



Sandy-Saulteaux

Spiritual Centre



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**“I am from the heart of a mother,
who didn’t know how to love me.”**

- Ji-Gaabiikwe Diane Campeau; NAIITS Conference 2020 used with permission

by Diane Meredith

It’s intriguing to meet some 30 strangers from all over the world in a “zoom café.” Such was the case at the 17th Annual NAIITS Conference (North American Institute of Indigenous Theological Studies). Sandy-Saulteaux staff, including our Keeper of the Circle, Adrian Jacobs, who opened and closed the conference in prayer, joined in this virtual gathering to explore “Spirituality of Wellness in Community.” We noted a strong metaphor of birthing permeated the presentations.

Ji-Gaabiikwe Diane Campeau’s talk focused on “moving from soul wounds to soul healing - decolonizing trauma healing practices.” She noted that too often colonial healing practices fail to address systemic violence or the need to see the individual’s wounds in the context of the restoration of the whole person back into the original community. Through embracing traditional healing practices and a re-discovering of her Anishinaabe (Ojibway) identity she found healing and was able to come to great peace with her past.

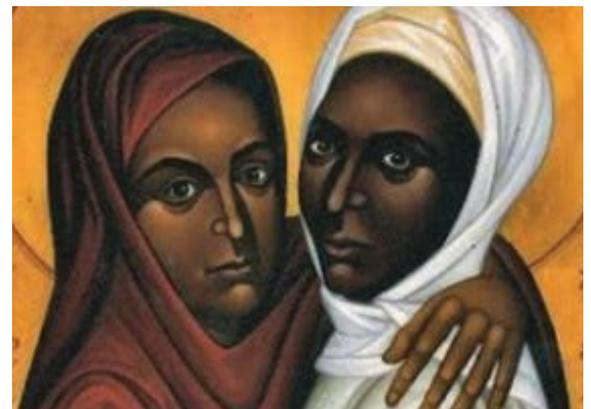
Describing herself as a “Justice Doula”, Micky ScottBey Jones drew on Black and Blackfoot wisdom to describe her healing journey as connected to political wellness. The notion of “Midwife chaplaincy” also caught our attention. Instead of focusing on the other as patient and client, the midwife chaplain enters a journey of mutual respect, rebirthing with the other.

Rather than a top down colonial “helping” model, these wholistic asset-resiliency based healing practices focused on traditional ceremonies, community-based ways of healing, and community strengths as well as colonial traumas. This reorientation is life-giving! As Terry LeBlanc (one of the founders of NAIITS) noted, all these practices help to remind us of our original goodness and bring us back to the Creator’s original good intention for us in community with ourselves, each other and all our relations. Like Shiprah and Puah (Exodus 1:15-21), the midwives who protected Egyptian babies and refused to participate in state violence, Indigenous healers are doulas of justice and midwives of rebirth.

Traditional Indigenous teachings guide our education and healing work here at Sandy-Saulteaux. May our labour, with ministry students, with Indigenous families and with all who come here seeking rest, renewal and reconciliation, carry on in this tradition.

The Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre builds up Indigenous leaders to journey with churches and communities towards healing and justice. Find out more about our ministry training program and other work at sandysaulteaux.ca.

Diane Meredith is our Second Keeper of the Learning Circle. Welcome Diane!



Shiprah and Puah

Covid19 Update by Adrian Jacobs

Covid19 has changed everything here at SSSC. We made adjustments for the safety of our office and maintenance staff, cancelled all of our programs and rentals, laid off retreat staff, and rearranged our office and moved staff to work out of our Lodges in order to social distance as well as we can. Offices have taken over the library in Lodge 1 and the common rooms in Lodges 2 and 3. Hand sanitizers are installed throughout our facilities and a personal sanitization protocol established for every on-site staff person.

The loss of retreat business income has been dramatic from our best ever year to zero. We have moved our in-person Learning Circles for our ministry training students to remote online Zoom sessions. This transition has gone well and we are happy to learn new ways of doing things. Zoom fatigue is a new challenge but in some ways Zoom has been a pleasant surprise for meeting together, not as

good as face-to-face but not as bad as we imagined.

