

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2020

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The Presbyterian College is a partner within the Montreal School of Theology, and is affiliated with the School of Religious Studies, McGill University.

A Few Reflections

Ministry is about transitions. No one holds a particular role forever. Even Moses had to let go after almost half a century of leading God's people! Transitions mean that our work is never complete. God's mission extends beyond any person or any generation. I often think of Moses, sitting on Mount Nebo, across from Jericho, overlooking the promised land. He had worked hard to get there, suffered numerous setbacks, and had his own questions for God. Yet, for all that, he never arrived in the promised land. I have often said to students, "If you aren't willing to see the fruit of your ministry from a distance, you may be in the wrong vocation."

If we are called to walk by faith, we are also called to work by faith. We hope it is done in faithfulness, but surely it can only be done in faith. In the end, it is God's vision, God's mission, and God's work. As Rev. Ian Victor used to say to me, "Dale, remember we are in sales, not management."

I have been at Presbyterian College for almost thirteen years. It has been a ministry to which I felt called. Presbyterian College has a unique role to play in the province of Quebec. With its partners in the Montreal School of Theology, it is the only English-speaking theological college that is part of the Association of Theological Schools accreditation in the province of Quebec. Its partnership with McGill School of Religious Studies helps support the theological study and research within that institution. Its partnership with the United Theological College and the Diocesan Theological College make it possible for those institutions to provide theological education for their own students, most of whom remain in Quebec. Its new partnership with the Francophone Institute for Theological Studies and its potential agreement with Laval University open new doorways into French ministry.

I have been privileged to work with great colleagues. Two are no longer with



us: Dr. Shuling Chen and Rev. Dr. Ian Victor; I still miss them. I was blessed

to work alongside students who believed God was calling them into a new form of ministry. I learned much from them as they navigated their way through complex structures, challenging studies, and personal growth. I was able to witness daily what most of the church does not get to see—the personal sacrifices that so many students make in order to serve the church.

As I transition to a new ministry in Vancouver, I continue to see new opportunities for the College. The next Principal will continue to face new challenges, not because we are doing

something wrong, but because it is the nature of ministry. The only way through is to fix "our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith...so that you may not grow weary and lose heart (Heb. 12:2-3)." It has always been central to Christian living, but in these challenging days, it seems an even more important reminder.

With gratitude, D. Woods

Announcement: Acting Principal



The Board of Governors of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, is pleased to announce the appointment of the Rev. Dr. Roland De Vries as Acting Principal, commencing July 1, 2020. Dr. De Vries will hold the position of Acting Principal until such time as the search for a new Principal of The Presbyterian College is completed, or until June 30, 2021.

Dr. De Vries has been the Director of Pastoral Studies at The Presbyterian College since 2015 and previously served as Acting Principal during Dr. Woods' sabbatical in 2019. The Board is confident that he will provide the necessary leadership during this time of transition at the College.

The Board is grateful to Dr. De Vries for his willingness to take on these new duties and we invite you to join us in congratulating him in this new leadership position.

Thanks Dale!

By the Rev. Joel Coppleters

It was one of those spur-of-the-moment decisions that I have never regretted. While I was slowly making headway through my MDiv degree at The Presbyterian College, more than a decade ago, my wife Debbie and I attended the Church of St. Andrew and

St. Paul in downtown Montreal. We had no official role in the congregation, apart from the privilege of keeping an eye out for newcomers who were trying not to look lost. And it is a congregation where out-of-town, Sunday visitors are not uncommon.

On one of those Sunday mornings in 2008 I met Dale Woods. He had just arrived from a 14-year pastorate at First Presbyterian Church in Brandon, Manitoba, and was transitioning into a new role as the Director of Pastoral Studies at the College. After the service, on the spur of the moment, we drove through out-of-season snowy slush, around the main parts of the city, and I answered basic questions about neighbourhoods, transit, and weather.

My first impression of Dale never left me. Some ministers step into other kinds of service because they can't stand the church anymore. I was struck by the tinge of sadness in Dale as he spoke of leaving the hands-on pastoring of a congregation. As Dale mentored me and dozens of other students over the next few years, his passion for the church was always obvious. We could tell he wasn't in an office at the College hiding from the messy reality of congregational life.

That love for the church and a passion for the importance of congregational leadership done well continued to mark Dale's priorities as he stepped in as Acting Principal in January 2013, and then was officially appointed by the General Assembly in June 2014.

