

A welcome by Rev. Patty Beals, Pastor of Lawrencetown Baptist Church, Lawrencetown, NS, opened the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Annapolis-Digby Baptist Association at Digby Baptist Church, Digby, NS on Saturday, April 30, 2016. All the delegates and guests were welcomed first by the ladies of the Church as they assisted everyone with their registrations and meal tickets. Coffee and conversation, and a “get acquainted time”, was enjoyed by all as we gathered and assembled in one of the large rooms in the church before we began the meeting.

Rev. Patty Beals welcomed everyone to the Gathering and opened with the reading of Psalm 150, followed by prayer for this special day. Rev. Jeff White blew the Ram’s horn to officially welcome everyone and we began our Annual Meeting of the Association. Pastor Jeff wished us all a hearty welcome and a blessed day for our “Builders and Boomers” Association meeting at Digby Baptist.

We began with a popular Hymn, “Bind Us Together, Lord”, as well a prayer for the church and the meeting today. A short devotional based on Hebrews 12 was presented by Pastor Jeff White. Rev. White spoke of various outreach activities and how we associate together in the Lord’s name. He mentioned the outreach last September when 170 Bikers came to Digby and were welcomed into Digby Baptist where the Church provided a meal for the Bikers and anyone who attended the Rally. Jeff mentioned that Seniors are “joiners” and they like to associate with others, while younger people often don’t join groups unless they feel it is advantageous to them. Further, he continued, older people believe that the weekly worship time is for fellowship with each other and with God. Today, he said this special gathering of our Association, is a special time to join together to honour God with like-minded Christians.

This was followed by an offering for the Association, and special thanks from Moderator Rev. Patty Beals to Pastor Jeff and all the dedicated members of Digby Baptist who helped to organize our meeting today. Patty welcomed all the delegates and thanked Mrs. Cairine Robertson, organist of the church, who played during the offering. Everyone then joined in the rousing hymn, “Marching to Zion”.

Moderator Rev. Patty Beals introduced Rev. Robin McCoombs, Pastor of Congregational Care at Middleton Baptist Church, and she is our special speaker today. Patty mentioned Robin’s family and that she studied at Acadia Divinity College. Patty prayed for Robin and for the message she has for us today.

“Blessing Builders and Boomers”

Robin stated that she felt it was a privilege to be here today and spoke of the work she does in the church and sometimes in the community, as well, so she entitled her message **“Blessing Builders and Boomers”**. She wanted to affirm that seniors have much to offer to others in our churches. She spoke about the “Baby Boomers”, which was a name given to a group of people in our churches, born after 1946. Our many Seniors are those who were born before that date, which makes it a very large group of people. This group often has the largest number of members in most churches who are beyond the age of 70, and are sometimes referred to as “Builders”. Robin indicated that many of our churches are in decline as far as youth and younger families are concerned, and Seniors continue to be the largest and most effective group in many established churches today.

Robin went on to list some of the values concerning Seniors: most are very social and spiritual, are concerned about their personal growth, intentional about their health, eager to be treated with dignity and most believe that age is just a number. Robin reminded us of God’s use through the ages of so many older people throughout the Bible, who did great things for God. She talked about Noah, Caleb, Joshua, Moses and others who were used by God to accomplish great deeds all through their lives, despite their age. The heart and will, not age, are the most important characteristics when things have to be accomplished. God had a plan for them and He has a plan for us, his children today, regardless of our ages. We need to seek His will for our lives so we can be renewed by knowing how to serve Him and in turn, serve others.

Seniors want to “give back”, be motivated and self-sufficient but they also want to continue developing and work on fresh and new experiences.