My Haudenosaunee people used to live in communal longhouses but with the pandemics that came with European explorers and settlers we changed our way of living to prevent the viral destruction that communal living wreaked among our people. By the 1700's our people were living in individual homes, albeit large families but this arrangement stemmed the tide of mass death. Indigenous people are survivors and we will survive this current apocalyptic event.

Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre is proud of its Indigenous heritage and survival spirit. We will continue to learn from our Faculty the Earth to make our adjustments and flourish once again!

Adrian Jacobs is the Keeper of the Circle at Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre.

Zoom Me In: What It's Like to be a Ministry Student in an Online Learning Circle by Joyce Johnston

What an experience, just seeing everyone all on the same screen. I appreciated the guidance and patience of our support team. We are starting to develop the process that feels right. Our elder is a real asset and so willing to accompany us in this new way of communication. Nice to have Agenda and other material show on the screen while we continue with the discussions. The only issue is that the connections are sometimes weak, but with patience we quickly adapt, and take it in stride. Zooming is another unique way of getting our work done and I enjoyed it more than I expected. I now know where the chat feature is on my equipment. Miigetch for arranging the Zoom feature. Blessings to all.

Joyce Johnston is studying for ministry at Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre. She is the Student Rep to our Board/Keepers of the Vision. She is from Neyaashiinigiimig (in Ontario) where she serves her community as the Student Minister with Cape Croker United Church.



Elder Judy Delorme



Students in our online Learning Circle: Robert Patton & Alma, Joyce Johnson, Wayne Monague

Class of 2020

We were thrilled to announce five graduating students from our Ministry Training Program this spring. Due to the pandemic, we were just as disappointed to not be able to hold our annual Ceremony of Celebration in their honour. Elenor Thompson, John Snow, Bruce Neal Kakakaway, Sam Ross and Murray Pruden will all be missed in our Learning Circles. They each bring tremendous gifts to the communities where they serve. We hope to be able to host a Ceremony of Celebration in their honour next April.

My Ministry Partners: Reflections on the Sandy-Saulteaux Grads of 2020 by Joyce Johnston

MURRAY PRUDEN

Murray has so many gifts with respect to his capacity to provide leadership in the United Church. He is gifted as a speaker, singer, story teller, and has the creativity to work magic in groups. He sees Spirit in all things, and totally inspires through his delivery. He is a loving human being, full of energy and the willingness to listen and to be receptive of others' views.

ELENOR THOMPSON

My first day at Sandy Saulteaux I was quite nervous, and my first impression of Elenor was wow, she has such a strong generous personality. This small lady had a regal entry and lit up the room with this amazing smile. People came one at a time for a hug which she was very generous with. Over time I realized how important she was to this group, she was the mother hen, who gave counsel, advice, and who initiated so many things. Her faith was strong and she had the gift of bringing out the best in all of us. She loves to laugh, sing and shares from her experience and acquired knowledge. Her dedication to serve is very evident in her overcoming the trials and tribulations suffered after her stroke. She emanates the teachings of Jesus in her capacity to love people, and to be forgiving.

BRUCE NEAL KAKAKAWAY

Being in the circle with Bruce was so inspirational. Why? Because he spoke from his heart's experience. He has been brought into the Ministry through his life experiences and much of what he shared was filled with emotions that we all

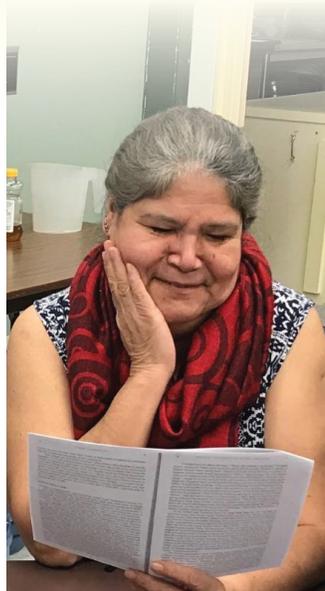
struggle with throughout our journeys: love, pain, sadness, connection, and so much more. He delivers his stories so honestly that you just know Creator wants him as a disciple. He has no problem getting involved with people and doing every aspect of the work placed before him.

