



Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre

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The Earth Is Our Faculty - The Spirit of Indigenous Ministry at SSSC by Adrian Jacobs

Rev. Andrew Wesley, elder and Anglican priest, instructed our Basic Pastoral Care Learning Circle to take tobacco in our left hand (closest to our hearts) and to go out onto our 39 acre property, give thanks and meet with Jesus. I had a very profound experience and wept as I greeted and thanked all our relations – here at Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. After almost a year at SSSC I felt like I finally arrived.

When we lament the passing of our elders we fear the loss of all their knowledge. We can be comforted in part knowing that the teachers that taught them (our Mother the Earth, the animals, the fish folk, the medicine families, the tree beings, the crawling relatives etc.) are still with us today and stand ready to teach anew this generation.

Continue on page 2





Three little bears at SSSC - Momma and twins

Continued from page 1

I hear the elders speaking when I listen to the voice of creation, just like the Psalmist did in Psalm 8. Our elders have taught us what the earth taught them. We continue this teaching to future generations. Our elders will pass away but the earth our teacher will endure. **THE EARTH IS OUR FACULTY!** This profound insight gives us a great sense of hope.

The Broken Head River winds its way around us and we see eagles, bears, foxes, coyotes, squirrels, deer, and lots of creeping things. The trees and medicines silently grow everywhere and the fish folk make their presence known on occasion, ever ready to teach us.

We respect and honour the land all across this country: the BC Coast, the mountains, the plains, the woodlands, the tundra, the sub-boreal forest, the Great Lakes, the rivers, the East Coast. Each of our Indigenous peoples have languages and cultures shaped by the land. When we meet with each other we honour the protocols of our hosts – their rules apply.

Colonialism imposes the rules of outsiders upon Indigenous communities. We will not do that to each other. We will honour the elders, the wisdom, the governance, the languages, the protocols and the ways of our Indigenous constituencies. The nation to nation peer-respect of treaty is what guides us here at SSSC.



History Brought Us To This Point And Is Part Of Us Going Forward



Rev. Dr. Jessie Saulteaux and Mr. Francis Sandy

Aboriginal ministry is in The United Church of Canada is rich with many facets including:

- The Indian Methodist heritage work prior to the start of The United Church of Canada in 1925 – first Methodist church at Six Nations, ON in 1822
- The 1970's Indian Ministry Training Program in Northern MB/ON
- The 1980's national Aboriginal ministry consultations that morphed into the National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering
- Keewatin Presbytery – the first all Aboriginal presbytery established in 1981
- Rev. Stan McKay Jr., the First national coordinator for Native Ministries 1982
- The Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre established in 1984
- The urging of Aboriginal ministries to the UCC to apologize for its treatment of Native people in the church and the Indian Residential Schools 1984
- The first UCC Apology for the Policy of Assimilation 1986 and the "joyfully received" but "not accepted" response of Aboriginal people to the apology.
- The establishment of the Native Ministries Consortium 1986
- The Francis Sandy Theological Centre established in 1987
- All Native Circle Conference – the first all Aboriginal conference established in 1988
- The establishment of BC Native Ministries in 1988.

- The establishment of the Non-aligned Native Ministries of ON and QC (now ON/QC Native Ministries) in 1988.
- Rev. Stan McKay Jr., the first Aboriginal Moderator of the UCC 1992
- The Healing Fund 1994 – 2014
- The second UCC apology for Indian Residential Schools 1998
- Rev. Laverne Jacobs, First program minister, Aboriginal Ministries Laverne Jacobs 2002
- Aboriginal Ministries Council is the umbrella group for Aboriginal ministries across Canada established in 2010 served by their staff the Aboriginal Ministries Circle.
- The new UCC crest with the four colours of Aboriginal people and the Mohawk phrase "Akwe Nia'Tetewá:neren", which means "All my relations" and the corrected inclusion of Indigenous ministry in the Introduction section of the Basis of Union document at General Council 41, August 2012



New four directions colours and Mohawk inscription AKWE NIA'TETEWÁ:NEREN translated "All Our Relations"

Aboriginal Ministries In The United Church of Canada: Current Structure



SSSC student Ken Keno and BC Gitksan Elder Ray Jones

Please feel free to contact each of these aspects of the Aboriginal ministries of the United Church of Canada. Living into right relations means building healthy connections with one another. We are in a relationship that will never end and Jesus Christ

our peacemaker has called us to the ministry of reconciliation. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has noted that the truth side has been told but now the difficult work of reconciliation must begin.

