

## THEME SPEAKERS

### **Emma Hebb**

Emma Hebb was raised by Three Harbours Pastoral Charge, in Wallace Nova Scotia. Her first Maritime Conference was when the Rev. Beth Johnston brought her to children at conference in 1998, where she fell in love with the hymn Para Para Pitter Pat. Emma and her baby brother Thomas were infamous for their quick witted children conversation responses, and writing their own White Gift plays as they attended Sunday School in Wallace. Emma was first appointed to church council at age 11, as Sunday School representative, she started teaching Sunday School at 14, was a Youth Elder on Official Board at 15, and Chaired the Christian Education Committee at 16. Being a part of the church also allowed Emma to attend awesome workshops and events at Tatamagouche Centre as a teen- things like popular theatre, drumming, and alike. Emma's passion for creation has always been present loving to camp and swim. This passion led her to study Environmental Science at Acadia University, graduating in 2010 with a BScH. Emma focused her studies there on water, rocks, and emerging organic contaminants-she's a science geek with a love of field work and the lab as well. While at Acadia Emma served as a Chaplaincy Assistant, learning the in and outs of ecumenical church leadership. After graduating Emma worked for Sierra Club Canada's Atlantic Canada Chapter, as their volunteer coordinator, using all the skills she learned about "voluntelling" from the church to save the world. She ran into Linda Scherzinger on Spring Garden Road one sunny spring day in 2011, and that is how she ended up on the Environmental Working Group, of the Conference's Church in Action Committee, where she has served as co-convenor since 2012. Emma travelled to Guatemala as part of the Maritime Conference sponsored, National Mining Study Tour, and represented Maritime Conference at a General Conference Meeting on mining, she served as a youth commissioner for the conference at this past summer's General Council Meeting. Emma is a member of Wesley United Church, in St. Andrews, NB where she recently finished a term as vice-chair of the board. In 2013, Emma took on the position of Youth Worker, at St. Mark's United Church in West Saint John, NB, as she asked herself the question with all the awesome things the church has allowed me to do why wouldn't more young people want to be a part of this? She continues her ministry at St. Mark's presently. Emma currently resides in Saint John with her finance Jason Seamone (who says he never knew there was anything called church politics till he met her!), and their cat Harley Quinn.

### **Penny Nelson**

At the age of 17, Penny felt a calling to ministry in The United Church of Canada. At the time, she was passionate about the Kingdom of God and learning what her role in it was, talking with people about their faith, and spending time with God—but she was pretty sure God only called people over the age of 50 into ministry. A year later, Penny found herself addressing the delegates of GC 39 in Wolfville, NS with an impassioned plea to not forget the mission God had given the United Church when she literally heard God's voice tell her “this is what you're supposed to do”—and she knew it meant ministry: to individual congregations, and to the church as a whole. 10 years later, at the age of 28, Penny graduated with her MDiv from the Atlantic School of Theology and was ordained in her home Conference of Alberta & Northwest.

Today, Penny is grateful that she *still* finds some of her life's deepest passions in dreaming and living into the Kingdom of God, exploring faith with others through worship, conversation, and life, and spending time with God. She's also found some new passions—including hula hooping, growing and foraging her own food, and encouraging rural community development. Thankfully, she's found that all these passions can be lived out on the breathtaking North Shore of Nova Scotia where she currently makes her home with her wife, the Rev. Nicole Uzans (of the Anglican Church of Canada), and works alongside the people of the Tatamagouche Pastoral Charge.

### **Mat Whynot**

Mat's twitter bio sums up who he is in less than 140 characters: Father of 2, husband, United Church guy, Former NS MLA, involved in the community.

Knox United Church in Lower Sackville, NS is Mat's home away from home. He has served as an elder at the age of 16, church board chair at 21, United Church Camp Director, Youth Forum Co-Director and youth group leader at his church for over 12 years.

Mat was elected to the Nova Scotia Legislature from 2009-2013. He served a Government Whip and Ministerial Assistant to Energy.

Mat and his partner Charlotte live in Hammonds Plains, NS with their kids Morgan and Andy.