As I transitioned into church leadership after decades of managing businesses and non-profits, I was encouraged by Dale's obvious assumption that if the lucrative bottom line in business deserves well-prepared and well-resourced leaders, more so the church of Christ.

When Dale's contributions to Presbyterian College are listed, they will undoubtedly include some important elements: guiding the new visioning process, creating the Leadership Center, building the mentoring program, overseeing a substantial funding campaign, and a few attempted projects that ended up as learning opportunities. But his most important impact is a second-hand one that will continue long after

his term. Dozens of congregations across the PCC are now led by women and men that Dale refused to let off easy. Through challenge and encouragement, we have learned that you don't ignore the hard realities of congregational life and that they don't make ministry impossible. You do the work. You prepare. You surround yourself with a support structure. And you love your people through the thick of the storm.

We will miss Dale, but in the end, none of us were surprised that he would leave the College for a role where he will continue to challenge churches and ministers to think outside of the box so that ministry can happen, and happen better.

Thanks Dale!

Being and Building Christian Community

During the Covid-19 Lockdown

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith..."

Hebrews 12: 1-2a

"Looking unto Jesus" first and foremost, Rev. Dr. Woods reminded the College community at the final chapel service for the academic year 2019-2020, is our privilege as Christians. In his warm and authentic way, Principal Woods reminded us that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and encouraged The Presbyterian College community to continue to look to Jesus as "the pioneer and perfecter of our faith." This is a powerful reminder during this major time of change, as the College navigates a leadership transition, and the church charts its way during the lock-down imposed by the coronavirus.

Students who had to leave Montreal suddenly to return home, as well as all those who remained in the city, were able to be present in chapel services conducted on a video conferencing platform right until the end of term. Mentees and Board members who would ordinarily have been unable to attend the final service of the year, joined Principal Woods' farewell chapel service from Nova Scotia, Toronto, London, Ontario, and

elsewhere. Even with the limits imposed by cyberspace, the College community was able to say farewell with a video compiling "selfies" created by students and faculty who shared their heartfelt gratitude and well wishes. The community also said good-bye to the College librarian Rev. Dr. Dan Shute and thanked him virtually, in a meaningful way, for his over forty years of service.

As counterintuitive as it seemed when the lock-down came suddenly upon us, our experience at the College during this time has been one of deepening community. Yes, we are isolated and it is often difficult. But we have also experienced the spiritual unity that worship brings, even on-line, the potential of singing together, praying together, even in taking communion together, from the distance of each in our own home. We are also experiencing what times of fellowship and prayer can offer, even online. The ending of the school year usually signals a hiatus in intentional community life. This year we have continued to offer a time of fellowship and prayer twice weekly through video conferencing for all who would like to participate. The platform provides a space where students and faculty can meet to share one another's burdens, and to continue to pray for each other, for the College, for front-line workers, for the nations, and for our world.

Technology has supported the College in "Being and Building Authentic Christian Community," as we have moved into these peculiar times. We have missed the joy of celebrating our students' achievements at our annual convocation; nothing can replace the casual connections in the hallways, the library, the lounge, the terrace, that are so much a part of community life at the College. Yes, it still feels strange to have to reach out of the isolation of our individual silos. And yet, the telephone, WhatsApp, email, Skype or Zoom provide the links so necessary to nurturing community life during this time. And we're using them in whatever ways we can to continue to be and to build the

authentic Christian community that we strive to create.

Indeed, being and building Christian community through worship, through prayer and through being there for one another continues to be central to our vision of theological education. Please pray that we will continue to run with perseverance the race that is before us as we transition into a new time, even amidst the challenges of Covid-19.

Welcoming Joanna

Presbyterian College welcomes Joanna Duy as part-time librarian. Joanna comes with several years of experience as librarian from Concordia University. She was recently the administrator of The Montreal School of Theology so she is also familiar with our work as a theological consortium. We hope

to complete the quiet study space in the library stacks area this fall and look forward to the creative ideas Joanna will bring to the library, while maintaining it as a place of support and hospitality for our students.



Facilities Renewal



These pandemic days have put our buildings into a new perspective, haven't they? Over the past number of months, we have learned to be congregations, and a theological college, without our buildings. Online worship and education have become (somewhat!) normal for us. We have begun to imagine life as God's scattered people—scattered in mission and service and worship.