When we minister to Seniors, we need to help them with their emotional, physical and mental states, encourage them to talk to people, show love for others, help them to use their skills to encourage others and see people as God sees them. Seniors need to see opportunities to continue doing ministries in their churches. Robin quoted, “the fields are ripe with harvest” meaning we have so many people, as Seniors and Boomers, who can be doing God’s work in the church and in the communities. We need to seek the Holy Spirit to show us how to reach all the lost in today’s world. We often say that the “Youth is the future of our Churches”. It may really be the truth that “Seniors are the future of our Churches.”

The cultural view of aging may be like that “Old Stuff” we collect and hold onto - the tangible things, may be seen as more valuable than people. Youth tends to value beauty, glamour, money, possessions and a vibrant life style as we see in the movies, on TV and in our electronic gadgets, because it makes everyone look and feel young. Seniors may withdraw from Society because they feel that they have nothing, and have little to offer others and thus face discrimination because of their age.

Robin continued to point out some myths about Seniors: they are sick, feeble, crippled up, can’t look after themselves, and are unable to do much of anything. Some people think that old people have dementia and can’t learn new things. Those ideas have been proved wrong because many Seniors can use technology, take University courses, volunteer in their communities, schools and churches. Some Seniors hold offices in various charities and volunteer in caring for others in hospitals and nursing homes. We know Seniors are not worthless as most of our churches are full of Seniors and our churches would not be viable without them.

God does not set a Retirement Age for Seniors! We must realize that everyone can be used by God, regardless of age. God wants us to serve Him no matter how old we are as long as we have willing hearts. He determines the “length of our days” and we will be around to serve Him as long as He allows us to live. God used so many older people throughout the Bible to fulfill his promises and accomplish his purposes and his plans. Think of Moses, Noah, Abraham, and many others who were hundreds of years old when God called them to work for Him. They did their best for God, so we know He still uses people today, regardless of age. He proves the fact over and over again that He can use anyone for his purposes if they answer His call.

Robin told us of Muriel Bent, a member of Middleton Baptist who was a missionary to India for many years and travelled to other fields for God. Just last year at 85, she and her brother went to Lebanon on behalf of Canadian Baptist Ministries to see what they could do for that country. God doesn’t think she is too old! Robin told us of a Retreat which she attended and the leader was a 90 year old lady!

We were told that in 2012, there 4.5 million caregivers around the world working with seniors to help them solve problems in their lives such as physical, mental and emotional concerns. Emotional health care deals with anger, fear, depression, loneliness and hurt. There are not enough people with the desired skills to deal with so many of these particular maladies today. We know that God is always at work in our lives and He shows us his love, tenderness and kindness and He expects us to reach out with love to others! He wants us to have a deeper relationship with Him. His word tells us we may suffer, but that He will not give us more than we can handle. We must see others as Christ sees them, and minister to their needs in a gentle and fair manner as Christ would do.

Robin reminded us that we need to be compassionate to everyone we meet and not question their values, worth and purpose, as we see them. We must stand firm in Christ as well in faith, love and hope. We must not fear growing old and thinking of death as there is so much to do. Psalm 92 and 2 Corinthians give us an idea of what God’s church will look like with both Boomers and Builders working together in love and building up the church for Christ.

Boomers and Builders each have a role to share in Kingdom work as they have so many gifts to serve others in our churches. We can all be advocates for the hurting people and be involved in ministries to the glory to God, regardless of whether we are Builders or Boomers!

The **ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION:**

The 2015/16 Annual Business Meeting of the Annapolis-Digby Baptist Association held at Digby Baptist Church was called to order by the Moderator, Rev. Patty Beals, who welcomed everyone and then opened the meeting with prayer.

The **RULES of ORDER** were read by the clerk.

OLD BUSINESS:

MOTION # 1: R. Lightfoot/B. MacLean, that the Minutes of the Annapolis-Digby Baptist Association Annual meeting held at Lawrencetown Baptist Church on April 25, 2015 be accepted with the correction that Dr. Stephen McMullin is Director of Acadia Doctoral Studies in New Brunswick, not Nova Scotia; and that the date of the Annual Report is to read April 2014/15.

