



Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre



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Every Child Matters by Diandra Rose Powderhorn

The day started with a deep anxiety that entangled itself around my spirit. It wasn't until I tied my beloved Granny's scarf around my head and remembered her cute laugh, that the anxiety eased. Her memory along with a hug from my mother reminded me of who I am and the purpose I have on earth. My sisters and I were met with a crowd already making their way to Portage and Main, the sea of orange was a wondrous sight to behold.

The heat in the air already filling my lungs, I knew the first thing I needed to do was make our Elders comfortable.

As Tara engaged with the crowd, numerous volunteers, Marcus included, jumped at the chance to help; helping to set up the umbrella for our elders to sit under, handing out water, etc.

Grandmother Martina started us off with her beautiful speech, her voice shaken, but standing tall with tears streaming down her face. My heart aching and filled with awe, I thought to myself... "This is why we're here."

Tara, with her hand on Grandmother Martina's shoulder in comfort, made it known that we as youth understand our Survivors now, "We forgive you! We love you!"

The next hour was filled with beautiful people sharing their truths, their knowledge, and their gifts of music and dance with us, to whom we are eternally grateful.

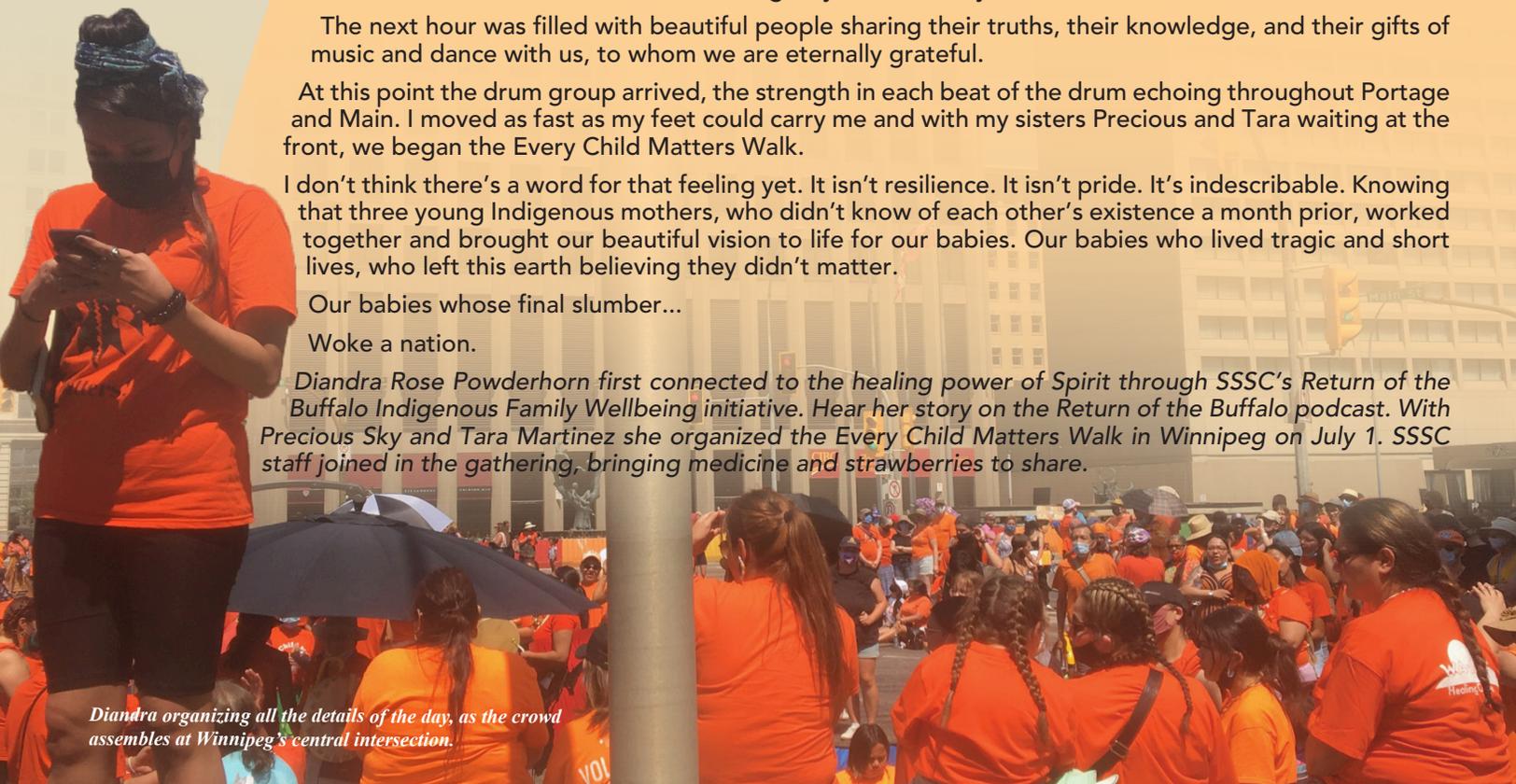
At this point the drum group arrived, the strength in each beat of the drum echoing throughout Portage and Main. I moved as fast as my feet could carry me and with my sisters Precious and Tara waiting at the front, we began the Every Child Matters Walk.

