



# Sandy-Saulteaux

## Spiritual Centre

### In this Issue

Spirituality in the 90's and the Day a Red Tailed Hawk Feather Fell to Earth - Page 2

Carrying on the Legacy of Francis Sandy Theological Centre - Page 3

Learning Circles - Page 3

Family Reunification Work Begins at SSSC - Page 4

"Help!" - A Rescue Story - Page 5

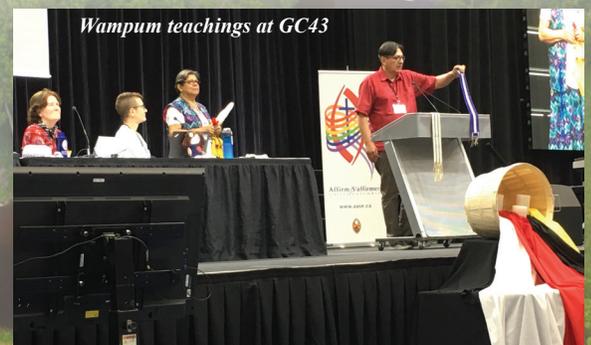
Mamawe Ota Askihk - Sharing Life Together Here on Earth - Page 6

## General Council 43 and the Calls to the Church by Adrian Jacobs, Keeper of the Circle

On the opening day of General Council 43 held at Durham College, Oshawa, ON, the Calls to the Church were approved by an overwhelming margin. The long history of Indigenous ministry became the backdrop for nine Calls to the Church that outlined what development would look like:

- 1. Concerning an Office of Vocation** – ensuring Indigenous ministry is overseen by competent and experienced Indigenous people and that policies arise from Indigenous sensibilities.
- 2. Concerning Indigenous Ministry Formation Accompaniment and Oversight** – ensuring Indigenous ministry development is under the oversight of competent Indigenous leaders and non-Indigenous overseers that are well versed in Indigenous ways of being and function.
- 3. Concerning Indigenous Communities of Faith Approved Ministry Placement** – widening the door of what is recognized as a "ministry" placement to meet the growing needs in Indigenous communities.
- 4. Concerning Indigenous Testamur** – ensuring that the approved program to prepare students for Indigenous ministry comes from an Indigenous perspective.
- 5. Concerning a National Indigenous Organization for Fellowship and Support** – ensuring a vision for the leadership of elders and an ongoing development of self-governance according to Indigenous values and ways.
- 6. Concerning Belonging** – ensuring the right for Indigenous communities of faith to choose their relationships with other church governing bodies.
- 7. Concerning Indigenous Community Leadership and Consensus Building** – ensuring the time and resources necessary to come to grassroots consensus before anything is passed on an upper level of authority.
- 8. Concerning Sustainable Support** – ensuring support for Indigenous ministry development.
- 9. Concerning sexual orientation and diversity** – ensuring inclusive care of LGBTQ2A+ folk in the Indigenous communities of faith.

Each of the calls was preceded with a retelling of the Indigenous ministry history. These Calls build on what Indigenous elders have said over the years. Our Cree elder from Fisher River Cree Nation, MB and The Right Reverend Doctor Stan McKay warned in light of the big changes happening in The UCC, "I hope we don't get colonized all over again." Embodying these call will make the Indigenous communities more Indigenous and not assimilated!



*Quote from Stan McKay is this author's note from a meeting at SSSC called to gather feedback on the Calls to the Church, January 19, 2018.*

# Spirituality in the 90's and the Day a Red-Tailed Hawk Feather Fell to Earth

By Albert McLeod



*31st Annual International Two-Spirit Gathering at SSSC, August 2018, photo by Albert McLeod*

It was twenty-seven years ago that the name "Two-Spirit" came to a group of Indigenous gays gathered at a former Boy Scout Camp near Beausejour, Manitoba. Our theme for the gathering became "Spirituality in the 90's", because we wanted to bring our peers together to share what we knew from our various languages, histories, cultures and regions.

