lord and Saviour as ministers of the Gospel in this complicated world of ours.

Worth considering, wouldn't you say?

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Taking a Leap of Faith—Capital Campaign Update

Tahra De Lallo

We continue to receive gifts and pledges from our wonderful family of alumni, friends of the College, and congregations from across the country. We are truly grateful for the support we have received and we thank you sincerely for your thoughtfulness and generosity. For those that have yet to experience the joy of giving to The Presbyterian College, we hope you will do so at

www.presbyteriancollege.ca/donate

or contact us by phone or e-mail.

I invite you all to share in the stories of how giving can change your life, as well as the lives of others, through the joy of song, the celebration of one's life's mission, and by the generosity of a bequest that keeps on giving.

Many blessings to all!
Beer, Hope, Legacy, and the Future

Rev. Dr. Dale Woods

For all of us, life gives three gifts: the past, the present and the future. The past allows us to look back for the experiences and people who have blessed our lives. The present invites us to make a difference in the world today. But what about the future?

When Jesus encouraged people not to “lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:19-20), he was inviting them to consider blessing the future. In our culture, the common view is that life is for “getting ahead,” for getting and accumulating as much as we can. But in Jesus’ view of the world, life is for “seeing ahead.”

Jesus doesn’t, as one writer notes, “spell out how the disciples are to store up treasures in heaven... He leaves room for the disciples’ creative response in his or her particular situation.” But Jesus does invite us to consider our role in the future. The future blesses us with the opportunity of leaving a legacy today to bless generations in the future.

Some of you may know the story of Arthur Guinness, the entrepreneur who started Guinness beer in Ireland in 1759. A man with a vision, he signed a 9,000 year lease for £45 a year. Believing that hard liquor, especially large consumptions of gin in Irish society was destroying families, Guinness believed a beer was a healthier form of alcohol. Within a few years, his company achieved remarkable success. With that success, Guinness gave back to both his workers and to society. He donated to charities, worked for health care for the poor, supported the arts, and advocated for tolerance in a religiously divided community. He left a legacy that would survive long after his death in 1803. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Guinness board members provided employee benefits—health insurance, subsidized meals, pension, higher wages—that were unparalleled in Ireland at the time.

So where did Arthur Guinness develop the conviction that legacies mattered? When he was a young man he worked with his father for Dr. Arthur Price, an Anglican vicar. When Dr. Price died he left Arthur and his father a bequest of £100 each. When Arthur signed his 9,000 year lease for £45 a month he also had to come up with a £100 deposit! The legacy gift of £100 from Dr. Price not only changed Arthur’s life in ways Dr. Price would never know, it impacted thousands of others throughout Arthur’s life and beyond. In fact, the Guinness board has a benevolent fund that gives thousands of pounds away each year.

In a culture that seeks to “get ahead” Jesus invites us to “see ahead.” If you are interested in a legacy gift to The Presbyterian College in one of four areas (faculty, students, facilities, or operations) we would be glad to hear from you.

Chapel gathering
Generosity Inspired by Others

Tahra De Lallo

Gifts have been given In Honour of those below marking milestones, anniversaries, degrees and other celebration in their lifetime. Others are gifts In Memory and recognize the importance of someone’s life to those that have given in their name.

In Honour and In Memory gifts* are wonderful ways to give and to celebrate our loved ones and friends. Tucked into this newsletter, you will find a card called Generosity Inspired by Others, which offers an opportunity to give a gift to honour or remember a friend, mentor, or loved one. The individual or family, depending on which type of gift you are giving, is notified by The Presbyterian College of your thoughtfulness, and these individuals will now be published annually in our Newsletter. The actual amount is not disclosed—all gifts will be receipted to the donor for tax purposes.

Please note below the gifts received for 2016-2017:

Grace Bragg (Mackay)
Bessie Budwin
Douglas James Dimock
Reverend Thomas Gemmell, Grad. 1963
Reverend Dr. William J. Klempa
Reverend Dr. Lloyd George MacDonald, Grad. 1974, DD 2004
Randolph Douglas MacLean, Grad. 1941
Reverend John S. McBride, Grad. 1944, DD 1974

Reverend Ross Irvine McKee, Grad. 1945
Reverend Dr. Joseph C. McLelland, DD 2007
Reverend Dr. Cedric Pettigrew, Grad. 1969, DD 2016
Reverend John Simms, Grad. 1947

* This is a new program at The Presbyterian College. If we have omitted someone’s name, our sincere apologies. Please be sure to contact our Development Officer, Tahra De Lallo, at tdelallo@pcmtl.ca so we can make the necessary corrections.