JOHN SNOW

John has a strong personality, rarely at a loss for words, yet can be very quiet, contemplative and reflective in his approach in being of service. He is supported by his family and draws on his inherent wisdom as a traditional pipe-holder. He has so much conviction in the words found in the Bible, yet draws equally on the words of many others who have made an impression – he often quotes his father's book – to express an ecumenical relationship with the Creator. His services during our circles were for myself very inspiring and spiritually based. He has the vision that in this day and age is needed in the field of Ministry.

SAM ROSS

Humble with the energy of two men at times, Sam loved the music and often led us in song. Sam had a long history in the church and had such an open mind about the traditional rites that were discussed. His heart was one of love for everyone in the circle, often lending his support in individual services provided by other student Ministers. I am so glad to hear he is one of the graduates as he is likely as much of a Blessing to his community as he was to his company of student Ministers.





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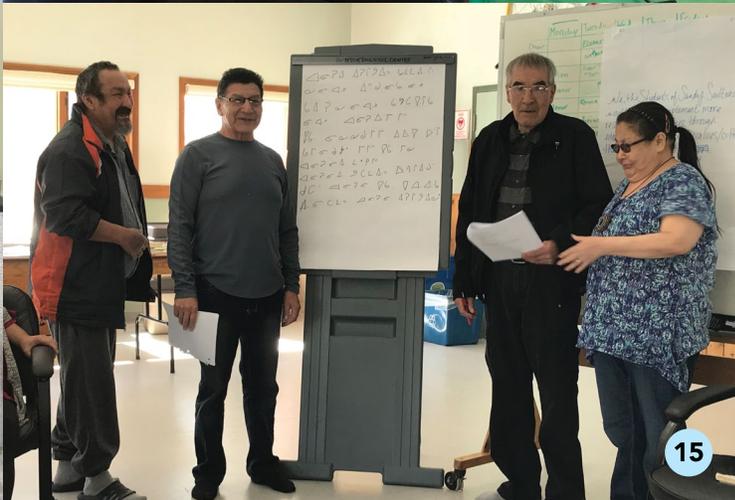
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1. John (second from right) was elected to the National Indigenous Council in 2019. Since graduating, John has completed his service at the Indigenous Executive Council, Chinook Winds Region 3. He is now serving as Indigenous Minister for the Pacific Mountain Regional Council in The United Church of Canada.

2. Elenor and Murray (first and second from right) practice baptism during a Sacramental Elders training.

3. Sam playing keyboard at the Ceremony of Celebration in 2018.

4. Bruce sharing his knowledge of history as he adds to the timeline in the Church History Learning Circle.

5. Murray and Keeper of the Learning Circle Deanna Zantingh, delivering a dramatic reading of his play about Indigenous and Christian spirituality.

6. Bruce checking on the smoked meat at Mamawe Ota Askikh: Sharing Life Together Here on Earth.

7. Elenor with her husband and grandchildren at the Ceremony of Celebration in 2019.

8. The five grads together in a Learning Circle in 2019.

9. John helped host the United Church Moderator, Jordan Cantwell in 2017. John says "One of the most important moments for my ministry was to have the Moderator at Samson United Church, to carry a message of hope and healing. From book of Acts, her sermon recounted Paul and Silas in prison. Then there was a shaking of the jail and all were free. The survival of the prisoners and the guards were dependent on one another. In order to heal today, we need to all do work on ourselves, settler and Indigenous alike."

10. Bruce and Sam visiting at the Ceremony of Celebration 2019.

11. Murray is now serving as the Executive Minister for Indigenous Ministries and Justice in The United Church of Canada. This is what he says about his journey to ministry: "My belief in the Creator has been adapted to the spiritual and cultural knowledge that I hold as a Cree person and bridged with the Theological teachings of the western world and Christian practices through family, community and the United Church. It has helped me to develop and allows me to embrace my belief in God, my belief in the church, my belief in the land, my belief in Jesus and my belief in myself."