Aboriginal Ministries Council

Aboriginal Ministries Council (AMC) is composed of representatives from Aboriginal constituencies across The United Church of Canada and representatives from French, intercultural ministries, and Inuit/Métis. It meets twice a year to deal with matters of leadership, community, congregational development, healing and real property. AMC works and meets annually with the Committee on Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools. Six AMC members, including the chair, serve on the Executive of the General Council.

AMC receives direction from Aboriginal communities of faith through the triennial National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering. The NASG gathers two representatives from each Aboriginal community of faith and outreach ministry to discern matters of ministry and spirituality. Contact: Ray Jones, Chair, niisnooh@gmail.com

Aboriginal Ministries Circle

The Aboriginal Ministries Circle is the staff unit of Aboriginal Ministries Council at General Council Office that works in full partnership with the rest of the church. It is composed of an executive minister, healing programs coordinator, youth leadership development

coordinator, two community capacity development coordinators, and program and administrative support.

Contact: Rev. Maggie McLeod, Executive Minister, mmcleod@united-church.ca

All Native Circle Conference



SSSC student Deb Anderson Pratt and Keeper of the Circle Adrian Jacobs

The General Council in 1988 established All Native Circle Conference. ANCC is the only non-geographic Conference with four presbyteries (All Tribes, Plains, Keewatin, and Great Lakes Waterways) and 40 communities of faith, four of which are outreach ministries, from Alberta to Quebec. Conference office is in Winnipeg, MB.

ANCC adheres to the policy and polity of the United Church and uses the circle governance—the consensus model—for its decision-making. The Conference has: an Executive of 13; two Leading Elders (one male and one female), who are equivalent to Presidents in other Conferences; the Speaker (Executive Secretary); and one staff for each of the Council on Learning and the Council on Sharing. The Council on Healing and Respect and Youth Council's responsibilities are shared by the Speaker and program staff. The Councils meet in the spring and fall, as a whole every other year, and every three years during Grand Council (Conference meeting.)

Contact: Lorna Standingready, Leading Elder (west), lstandin@sasktel.net Rev. Phil Schuyler, Leading Elder (east); Cheryl Jourdain, Speaker, cjourdain@ancc.united-church.ca

British Columbia Native Ministries Council

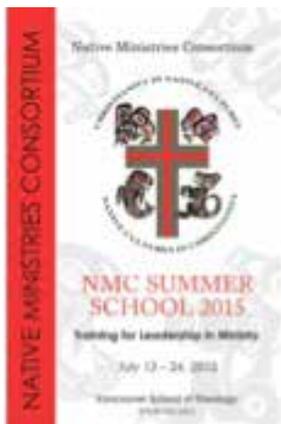
British Columbia Native Ministries Council (BC NM) emerged from what was known as the Coast Regional Group. Its goals are to increase the number of ordained

Aboriginal ministers, support and encourage the vision of Aboriginal ministry within the context of community, and strengthen Aboriginal awareness and knowledge of church structure, enabling full participation in making decisions, sharing responsibilities, and contributing to church growth.

In 1988, BC NM chose to concentrate on the development of local congregations to strengthen them to serve in partnerships with all sister churches within BC Conference, rather than become part of ANCC.