A woman-centred activist event occurred that summer as well. This protest led to the emergence of the name Two-Spirit, which was eventually introduced at the gathering that happened on August 3-5, 1990. A First Nations woman had set up a teepee on the corner of the Legislative Grounds (Osborne and Broadway) to protest the abusive power that her husband (a Band official) had wielded in separating her from her children. She fasted in the teepee for days and many women from the Winnipeg community would come and support her through the day and night. Myra was one of them, and one night the name Two-Spirit came to her and her partner Ginette. Later, on a hot afternoon at the gathering, a circle of eighty people spoke about the teaching of respect. During this time, a red-tailed hawk hovered over us as the name was introduced. The

gathering itself was tumultuous and grand at times as we explored our life-experiences, ceremony, teachings, and our fears and anxieties. Over one-hundred Two-Spirit people came from every corner of North America and I believe this constellation of gifted spirits helped us open a doorway into the spiritual realm to receive the gifts that are meant for us. Nazareth Therriault built our sweat lodge at the site, near a place where sweat lodges are still held to this day.

*Albert McLeod is one of the directors of the Two-Spirited People of Manitoba. [www.albertmcleod.com](http://www.albertmcleod.com)*

*This is an excerpt from an article originally published in Issue 7: Two-Spirit of Red Rising Magazine, an unfiltered space for Indigenous peoples to tell their stories. To subscribe to Red Rising, visit [patreon.com/redrisingmag](https://patreon.com/redrisingmag).*

*The "former Boy Scout Camp" where the 1990 gathering was held was the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre, now the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. This summer, SSSC once again welcomed the Annual International Two-Spirit Gathering, for the 4th time in the gathering's 30 year history.*

# Carrying on the Legacy of Francis Sandy Theological Centre

We currently have four students from Ontario training for ministry at the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. With the help of the Walter Arnold Elliott fund we are carrying on the legacy of our founding school in the east of the country.



*Eric and Eva Nothingg, from Deer Lake, at the Mamawe Ota Askihk Learning Circle in August*



*Zack Kakegamic and Nathaniel Keno, from Sandy Lake, at the Ceremony of Celebration in April*



## 2019 Learning Circles

Come to a learning circle at the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre to discover new ideas and resources. These are part of the Ministry Training program and they are open to others in ministry.

**January 21 - 24:**

Pastoral Ethics & Boundaries

**January 25 - 26:**

Sacramental Elders Training

**January 28 - February 1:**

Introduction to Christian Scriptures

**April 1 - 5:**

Christology

**April 8 - 12:**

Wisdom & Psalms

**June 3 - 7:**

Worship & Liturgy

**June 10 - 14:**

Church Doctrine & Polity

**August TBA:**

Mamawe Ota Askihk: Sharing Life Together Here on Earth

**October 21 - 25:**

Basic Pastoral Care

**October 28 - November 1:**

Crisis Counselling

Visit [sandysaulteaux.ca](http://sandysaulteaux.ca) for details on these events. Contact us to register at [sansau@mymts.net](mailto:sansau@mymts.net) or 204-268-3913.

# Family Reunification Work Begins at SSSC

by Marcus Rempel

From August 11 to 26, five Indigenous women participated in a guided spiritual retreat/culture camp on the land at Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. They were there to rediscover their identity as water carriers and receive support in the process of reclaiming their children from the child welfare system. It was a time of healing and mutual support that resulted in dramatic outcomes of personal growth. The women knew the medicines they needed: the sweat lodge and the talking circle, smudges and drum songs, the sacred fire and time with the elders.

The family day when their children were allowed to visit was a beautiful time of being together on the land. Soaking the hide in the river, playing in the water,

harvesting beans and tomatoes in the garden, making food together in the kitchen, posing for family photos in the bean tipi - all these moments were confirmations that Indigenous family life is healthy and at home in the circle of all our relations. The health of children rests on the health of parents that rests on the health of community that rests on the health of the water and the land.

The vision-keepers for family reunification work at SSSC continue to explore next steps for this program. A fifth design charette will be convened at the centre in November.

*Marcus Rempel coordinated this family reunification pilot project.*



*Brenda Baron held a giveaway for the women who participated in the Indigenous Family Reunification Pilot Project. She gave each one a beaded goose feather, gathered from a flock that gathered on her lawn a week before the retreat. She later learned the teaching of the goose: Nobody gets left behind.*



*Everyone enjoyed the bannock cooked over the fire.*



*One woman was given her spirit name while on retreat at SSSC, a name that associates her with the turtle.*



*Moccasin Mama Brenda Baron of Sweet Grass Designs ([facebook.com/SweetGrassDesigns101/](https://www.facebook.com/SweetGrassDesigns101/)) organizes her supplies. Brenda was an invaluable addition to our team this year!*