Of course, our buildings aren't going anywhere. They are, and will continue to be, vital centres of worship and prayer and education and ministry into the future. While our relationships with our buildings will have changed, and we are learning to be God's people as much outside of the walls as within them, they

will continue to be vital to the embodied life of those who live and serve in the way of Christ.

The College continues a project to address deferred maintenance in the coming months—keeping our building an appropriate place for ministry and community life. Building renovations and maintenance are not the most exciting aspect of college life, but they require our attention and care! Over the past few weeks we have installed new entrance doors at the front of the building—which will be good news for anyone who has had to wrestle the big, old doors open in the past few years!! We have also replaced the roof on the residence wing, with white gravel which



helps to reduce the level of urban heat. The courtyard is a beautiful space, of course, and we will have more news about its restoration in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, a few pictures of beautiful, spring tulips in that space.







Congratulations to the



Oliver Kondeh Ndula, Master of Sacred Theology (McGill)

Born in the North West Region of Cameroon to Christian parents, Oliver Kondeh Ndula grew up in the church. He was first trained as an elementary school teacher. After some years of teaching, he received pastoral formation at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Kumba, Cameroon, graduating with a Bachelor of Theology in 2007. Thereafter, he served the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon as Parish Pastor, sometimes with additional duties over a period of ten years.

He came to Montreal in Fall 2017 and began his studies at the The Presbyterian College/McGill, thanks to the Faith-to-Faith Program of the

College. His focus has been on inter-Religious dialogue. His stay at The Presbyterian College has been a very enriching one: from the communal life of the residence and other College events; through a friendly staff who have never relented their efforts to make both his studies and stay in Canada an enjoyable experience; to a challenging academic encounter in a secular University. Oliver, whose wife and children live in Cameroon is graduating with a Master of Sacred Theology. He enjoyed every moment of his stay and studies but regrets the cancellation of graduation ceremonies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Stephen Azundem, Master of Sacred Theology (McGill)

Stephen is an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana currently on secondment to The Presbyterian Church in Canada, specifically in charge of the Ghanaian Presbyterian Church of Montreal. Coming to McGill University through the Presbyterian College was a dream come true for Stephen. He had always envisaged studying abroad, in a university outside his home country. McGill University has the best world-class facility and the best professors Stephen could think about in North America education. These two institutions have deepened his knowledge in religion and global politics, which is his area of interest in the

academy. Stephen believes he is now in a better position to engage in interfaith dialogue with people of other faiths and to make an informed contribution based on knowledge. He has also attained global perspectives on interfaith issues that will help him in the analysis of an issue in the future. Stephen also believes he is in a better place to contribute to the ongoing religious-politico discourse in Ghana and Africa at large. Stephen says: "I am profoundly grateful to instructors and other administrative staff of McGill and the College whose contributions ensured the timely completion of my Masters in Sacred Theology."



Edythe Arnott, Master of Divinity

Before coming to Presbyterian College/McGill Edythe was working in the field of education with students who had learning disabilities. Although she had taught in South America and Quartaq, QC, most of her life has been lived on the Island of Montreal, where she was born. In her free time, Edythe enjoys visiting with family and friends (in COVID-19 times via

Zoom or phone), reading, and spending time in nature. She is a great-aunt to some very cute preschoolers and has recently adopted a two-year old cat named Mulligan.

While at The Church of St. Andrew & St. Paul, where she is a member, Edythe was trained as a Stephen Minister and Stephen Leader in

Graduating Class of 2020!

pastoral care. In the BTh/MDi program at The Presbyterian College/McGill, she has enjoyed studying under professors who have a strong faith and many years of scholarly and practical experience. Edythe speaks of the final year at The Presbyterian College in this way: "I have been

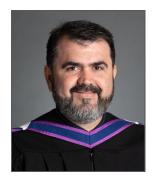
challenged and stretched in both the classes and my field placement. I feel privileged and blessed to have had this opportunity to study and prepare for ministry in this way."



Kathryn Parks, Master of Divinity

Kathryn (Kathy) Parks lives in Derby, on the Miramichi River in the province of New Brunswick. She graduated from St. Thomas University, Fredericton, NB, in the spring of 2016 with a Bachelor of Arts, with a Major in Sociology. That same year she entered The Presbyterian College/McGill University in the combined Bachelor of Theology/Master of Divinity program, completing the BTh in 2019. Continuing into the final year of the Master of Divinity (the In-Ministry Year) Kathy lived at the College residence.