Contact: Ray Jones, Council Member,
niisnoolh@gmail.com

Native Ministries Consortium



The British Columbia Native Ministries Consortium was established in 1986 and is under the direction and support of Aboriginal communities. This consortium of Anglican and United Church organizations develops and delivers a community-based theological education program for Aboriginal lay and ordained ministers. The program permits Aboriginal

church leaders to live, work, study, and learn in their cultural environment.

Contact: Mary Fontaine, Chair, hummingbirdministries.wordpress.com

Ontario and Quebec Native Ministries

Ontario and Quebec Native Ministries (ON & QC NM) is made up of two representatives from each of the ten Aboriginal communities of faith and one outreach ministry in the following Conferences: Bay of Quinte, Hamilton, Toronto, London, and Montreal & Ottawa. It gathers twice a year. The role of the representatives of these communities of faith is to link their communities to the wider church.

In 2014, the ON & QC NM established the following vision statement: "The vision of the Ontario and Quebec Native Ministries will give voice to All Our Relations and share our understanding and love of Creator God."

Contact: George and Wanda Montour, wjmontour@gmail.com

Native Peoples Retreat



The ON & QC NM work collaboratively with other Aboriginal constituencies, such as ANCC, on the Native Peoples Retreat (NPR) planning committee. The NPR is an annual event that has 50-plus years of history within Aboriginal communities of faith in Ontario and Quebec. This gathering holds space for fellowship, spiritual nurture, Bible study, celebration, children and youth ministry, and worship.

Contact: Rhonda Johns, Nations Uniting,
nations.uniting@gmail.com

Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre

Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre (SSSC) is an Aboriginal theological and ministry training program of the United Church. It prepares Aboriginal people for lay and ordered ministry by affirming a style of leadership appropriate to Aboriginal culture and church experience. It develops and tests curricula and models to uphold this style of learning.

Ministry students attend eight learning circles annually and are also involved in presbytery, Conference, and denominational work for an additional credit each year. Students are placed in church- and Conference-recognized ministry contexts for community-based learning applying the lessons from learning circles.



Sign at entrance to SSSC 37 acre property

Successful completion of the five-year program fulfills the testamur requirements of the United Church for ordered and lay ministry as determined by presbytery and Conference.

SSSC provides cross-cultural and spiritual awareness for the larger community through its educational activities on its peaceful, 37-acre retreat facilities along the Broken Head River in Manitoba. Staff brings an

awareness of Aboriginal history, culture, and current issues in educational outreaches to schools, churches, community groups and Conferences locally and across the country.

Contact: Adrian Jacobs, Keeper of the Circle, Adrian@sandysaulteaux.ca

Contact: Rhonda Johns, Nations Uniting, nations.uniting@gmail.com

Our Elders Have Spoken

A recounting of the words and efforts of our elders (Stan McKay, Alberta Billy, Dr. Jessie Saulteaux, etc.)

- Photos and quotes
- The Covenant
- The apologies and the need for reparations
- Living into right relations and the Indigenous Justice and Residential Schools Committee

Living Into Right Relations In Respect To Land

We are very grateful to Zion United Church in Regina, SK that in the sale of their church building they gave Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre \$40,000 and Plains Presbytery of the All Native Circle Conference \$100,000. This is an example of living out the apology the United Church issued in 1988 and 1994. The UCC was part of the colonization of Indigenous people in Canada, especially through the Indian Residential School system and built the schools and churches on traditional First Nations lands.

80% of Aboriginal Churches are National properties. The Church is looking to fix up these properties and turn them over to the Native communities. AMC's community capacity development staff are attempting to build capacity for this transfer. This is a huge task requiring a lot of education and skill training. The

example of Zion United Church in Regina, AB in giving a large portion of the proceeds from their church property sale to Indigenous ministry could serve as an inspirational story for others to do likewise. Funds would then go to building capacity to overcome dependency and intergenerational trauma in the development of the Indigenous UCC. Saskatchewan Conference has been talking about giving oil revenues to Indigenous ministry.