CARRIED.

MOTION # 2: M. Billard/L. DeMone, that the **Annual Finance Report for 2015/16** be accepted as presented. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 3: M. Billard/ J, Chaisson, that the **Proposed Budget** for the fiscal year of 2016/17 be accepted as presented in the Annual Booklet. **CARRIED.**

REPORTS FROM CHURCHES:

Paradise Baptist Church: Pastor Mark Reece reported that Paradise and Bridgetown carry on a combined Youth Group and they went to Spring Forth. Paradise has a "Children's Church" and supports a Refugee Family along with Bridgetown. The family is doing well and will have been in Bridgetown for one year in August.

Melvorn Square: Pastor Libby Amirault stated that the Church carries on a Bible Study and luncheon with an average of 22 attending. They have an Alpha Parenting Class for parents of children aged 0 to 10. Pastor Libby asked for continual prayers for her and her congregation.

Randy Legassie reported that he is pastoring two fields: Port Lorne/Hampton, and the Lower Granville Field for which he has 2 services a week for each field, consisting of approximately 12-15 people with three new people in the Granville Field.

Westport: Jeanette Denton informed us that the church is holding an Induction Service for their Pastor, Joseph Chaisson, on May 28th at 6:30 pm.

Rossway Baptist: Judy VanTassel spoke of the events being carried on in the church with a graduation service in May and the youth Group had a trip to Halifax.

Nictaux Baptist: Pastor Bill McLeod told us that the church has a Bible Study each week, held a Family Night to connect to the Community and to the Home and School. As well as Sunday Services.

New Tusket Baptist: Pastor Quincy Collins spoke of the generous, compassionate people in the church and the community who provide meals for Seniors. He spoke of the concern of the people in the church and the community as people of prayer. The Bible Study Group has 17 members. The village has had a turn-down in the Mink industry, so Quincy asked us to keep the people and the church in prayer.

Bridgetown Baptist Church: Pastor Brian Wallace reported that Church had 17 people sign up for visiting teams that go out into the community to reach people. The Sunday School did a project to help clean-up the Bridgetown area.

Middleton Baptist: Pastor Robin McCoombs informed us that the church helps to provide a Breakfast programme for the school children and also when there are in-service days and no school. The Church worked with the Middleton Emmanuel Community Church to co-sponsor an Iraqi family to come to Middleton. Middleton Baptist carries on Youth and Children Activities weekly in the Church as well as a very large ABW group.

Lawrencetown Baptist: Pastor Patty Beals told us that the church has an active Youth Group within the church. She reminded us that their "Feed My Sheep" programme has continued every Friday evening for people in the area, from Fall to spring, when a full meal is prepared and served to approximately 70 people each Friday evening at the church. Along with the food, the people hear a gospel message.

Annapolis Royal Pastorate: Pastor Elizabeth Legassie informed us that she serves three churches on this field with First United Baptist Church of Annapolis Royal, Granville Centre UBC, and Granville Ferry UBC. They carry on joint activities as pastorate events such as Baptismal classes, and joint choir events. Annapolis Royal has a Sunday School again after 15 or more years. There is interest in Scriptural exercises and disciplines in the church and the community, as well as a class on "Insight into Islam".

OTHER REPORTS:

Oasis Delegate Reports: Janice Roscoe, and Sherry Cleaves were our delegates to Oasis 2015. Janice was unable to come to the meeting to give her report, and Rev. Patty Beals read Janice's written report of the highlights of her time at Oasis at Crandall University. Patty also issued a thank-you on Janice's behalf for being able to be one of our Association Delegates. (Janice's Written Report is on file with the Clerk, along with thanks to the Association for allowing her to be one of our representatives to Oasis). Sherry Cleaves, our second delegate to Oasis, was unable to attend but will send a report to the Clerk to be filed.