Kathy knows that Higher Education is not for the faint of heart, and writes: "It is with much grace from my Lord that I pursued studies. There were many prayers and tears in this journey; I am thankful to my God, my creator. There are so many friends and supports along this path, I have been truly blessed by each one. Many times, I have been challenged to understand concepts, theories, ideologies and to read so many books. My favourite Old Testament person is Elijah and this was his prayer, 'O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your bidding. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so that this people may know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back'."



Silvio Esteves, Master of Divinity

Silvio was born in Brazil but felt called to serve the Presbyterian Church in North America. As part of the process towards ordination, Silvio did his Master of Divinity degree in two distinct phases. In his first year, he attended Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA. Years later, Silvio moved to The Presbyterian College/McGill University to complete the second and third (In-Ministry Year) of the Master of Divinity. Silvio writes that there were bumps along the way as he managed course requirements and put together, with the support of the College faculty, the final

requirements of his program with courses at the Vancouver School of Theology and Carey Hall. He writes: "This is part of the Presbyterian College experience. Not only high-level education is offered, but we are all on a first-name basis. We worshiped, prayed, travelled and shared meals as a community. At PC, they show concern to one another and when someone needs something, they will do the best they can to assist. I am grateful for my time there, especially to Annie, Dale, Dan, Lucille and Roland. May God bless and keep you."

A Word of Gratitude: Rev. Dr. Dan Shute

Dr. Shute has been at Presbyterian College for four decades. Over that time, he has served as librarian, teacher, researcher, author, and general supporter of students. As Dan concludes his work at Presbyterian College, we would like to thank him for the contribution he has made. Two of our alumni were asked to write a few words of appreciation.

The day I arrived at Presbyterian College, I met Dr. Dan Shute. His welcome was warm and sincere and I immediately found him approachable. Dan had a wonderful knowledge of the books that the library held. He was so helpful in recommending books when we were preparing papers. When asked for help in researching a topic, Dan made sure his reading suggestions would contain exactly what we needed. I also very much appreciated that Dan arranged for students to use the library on the weekends. It was such a lovely change to leave our residence rooms and work in the library.

Dan is very fond of tea and had a tea table in the library. On occasion, he would made me a cup while I was

studying. It was one of the ways he demonstrated pastoral care to us. He often asked how we were doing and if we were getting enough rest. As a mature student myself, I fully appreciated his understanding of the challenges mature students face.

Thank you, Dan, for being so helpful, supportive and dedicated over the years. You have enriched the learning experience of so many graduates. I know many others join me in wishing you every happiness in this new phase of your life. May God richly bless you.

Rev. Lydia MacKinnon, 2011

Dear Dan, (Psalm 1: 1-3)

When it comes to your ministry at the College, there are three enduring images that remain with me.

Your presence at the College: We are thankful to God for you because you have been, for 40 years, very present well beyond the library. You have taught the College denominational courses, including Bible Content Quizzes (sorry, I think I still owe you the quiz on Psalms!), the course on preaching the Old Testament faithfully, accurately and intelligently and certainly everyone's favourite, the Polity course in the In-Ministry Year.

Your hospitality: I remember one year (I think at Easter) when Elaine, Kirstin, Jordy and you, had about 25 students from the residence over to your home for supper and some fun. Not all who were invited were students of the College (some were international students at McGill etc.) I don't even know if you knew everyone who came through your door that night. I remember however that all the students were delighted to escape residence food for

the one night at least! They certainly enjoyed the hospitality of your family and home.

Your encouragement and support: The most iconic image that remains with me is the unnumbered students who have sat beside your desk and who have asked any number of questions on any number of subjects. You always took the time to answer. Usually, with a few strokes of your beard, and with wisdom and understanding, you helped find a solution. Sometimes these were brief encounters, but many took longer and diverted you away from 'regular duties' and of course your work on Peter Martyr Vermigli.

So, on behalf of all the students you have helped over all the years, thank you Dan! Congratulations on your wilderness length journey! I hope there is even more milk and honey ahead!

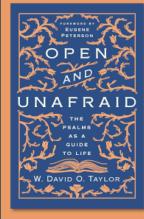
Rev. Reid Chudley, 2004

Engaging Through Webinars

We have been living through uncertain and difficult months, as individuals, students, pastoral leaders and members of the College community. As a theological college committed particularly to the task of theological reflection—of

reflecting carefully, scripturally, and theologically about our context. In this vein, we have worked to provide opportunities for such reflection over the past weeks and months. This came in the form of webinars that explored

themes related to life and ministry in the pandemic context. Thank you to all those who have participated and contributed to these opportunities for reflection and learning together.