The future of Indigenous ministry in the United Church can be partly insured by similarly gracious acts of giving as an act of reparation. Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre would like to build an Endowment Fund for a Chair in Indigenous Studies. Large contributions would then yield operations funds for the core program of our ministry training.

“We have our own way of doing things!” Alberta Billy “I hope that in the Comprehensive Review process that we don’t get colonized all over again!” Stan McKay

There is a need for several things that arise from the fundamental cultural distinction of Indigenous people in Canada such as:

- A switch in terminology from Aboriginal to Indigenous. There is a strong Indigenous public resistance to the term Aboriginal. Now would be a

good time to express the ongoing development of Indigenous ministry in the UCC by using the term Indigenous, as in "Indigenous Ministries National Council."

- Indigenous Testamur – the Indigenous community and training specialists should determine the training program for ordered ministry in the Indigenous UCC
- Indigenous Competencies for Ministry – the Indigenous communities of faith and training specialists should determine what the Indigenous competencies for ministry are
- There is a need for a National Indigenous Assessment Council (with core members from an Indigenous Ministries National Council and regional representative for students in unique Indigenous regions)
- Consensus and circle/council decision making is endemic to Indigenous governance and should be articulated in an Indigenous UCC authored manual
- All Indigenous UCC community of faith bodies should work together in a national Indigenous ministry training system
- Building our capacity needs to be done our
 - * Indigenous graduates from DJSRC and FSTC and SSSC – 66
 - * Indigenous ministry focused school and curriculum
 - * Indigenous/Indigenous-sensitive resource people

- * Indigenous elder in circle
- * Indigenous/Indigenous-sensitive Vision Keepers/Support Circle
- * Indigenous/Indigenous-sensitive Keeper of the Learning Circle
- * Indigenous community-based learning
- * Indigenous church national council

- Indigenous community of faith support
- Indigenous Council on Learning to support and oversee Indigenous ministry training
- Indigenous/Indigenous-sensitive Personnel Minister
 - * Acknowledgement that Indigenous students are often lead ministry personnel early on in their training

A few important questions need to be answered by the Indigenous community like:

- How do we not put barriers in the way of Indigenous ministry students after dismantling them for the past 45 years?
- How can we ensure we don't place a stumbling block in front of our students like a Regional Assessment Board that is ignorant or insensitive to Indigenous culture and reality?
- How do we make room for Indigenous ministry collegiality and understanding in the midst of the proposed College of Ministers?

Notice of Annual General Meeting for Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre

**2 pm Saturday
September 26, 2015**

at

**Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre
29 Dugard Road, Beausejour, MB**

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.” Micah 6:8

by Norah McMurtry



Over the past five years, Canadians have been called to listen to wrenching, horrific testimonies from survivors of Residential Schools through the events organized by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Church members have been encouraged by our leaders to participate in these hearings by bearing witness to the stories of Indigenous peoples and to take that experience back to their communities.

We have learned that the residential school issues are really the tip of the iceberg - that the oppression and racism towards Indigenous peoples began hundreds of years ago when colonists from Europe arrived in this land and believed they had the right to claim it for themselves. The oppression and dispossession deepened as settlers arrived and were given rights to land not their own and as governments were formed that created laws foreign to the land they occupied with ideas about land ownership and use that were foreign to the first peoples of that land. The Settler governments made treaty with the indigenous peoples - treaties that were about sharing land and culture and creating bridges of friendship between cultures and governance bodies. Those treaties are still in place today but the settler nation has neglected and deliberately ignored the intent and meaning of those treaties. If we are all treaty people what is the call to us as churches to live out treaty relations?

The church has apologized to Indigenous peoples, it has created study programs, it has participated in the TRC process, it has supported First Nation organizations within the larger church, it has made commitments of support in the face of dwindling finances. But how have we taken relations with indigenous peoples and our commitments as treaty people to heart? In the recent processes around a comprehensive review, how have we taken seriously our treaty promises? How have we incorporated Indigenous knowledge into the way we make decisions – in the way we conduct the business of the church? How do our decisions reflect a commitment to repair the harm done – to restitution?