*This woman cut off all her hair when her children were apprehended, vowing not to cut it again until she had her children back. Today her hair is down to her waist. In her hands she holds gift from Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata, the beginning of her medicine bundle.*



*Brenda and Marcus with retreat participants*



## “Help!” – A Rescue Story by Marcus Rempel

Mitch Bourbonnierre of Winnipeg’s Bear Clan Patrol has a philosophy of healing: If you want to get better, help someone else. “And to prove my theory, I’ll tell you a story,” he said to a gathering around the sacred fire at Sandy-Saulteaux this summer. One evening in December of 2016, Mitch received a frantic call about a young woman who had jumped off the Midtown Bridge into the Assiniboine River. Mitch waded into the icy water but had difficulty reaching the young woman. He was in trouble himself. He cried out to the young woman, “Help me!” She came to life and participated in her own rescue.

Later in the hospital, she said, “I didn’t want to live anymore. I wanted to fade away into that water. I wanted to die. But when you asked me for help, something changed in my heart, and I wanted to help you, Mitch.”



**Your donations to the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre help us to offering a healing place on the land where people can learn to help others.**

**You can donate through our website, over the phone or by mailing us a cheque with the donation form on the last page of the newsletter. We need your help!**

# Mamawe Ota Askihk - Sharing Life Together Here on Earth

For the second year in a row we held an intergenerational and intercultural gathering for teaching and learning about traditional skills and do-it-yourself ways to use the gifts of the land. This event was made possible in part thanks to the support of the United Church of Canada's Justice and Reconciliation Fund, MCC Manitoba's Indigenous Neighbours program, the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada and Janet Loney of Emo, ON.



*Opening the circle in a good way: Reynold Anderson leads fire keepers Ninoondawah Richard and Kenny Ackabee in a drum song to begin the gathering.*



*Mamawe Ota Askihk was moved to the summer schedule this year so that young people could join us. We are grateful for their youthful energy and beautiful faces!*



*Piece by piece: Audra Wesley assembles the eighteen cedar boards to make a new drum.*



*Fuel for the sacred fire. Mark Monias dropped this big old pine at Mamawe Ota Askihk. Half of the wood went for fires at SSSC and half of it went as a thank you to our elder Robert Greene and his partner Corrine Warkentin, who opened and closed the Indigenous Family Reunification Pilot Project in ceremony.*



*Smelly, bloody work. The Right Reverend Stan McKay embraces the sacred teaching of humility.*



*Kindred spirits: two elders make a connection by the sacred fire.*



*Children shell dry peas harvested by our neighbours and co-conspirators at Ploughshares Community Farm.*



*Hyun Heo of St. Andrew's College gets an education in deer hide preparation. He is a minister in Kipling, SK.*



*The wisdom of the circle: Participants of Mamawe Ota Askihk share stories and discern how to walk together in a good way.*



Return Undeliverable  
Canadian Address to:

**Sandy - Saulteaux Spiritual  
Centre**

Box 210  
Beausejour, MB  
R0E 0C0

**Yes, I support the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre!**

With a gift of:  \$25  \$75  \$100  Other \_\_\_\_\_

In honour of \_\_\_\_\_  
*(we will acknowledge this gift with the honouree or family if you provide contact information.)*

This is an unrestricted gift to the centre or I/We wish to designate this gift to one of the following Funds

- For the Building
- For Dorothy McKay Memorial
- For Global Awareness
- For Egerton Bales Young
- For General Student Bursary
- For I.C.L.E.F. (Saskatchewan Students)

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to make my donation monthly with PAR. Please send more information.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am interested in leaving a gift to Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre in my will.

\_\_\_\_\_ I offer prayers for the ministry.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

**We accept donations through VISA and MASTERCARD**

Type of Card  VISA  MASTERCARD

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry Date \_\_\_\_\_

To donate online visit [www.sandysaulteaux.ca/donate](http://www.sandysaulteaux.ca/donate)



**GET OUR NEWSLETTER  
IN YOUR INBOX!**

You can now sign up to get our  
newsletter and other announcements  
from SSSC delivered to you by email.

Sign up at [sandysaulteaux.ca](http://sandysaulteaux.ca).

Phone: 204.268.3913 Fax: 204.268.4463 [sansau@mymts.net](mailto:sansau@mymts.net) [www.sandysaulteaux.ca](http://www.sandysaulteaux.ca)  
Box 210, Beausejour MB R0E 0C0

**Thank you for your generosity**