Praying the Psalms in a Pandemic

Praying the Psalms in a Pandemic

David Taylor, author of Open and Unafraid: The Psalms as a Guide to Life

Pastoring in the Pandemic

Bruce Meyers (Bishop of Quebec, Anglican), Rita Klein-Geltink (Pastor, Ancaster CRC), and Alex MacLeod (Pastor, Kortright Presbyterian, Guelph)







Rev. Rita Klein-Geltink

CRC Pastor – Ancaster, ON

Rt. Rev. Bruce Myers Bishop of Quebec (Anglican)

Rev. Alex MacLeodKortright Presbyterian Church
Guelph, ON

PASTORING IN THE PANDEMIC

Pastoral Care in the Pandemic

Professor Pam McCarroll
Professor of Practical Theology
Toronto School of Theology



Pastoral Care in the Pandemic

Professor Pam McCarroll
Professor of Practical Theology, Toronto School of
Theology

Connecting Stewardship and Mission

Gratitude in the Midst of a Pandemic

"Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, preserve in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers."

Rom. 12-12-13

We are grateful to everyone who responded to our funding appeal brought on by the financial uncertainties of the pandemic. For their own safety, we encouraged students to end their leases before the stated dates of April 30 so that they could return home as soon as

possible. This had financial implications for the College, but it was important to put our students' health first. Increased support for our international students was important since the restrictions have meant that they could not rely on summer work as in the past. We value their presence in the College and the added support for them is greatly appreciated. Our cafeteria, along with other restaurants, has been closed since April and we are working closely to ensure it remains

sustainable for the future by adjusting lease arrangements.

We know that many people have been adversely affected financially by the pandemic, including many congregations, so we are even more grateful for the support we have received in a challenging time for many.

—A Donor's Perspective



Ruth Darling

The Presbyterian College is truly blessed by the generosity of those that choose to support our work. I had a chance to ask one of our long-time donors, Ruth Darling, about why she has chosen to support The Presbyterian College over the years. Interestingly enough, she is not a graduate of the College and no matter "how far back you go", there are not any ministers or laypeople in her family who have attended The Presbyterian College since its founding in 1865. However, Ruth's family came from Scotland in 1843 as Presbyterians and like generations before her, has continued to worship in the Presbyterian Church.

Ruth feels strongly that the College needs to continue to involve itself in the community as a key to its growth, success, and longevity. "I see the Presbyterian College and its role in a cosmopolitan city like Montreal, a vibrant bi-linguistic community like Quebec, and, of course, situated in a great country like Canada, without a doubt, playing an important role in the future leadership of the church here and around the world."

She believes in leadership and in the leadership of the College. "Principal Woods has embodied this leadership in the way he has led The Presbyterian College by demonstrating compassion, dedication, and vision to help make the world a better place." Ruth's sincerest wish is for more people to take an interest and support this very worthwhile cause.

Building for the Future

Someone once said that every organization or congregation needs four things to build for the future: clarity, competency, capacity and commitment. While many people focus only on vision, the

reality is that vision requires capacity or resources. As Presbyterian College seeks to grow and advance its mission to 'equip the saints' it requires the support of others. The Presbyterian College