We are called to enact our promises and our desire for a just society. We must account for the historical and present-day injustices that are the result of colonization. We must be willing to tell the truth about how our churches, have benefited from colonization. Non-indigenous people must be willing to examine and tell the truth about our privilege and how we continue to benefit from the injustice done to Indigenous peoples in this land. We must name these truths publicly using a model like the TRC for public witness and empathetic listening. Justice Murray Sinclair has called on the churches to welcome - to not stand in the way of - Indigenous spiritual teachings and ceremony. They are the way to healing for his people.

As our church contemplates significant changes at its Conference gatherings and at the General Council meeting this summer, it will be important that the way we do our business together and the decisions we make reflect our understanding of being a treaty people.

All my Relations.

Norah McMurtry

Partnership with Centre for Christian Studies



Staff and Central Council members of the Centre for Christian Studies visited the Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre on Saturday, April

18, 2015 for a joint meeting between members of our respective staff and governance bodies. Our goal was to listen, learn, and deepen the growing partnership between our two schools.

Adrian Jacobs showed us the bundle bringing together the spirit and traditions of the Francis Sandy Theological Centre and the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre. He spoke of the strong intent to form a single new school, where the educational model and process reflected Indigenous culture. It was a decision that arose from two communities who had engaged in dialogue and decided to act together in a good way.

In a similar way, the Centre for Christian Studies was a coming together of schools from different denominational streams under a single roof and a single name. There was a strong desire to form a school where the educational model and process reflected diaconal values of justice and liberation from a feminist perspective. The decision came out of a shared history of the deaconess movement.

We recognized that our two schools offer courses of study that are national and distinctive in scope and process. Like the SSSC, CCS believes that learning

in circle along with sustained accompaniment and feedback from faculty members, other students, and community leaders are essential components of discernment, formation, and assessment for ministry. We share the concern and the hope that The United Church of Canada will implement any shift to a competency-based approach in a way that honours the unique approach of each of our schools and continues in respectful conversation with those who are directly affected.

In the week following the joint meeting of our Central Council with staff, elders and board members from Sandy-Saulteaux, staff and students in the Pastoral Care Learning Circle participated in a three day event, "We Are All Treaty People." We reflected on the work of reconciliation from Indigenous and settler perspectives, with Mark MacDonald, the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, and Steve Heinrichs, Director of Indigenous Relations of the Mennonite Church Canada. We visited the Canadian Museum of Human Rights. And we spent a day in Beausejour, learning from and with Indigenous students for ministry.

We give thanks for the growing partnership between Sandy-Saulteaux and CCS that is being built at the level of our governing bodies, our student bodies, our place within the Circle of Theological Schools, and our relationship with the wider church.

With respect and gratitude,
Maylanne Maybee, Principal.

Five Generations At Graduation

One of our 2015 graduates Connie Louise Budd had five generations of her family celebrate with her. Connie's mother Frances Queskekapow, 78, is also leading elder at Keenanow United Church in Norway House, MB. She is still very active in the community and sits in several committees. Connie is the oldest of 10 siblings, a widow, mother of 4, grandmother of 21 and a great grandmother of 7 and another one on the way! Also pictured above

is Connie's firstborn, Lenora Frances Budd-Clarke, a mother of 6 and grandmother of 4. Connie's first grand daughter Jessica Lena Louise Budd is Lenora's first daughter, a mother of 2 with another one on the way, a Grade 12 graduate in 2010, in her second year of College Prep and going into Nursing. Seated on Connie's mother's lap is her great granddaughter, precious little 4 year old Brea (Bean) Silver Skye Budd-Muswaggon



Standing: Jessica Lena Louise Budd, Lenora Francis Budd-Clarke, Connie Louise Budd Seated: Frances Queskekapow, Brea (Bean) Silver Sky Budd-Muswagon

(Jessica's Daughter). Bean is how Connie's great granddaughter introduces herself and the family has come to respect that.