12. John at Church of the Pater Noster in Jerusalem next to a plaque he sought out of the Lord's Prayer in Nakota Sioux, which is related to his Nakoda dialect. "I felt humbled and in awe to see the Prayers of our People in Jerusalem and validated because we know the Creator."

13. Bruce sitting by the Sea of Galilee during his Global Awareness Learning Circle. He reflected that the trip changed him and made him a better person in ways that are hard to explain.

14. Now Keeper of the Learning Circle Susie McPherson Derendy with Elenor.

15. Sam and classmates presenting during the Community Development Learning Circle.

Honoured Elders



Every year our students select two elders to honour at our Ceremony of Celebration. This year Jacob Keno and Mary Courtenay received this honour. We look forward to recognizing their many contributions at a future Ceremony of Celebration.

JACOB KENO

Along with his late wife, Jacob graduated from the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre in 1996. He served as a minister in South Indian Lake, Oxford House and Winnipeg.

Jacob was nominated by his son Nathaniel who is following in his father's footsteps as a student at SSSC right now, training for ministry. Nathaniel says of his father that he is kind and has helped a lot of people. Jacob showed Nathaniel and all of his siblings how to be Christian.



MARY COURTENAY by Adrian Jacobs

Mary joined the SSSC staff shortly after I started my tenure here. Mary had a Master's degree in nursing education and was part of a successful program of training Indigenous nurses in Northern Manitoba. She was part of an effort to decolonize the typical nursing education of the University of Manitoba into the remote rural Northern Manitoba Indigenous context. It was this experience and success that laid the groundwork for Mary's work at SSSC.

I would marvel at how Mary was able to translate our often deep philosophical discussions about Indigenous culture and learning into draft documents for our use in developing the SSSC ministry training program. Mary understood Indigenous thinking from her time with Indigenous nursing students and also knew the language that academics needed to hear.

Mary was committed to paving the way for others and volunteered her position to another before her contract ended. She was willing to sacrifice in order that the vision of SSSC could develop. It is this spirit that I appreciated so much while Mary worked with us. Even now she continues to bless us with her good thoughts and caring heart in our Program Committee. It is my pleasure to recognize her as one of our Honored Elders.



A Time of Renewal

To build on the foundation laid by our Elders we have embarked on a period of reflection and renewal. Over the summer we surveyed friends of the Centre, including groups who rent space here and participants in the programs we offer. Drawing on the collected wisdom of our supporters we have started identifying the enhancements we can make to our programming and our site to ensure we continue to meet the needs of those we serve. We'll be sharing the stories that emerged from these discussions soon and inviting you to help support a renewed vision of our Centre going forward. Stay tuned!



Drums & Dreams

by Kaylee Wood

I am from drums,
made of deer hide and acrylic paints.

I am from Northern Manitoba,
cold, wooded, the sounds of eagles in the distance.

I am from sage
rolled up in a basket next to the yellow sweet grass,
its aroma filling the air
reminding us of our ancestors.

I am from pickerel and fried bannock
Nohkom prepared both, with love.

I am from hugs and kisses,
mistakes are not yelled at
they are corrected by saying "try again".
I am from Nohkom begging me to stay home,
she doesn't want me out,
fear takes hold.

I am from screams of the girls,
the woman that were taken and
spat out into ditches.

I am from cries of mothers
when they find their child
won't ever come home.

I am from the last struggled breaths
of children that felt trapped in the reserves and
saw only one way out.

I am from empty beer bottles
because another family member
couldn't find the will to go on.

I am from broken drums and broken dreams,
a dying culture leads to a
broken future.

Kaylee is the granddaughter of Sandy-Saulteaux graduate Elenor Thompson.



Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre Annual General Meeting

September 26, 2:00 pm

To join us by Zoom, please send your email address to
sansau@mymts.net.



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- For Egerton Bales Young
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