Racing Back to the Future

Young adults from several Alberta Christian Reformed churches held an “amazing race” in which they competed to reach places that reflected Reformation history.

The 25 participants from Edmonton, Edson, Lacombe, and Neerlandia, aged 18 to 30, were attending the fifth annual Classis Alberta North Young Adults (CANYA) Retreat held in Canmore.

“Instead of random countries or places being selected as locations of the challenges,” explained Ron deVries, Classis Alberta North’s youth ministry consultant, “groups were taken to places that reflected part of Reformation history. One example was when groups were directed to a mass of water representing the ocean separating Europe and America.”

The young adults biked around the lake, weighed down with knapsacks filled with rocks to suggest the weight of the journey. Once there, said deVries, “the challenge was to build communities using Popsicle sticks and glue. It was interesting to witness that the majority of groups established churches first, not houses. We were inspired by this.”

Throughout the weekend, participants made connections to the Heidelberg Catechism, Reformation history, and the present church story through puzzles, stories, challenges, and Scripture. Rick VanManen, a CRC campus chaplain at the University of Alberta, offered three worship and teaching sessions based on Q&A 1 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Participants reflected on the anxieties they experience and where and how they might recognize God’s providence in their lives.

Brad VanderWey, 27, was on the planning committee as well as a retreat participant. “I think it is important for young adults to hang out in a Christian environment with their peers to have fellowship and worship with each other,” he said. “It is nice to be a part of a group like CANYA and know that when you bring up the topic of religion, you don’t feel like you need to be defensive or worry about offending someone.”

—Janet Greidanus

NOTEWORTHY

Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., reached its goal of raising $25 million in debt relief three years faster than its 2017 target.

The King’s University in Edmonton, Alberta, received the provincial government’s permission to drop the word “college” from its formal name.

Maple Avenue Ministries in Holland, Mich.; First Christian Reformed Church of Detroit (Grosse Pointe Park, Mich.); and Third CRC in Zeeland, Mich., all celebrated their 100th anniversaries.

The girls’ soccer team of Calvin Christian High School in Grandville, Mich., won the state’s Division IV title.

The girls’ soccer team of Unity Christian High School in Hudsonville, Mich., won the state’s Division III title.

Tom VanWingerden has been appointed executive director of Friendship Ministries.

Reformed Church’s annual Yearbook is available each year in the front pages of the Christian Reformed Church’s annual Yearbook and on The Banner’s website.