Here are some special words from Connie:

"I thank God for all his blessings on me...with God anything is possible. He will put people in our lives to help us, so thank you all for all the support and encouragement especially the staff

at Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. When I started the training the school was called Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre but we all survived through the changes and all the new friendships that came with almagamating with Francis Sandy Theological School. What an adventure? I have learned so much in these 5 years and my faith has grown so strong because I can see what God is doing in my life as I went through this training.

I have come to appreciate all creation and have deep understanding of the connection we have to every living creation in this universe - "All My Relations." I know now what that means, not just people but every created thing. We've had so many wise elders come to teach us like Andrew Wesley from Fort Albany Cree Nation and Toronto, Stan McKay from Fisher River Cree Nation, and many others that have shared their knowledge with us and many Resource People with their wise teachings.

I thank the Staff, new old, but especially the kitchen staff who become our friends. We all became friends and a family at SSSC. It was a home away from home. It is a very spiritual and peacefully place. It is truly God's Sanctuary."

These five generations at Connie's graduation made the celebration very special and complete for her. Connie and all of us at Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre wish to thank you for all your prayers and financial support that make graduation of ministry students for the church possible.

Ceremony Of Celebration 2015



Front Left to Right: Honoured Elders: Rev. Dr. Bernice Saulteaux, Rev. Dr. Grafton Antone; Graduates Connie Budd, Sharon McKay; Future Students: Katherine and Coryna

Saturday, April 18, 2015 dawned a beautiful sunny day and provided a perfect setting for the Celebration Ceremonies for the 2015 Graduates: Connie Budd from Norway House First Nation and Sharon McKay from Berens River First Nation. The new graduates were joined by family, friends and dignitaries as they received their Certificates of Testamur from the United Church of Canada recognizing the completion of their

five year program in Theological Education. Stoles were given by the SSSC as gifts as they start the next part of their journey. Connie Budd is serving as the Minister at North End Stella Outreach Ministry in Winnipeg. She will be commissioned as Diaconal Minister at the Grand Council Meeting at Walpole Island in early June. Sharon McKay is seeking a placement before she is recognized as a Diaconal Minister at a Commissioning Service.

Rev. Dr. Bernice Saulteaux and Rev. Dr. Grafton Antone as the Honoured Elders were awarded SSSC Medallions in recognition of the work they have done and continue to do at the Centre. Bernice Saulteaux, who is a graduate of the Dr. Jesse Centre, currently serves at Carry the Kettle in Saskatchewan. She held the position of the

Keeper of the Learning Circle during the transition period of the amalgamation of the two schools. She has joined the circle many times as Elder and continues to work in many positions in Plains Presbytery and Conference. Grafton Antone is an Elder at the Church in Oneida, ON. Grafton held many positions and was very involved with the Francis Sandy Theological School prior to the amalgamation with the DrJTS. Since the amalgamation he has served as Chair of the Keepers of the Vision Board for SSSC.

Following the Service of Celebration, led by the current students at Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, people joined the Graduates and Honoured Elders and their families for a feast.

Questions To Readers

- Should The United Church of Canada continue to impose its cultural norms through the policy of assimilation on Aboriginal United Churches? If not, what would a non-colonial relationship between the UCC and Aboriginal ministries look like?
- How can The United Church of Canada be a church committed to reparations in its efforts to pursue reconciliation?
- Since we are all treaty people how will I/my community of faith live out my/our treaty responsibilities?
- How can we get to know the story of our local Aboriginal community, churches and ministries?

Learning Circles

OCTOBER 19TH - 23RD

Week 1 HS1 Introduction to Hebrew Scriptures Adrian Jacob

OCTOBER 26TH - 30TH

Week 2 BS5 Inenimowin Circle Inenimowin Team



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- For Egerton Bales Young
- For General Student Bursary
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