MOTION # 4: B. MacLean/C. Batson that we accept Janice Roscoe's report to Oasis 2015 with minor corrections of Names of Events in the Report. **CARRIED.**

OASIS DELEGATES FOR 2016: The Association is allowed to send two delegates this year to Oasis 2016, which will be held in August, at Crandall University, Moncton, NB.

MOTION # 5: R. Lightfoot/F. Bigelow, that the Clerk send out a notice, with instructions for two delegates for **OASIS 2016**, and that the Executive have the power to choose the two delegates if more than two names are proposed. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 6: B. MacLean/J. Chaisson, that the Cluster Reports on Page 5 of the Annual Booklet be accepted as written. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 7: M. Reece/L. DeMone that we accept the report from Camp Kingswood as circulated in the Annual Booklet on page 6. **CARRIED.**

Moderator's Report: Rev. Patty Beals presented her report for 2015, on Page 9 of the Booklet and highlighted points of interest.

MOTION # 8: J. Denton/B. MacLean, that the Moderator's Report be accepted as given and as printed on page 9. **CARRIED.**

ASSOCIATION LICENSING COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Elaine Bent, Chair of the Licensing Committee presented a list of all the Candidates for **Renewal** of Association Licences to Minister or a **New** Association Licence to Minister.

MOTION # 9: E. Bent/M. Reece, that Pastor Shelly Illsley-Martin be granted a Renewal of her Association Church Licence to Minister. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 10: E. Bent/R. Legassie, that Pastor Mark Cress be granted a Renewal of his Association Church Licence to Minister. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 11: E. Bent/F. Bigelow, that Pastor Marc Phillips be granted a New Association Licence to Minister. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 12: E. Bent/J. Denton, that Pastor Joe Chiasson be granted a Renewal of his Association Licence to Minister. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 13: E. Bent/B. MacLean that Pastor Linda Demone be granted a Renewal of her Association Licence to Minister. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 14: E. Bent/F. Bigelow, that Pastor Herb Anderson be granted a Renewal of his Lay Pastor Association Licence to Minister. **CARRIED.**

The Assembly gave a round of applause for all these candidates.

MOTION # 15: F. Bigelow/R. Lightfoot, that Pastor Bill McLeod join a three year term with Pastor Libby Amirault and Chair, Elaine Bent on the Licensing Committee. **CARRIED.**

MOTION # 16: B. Mac Lean/M. Reece, that the report of the Kingswood Camp Society be accepted as printed on Page 6 in the Annual Booklet. **CARRIED.** **Please note:** The Camp is under the Eastern Valley Baptist Association and any cheques and/or donations to the camp must be made out to that Association, with a note that the donation goes to Kingswood Camp.

MOTION # 17: J. White/J. Chaisson, that Pastor Linda DeMone be the Vice-Moderator of our Association. **CARRIED.**

With no further business, Pastor Jeff White moved we adjourn and asked the blessing on the lunch which the ladies of the church had prepared for us.

AFTERNOON SESSION:

Sharon White presented a fun and lively worship ice breaker, called, "Where's Your Fit?" using colorful shapes to help us find our fit within our churches. Robin Mc Coombs finished up her message on "Blessing Builders and Boomers" reminding us that we need to help our Seniors and support them. We also need to show the Boomers how they can help Seniors in our churches. The role of the church is to include everyone within it because God's work is for all ages.

OASIS REPORT 2015: Moderator Patty Beals read a report from Janice Roscoe who was one of our Oasis Delegates for 2015. Janice was unable to attend, but sent thanks and appreciation for the opportunity to attend Oasis at Acadia.

Sherry Cleaves was our second Oasis Delegate. She was unable to attend today but indicated that she would send a report to be filed

ANNAPOLIS DIGBY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING 2017 will be held on April 29th, 2017. Place, Theme and Speaker will be planned at the October Council Meeting.

A hymn was sung and Rev. Patty Beals, Moderator, closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Billard