I don't think there's a word for that feeling yet. It isn't resilience. It isn't pride. It's indescribable. Knowing that three young Indigenous mothers, who didn't know of each other's existence a month prior, worked together and brought our beautiful vision to life for our babies. Our babies who lived tragic and short lives, who left this earth believing they didn't matter.

Our babies whose final slumber...

Woke a nation.

Diandra Rose Powderhorn first connected to the healing power of Spirit through SSSC's Return of the Buffalo Indigenous Family Wellbeing initiative. Hear her story on the Return of the Buffalo podcast. With Precious Sky and Tara Martinez she organized the Every Child Matters Walk in Winnipeg on July 1. SSSC staff joined in the gathering, bringing medicine and strawberries to share.



Diandra organizing all the details of the day, as the crowd assembles at Winnipeg's central intersection.

What do you love about Sandy-Saulteaux Spritual Centre?

It is a beautiful natural environment in which to honour the Creator through study and contemplation.

The space to grow with gracious challenge. *quiet beauty* **The work you do with families**

Deep learning and relationship **camaraderie**

training led by & for Indigenous People *the chance to learn about Indigenous traditions, and to be in the sweat lodge for the first time* **A PLACE WHERE I CAN BE RESTORED** *all the windows - bringing outside in*

THE OPENHEARTED WELCOME TO CEREMONY AND OTHER CULTURAL EVENTS

I remember hearing a wolf teaching and feeling blessed / inspired. *It is an oasis of hope for building relationship to the earth, one another and to the wider community*

Opportunity and possibility rests in its bones. **History and resilience** **IT IS A SAFE, SACRED SPACE** *It is a beautiful setting to do much needed work.*

Its ability to connect Christian and Indigenous spirituality.

Thank you to everyone who shared what they love about Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre through our 2021 Donor Survey! Your responses will help us better communicate with you about the things you care about. Didn't get to fill out the survey? It's not too late! Visit bit.ly/SSSCdonor

Want to join these donors in nurturing this space? Visit sandysaulteaux.ca or call 204-268-3913 to donate.

Building on a solid foundation



Replacing the foundation under Lodge 1 in 2016.

With the Centre closed to guests due to the pandemic, we're making the most of this down time to take care of some much needed work on our lodges that provide overnight accommodations at the Centre. Completing a project begun in 2016 to replace the shifting and sinking foundations under each one, the remaining two lodges will receive new foundations before we reopen to guests later this fall. Your donations help keep the Centre in good repair!