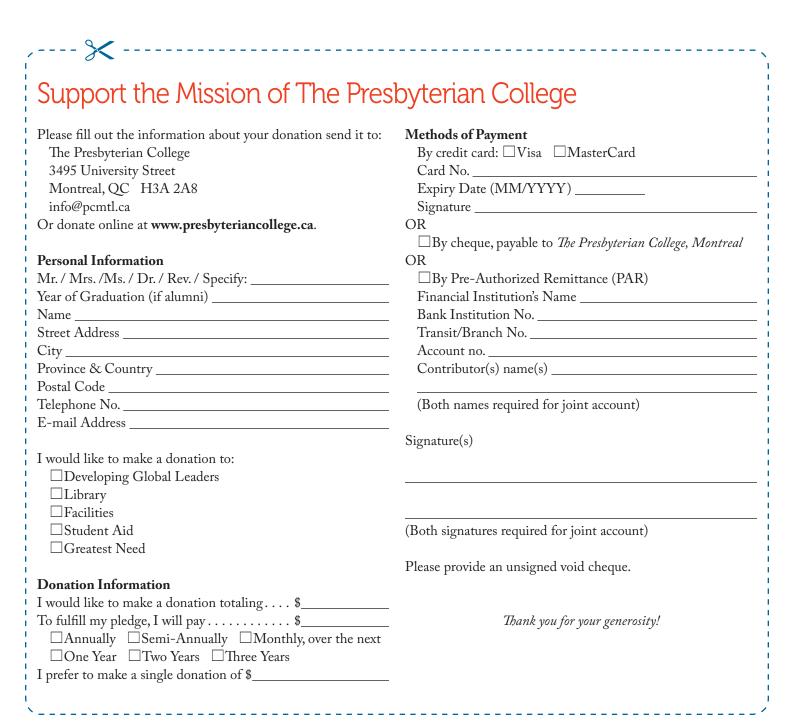
is deeply grateful to donors who give monthly to the College. Some donors sign up through their credit cards, others by sending a personal cheque each month, and still others through the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) program. Gifts range from \$20 to \$600 per month. The average gift is approximately \$128.

As little as \$30 per month adds up quickly and at the end of the year totals

\$360 when yearend tax receipts are sent for income tax deductions.

Monthly giving is an easy and efficient way to contribute to the work of the College and we thank those who have chosen monthly giving as a way to support our ministry of equipping people for ministry in Canada and around the world.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact The Presbyterian College by phone or email and we will be delighted to share with you how easy it is! reception@pcmtl.ca.



Gifts in Memory/Honour

Mrs. Grace Mackay Bragg Mrs. Bessie James Budwin

Rev. John Carson Dr. Robert Culley

Mr. James Douglas Dimock

Rev. Dr. Allan M. Duncan, Grad 1957, Hon. D.D. 1990 Rev. Dr. Lloyd W. Fourney, Grad 1969, Hon. D.D. 1999

Rev. Thomas Gemmell, Grad 1963 Mr. and Mrs. Jack & Hazel Bramhall

Rev. Coralie Jackson-Bissonette, MDiv. 1987

Rev. John Jennings

Rev. Dr. John A. Johnston, Grad 1954, Hon. D.D. 1980

Rev. Dr. William Klempa

Rev. Dr. Lloyd George Macdonald, Grad 1974,

Hon. D.D. 2004

Mrs. Rose Mackie, Lay Leadership Certificate Grad 2005

Rev. Donald W. MacKay, Grad 1968

Rev. Randolph Douglas MacLean, Grad 1941,

Hon. D.D. 1969

Rev. Dr. Donald MacMillan, Grad 1933, Hon. D.D. 1979

Rev. Dr. John S. McBride, Grad 1944, Hon. D.D. 1974

Rev. Archibald Daniel MacKinnon Mr. Irvine Ross McKee, Grad 1945

Mrs. Margaret Joyce McLean

Mr. and Mrs. Don and Goldie McLennan

Rev. Dr. Joseph C. McLelland, Hon. D.D. 2007

Ms. Verna Medina (Joseph) Dr. Mary Nichol D.D. 2002

Rev. Dr. Oliver Nugent, Grad 1937, Hon. D.D. 1961

Rev. Larry R. Paul Grad 1963

Rev. Dr. Cedric Pettigrew, Grad 1969, Hon. D.D. 2016

Rev. Thomas Pollock Rev. Harold Reid

Mrs. Arlene Robertson

Ms. Naarah Schmidt (Née McMillan)

Rev. John Alwyn Simms, Grad 1947, Hon. D.D. 1972

Rev. Dr. Ian (Donald) Victor, Grad 1979

Mr. William (Bill) Walker

Dr. Margaret Jean Taylor, Hon. D.D. 1983

Dr. Dan Se Silva, Hon. D.D. 2001

Rev. William Campbell Smyth, Grad 1970

If you would like to give a gift *In Honour* or *In Memory*, please contact our

Development and Stewardship Officer,

Tahra De Lallo at tdelallo@pcmtl.ca

for further information. Our *In Memory* and *In Honour* Program has now been up and running for a little over a year and sometimes we can make errors or

omissions. If you have noticed an error or omission, please let us know by contacting Tahra DeLallo at the above email address.



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Comments are welcome; we might even publish them!
Please send them by mail or e-mail.



Please pray for:

- Our Staff and Students
- The Presbyterian Church in Canada
- McGill University
- The City of Montreal

