

Summer student position – Presbytery of Huron-Perth

This summer a four local churches (Atwood, Knox Listowel, Monkton/Milverton and St. Marys) under the auspices of the Presbytery of Huron-Perth hired a student minister with the goal of facilitating cooperation between congregations, enhancing summer educational events, supporting and encouraging family ministries, offering creative children's ministry programs and providing pulpit supply during times of pulpit absences. Each pastoral charge would have the student work for approximately four weeks. This vision greatly increased the opportunity for family programming and ministry development in the Presbytery of Huron-Perth as we build on the joint relationship developed over the summer.

Accomplishments

Each congregation offered a unique experience to the student: session, management, worship order and style, unique congregation activities and event planning in a co-optative framework. The summer student, Angelica Atkins, expressed benefit of these learning opportunities. From discussions with Miss Atkins and the minister's we feel clearer particular objectives for the summer would have enhanced the overall learning experience. A fine-tuned overarching summer goal would focus the experience for the student and allow the ministers to support the student's particular ministerial developmental area.

Program particulars

The program began May 1 and finish August 21 2017 and with the presbytery's grave concern for the spiritual needs of the student weekly conversations occurred between Miss Atkins with either Rev Fraser or Rev Ament. We also changed the time line to allow for three weeks of vacation to meet the perceived concerns of members of the Presbytery. The financial grants from the Presbytery, the Synod and each participating congregation covered the costs for the summer ministry and individual costs arising from family ministry in the congregations.

Overall

There have been three great joys from this summer which are student, ministry and fellowship. To the first the summer student Miss Atkins expressed gratitude in all the areas of learning she was exposed to. She has a deeper understanding of ministry in the Presbyterian denomination and in the style of leadership in ministry. The congregations and the ministers were blessed with her unique skills of preaching, teaching and a passion for art as an entrance to new styles of outreach. As ministers we hope this summer has been a supportive time, which will allow Miss Atkins to farther reach God's calling in her ministry.

The summer student position allowed for the support of VBS's and other family events as well as powerful worship preaching. It is from this summer foundation that the churches in Huron-Perth Presbytery have continued to reach out together in our joint calling to families and youth ministries. We hope to continue this fellowship of support founded on our common summer experience.

Fellowship is the final joy of the summer, but it is by no means the least of what was accomplished. There has been a great strengthening of the fellowship in the members of the summer ministry team. In meeting together we have shared experiences, visions, passion, and concerns in our mutual ministry. These rewards can only strengthen the work of Presbytery, and support of our ministries going forward.

As a first endeavor, between congregations, to support a summer student with the focus on family and youth ministry there has been great rewards. As with any ministry there are areas of growth and development. Yet at this time many of the churches can say they have experienced a new vision on this vital ministry and have been better equipped to undertake ministry going forward.