



Celebration of the Dedication
of the Maritime Conference Centre
21 Wright Street, Sackville
New Brunswick E4L 4P8
September 29, 2012

“Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.” Joel 1.3:

Each generation shares and shapes its experience of God. To know where we have come from assists us in placing our trust in God’s leading presence as we move forward.

Throughout religious history, people have marked their place in the story of faith with monuments and buildings. Over the last several years Maritime Conference has reflected upon how we might undertake the significant task of supporting the on going ministries of The United Church of Canada in the Maritimes and Bermuda and provide ample and appropriate office for its dedicated staff, learning and meeting areas for its ministries and state-of-art storage for its history and archival records. This service of dedication marks part of that response. We mark two things today: the ongoing ministries within congregations, presbyteries and the conference and the heritage we have received.

The development of the collections in the Maritime Conference Archives began in 1866 when the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces of British North America created a committee tasked with collecting the historical documents of the Presbyterian Church in the Maritimes. These documents were placed in the Presbyterian College, Halifax (known as Pine Hall Divinity Hall after 1925).

After the United Church of Canada was formed in 1925, the Pine Hill Library also became a repository for United Church records.

In 1903, the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island Methodists organized a society to promote the study of church history. The documents collected by the society were held at Mount Allison University until they were moved to Pine Hill in 1968. The entire collection at Pine Hill was moved to the former conference office at Sackville in 1998. That move was hoped to provide ample storage for many years, but quickly became filled and by 2005 discussions were taking place about the need for additional archival space.

At the same time the former office building was understood to be in need of repair and the Conference Executive agreed that there needed to be more

adequate space for meetings and staff in Sackville. In June 2010 an unsolicited offer to purchase the York Street properties was received and the Executive took the major step to sell those properties and build a modern centre for the ministries of the Conference. A small planning committee of the Executive was formed and many months of planning and negotiations were undertaken. The faithful work of this committee and the faithful support of the Conference is evidenced by the building we gather to dedicate today.

This project stands as the most significant capital undertaking of Maritime Conference in many years.

The work of such a project would be impossible without the work of many hands. The Conference has deeply appreciated the work of the Conference Accommodations Committee, and many others who have provided significant input such as the former Archives Planning Group, the Conference Archives Committee, the Conference Staff Committee, the ad-hoc Technical Committee, the Property and Finance Committee, our Conference lawyer, and the members of the Executive and sub-Executive of Conference for their insightful questioning and faithful guidance. The project became a real possibility only when we were blessed with the financial support of Gerry Moore and his family who saw their involvement as a way of honouring Gerry’s mother’s deep love for the United Church of Canada.

The Conference Centre and Archives will provide Maritime Conference with 2500 ft² of office space, 1400 ft² of meeting area and over 4700 ft² dedicated to the archives. Throughout the planning, significant attention was given not only to functionality but also to the aesthetics and environmental impact of this building. Ground source heat recovery, photo voltaic energy panels, LED lighting were areas where up-front costs and cost recovery estimates were so daunting that the CAC proceeded with other more cost effective solutions while incorporating in the design the facility to easily adapt to these resources should the financial viability change in the future. Similarly, the Conference sought diligently to balance the desire to create a space that would be both beautiful and functional while recognizing the need to be wise stewards of our financial resources. We trust you will agree that the completed project succeeded in meeting these goals.

With these new facilities we can move forward to continue the ministry to which our archives witness. The Maritime Conference of The United Church of Canada offers thanks to all who serve and have served in ministry. May our ministry continue to share the Good News of hospitality, justice, discernment and service in this new space.

Thank you for joining us in this celebration. May God continue to bless.