The Earth is our Energy Source

With a grant of \$10,000 from The Thomas Sill Foundation and \$12,500 from "The Environmental Fund and the Jean Moore Endowment Fund", a part of The United Church of Canada Foundation's Seeds of Hope granting program, we have been able to replace our aging geothermal water furnace. Geothermal is a renewable energy source that can both heat and cool the Centre in a sustainable way, using the energy of the Earth.

The Seeds of Hope granting program supports innovative, unique, and much-needed projects which enable congregations and other United Church-affiliated individuals and organizations to live out the New Creed's call to seek justice, live with respect in creation and love and serve others. For more information, visit unitedchurchfoundation.ca.



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Let's Connect

We have a new email address!

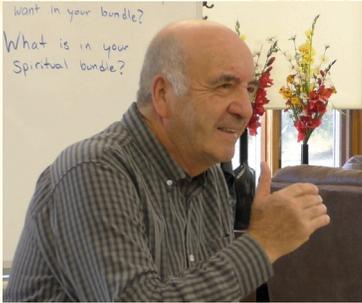
You can now reach us at connect@sandysaulteaux.ca.

Please update your address book.

(sansau@mymts.net will no longer reach us.)

Introduction to Indigenous Lands & Issues in Canada

From February to June, many of you joined us for a monthly conversation with Indigenous elders from across Canada to explore the cultural and historic foundations to today's headlines. Each time the conversation was rich with stories, insight and humour. Here are a few quotes that stood out. Stay tuned for more online learning opportunities with our elders!



"I think the word "mission" is misused. It's been a guise of engagement in colonization. It goes back to the history of the crusades. It's a problematic term. I've told the church... that I think their role is remission. That's a cancer term. To deal with the cancer, you have to acknowledge that remission is going back and recovering your health. So I'm inviting the church... to be in/about remission." - Stan McKay

"That's a teaching that we carry in the circle: humour. Humour is one of the cornerstones of our theology, of our philosophy, of our way of life. To have that great thunderous laughter, is always present in our sharing circle." - John Snow Jr.



"The stories are our medicine. The stories make us who we are... when you tell and share the stories... you put yourself into the medicine. The medicine that you share, if you're a really good storyteller, oh... this story will just grow! It'll become fantastic! It can change people's hearts. It can save people from tragedy.

Stories don't really tell you what to do. The stories just sort of tell you of the way things were and the way things could be and how things improve." - Grafton Anton

Garden Goodness

Next time you come to visit, it's very likely that you will be eating from what is being produced right here. Thanks to a grant from Agri-Food Canada, we've expanded our growing space with a geodesic dome greenhouse. Our staff Victor, Deb, and summer students Rebecca and Ethan have been busy every day in the garden and greenhouse. We have harvested herbs, rhubarb, wild onions, wild mint, beans, peas, beets and spinach so far. Cabbage, carrots, onions, tomatoes, peppers, rutabaga, potatoes and cucumbers are all growing well. Our three sisters planting of corn, squash and beans will be harvested and set aside to make Three Sisters Stew. We look forward to serving you the fruits of our harvest!



Honouring the Children

Across Turtle Island our communities have been caring for each other and honouring the children as announcements of unmarked graves at residential school sites continue to weigh on our hearts. Your donations and prayers help support ministry training, family wellbeing programs and cross-cultural education that are strengthening communities in times of grief.

Please note: if you are a residential school or intergenerational survivor the Indian Residential School Survivors Society 24hr Crises Line is available for you to find emotional support or assistance. Phone: 1-866-925-4419

Vernon Grieves Memorial Pastoral Charge in Oxford House paused on May 31 to remember the 215 children found buried on the grounds of Kamloops Residential School. Permission was given to photograph the sacred fire and ceremony.



Community members smudging at the fire.



SSSC grad Elenor Thompson offers prayers for the children.

Cape Croker United in Neyaashiinigmiing opened the church and palisade so the community could gather for conversation, prayer, song, drumming and a sacred fire. They rang the church bell 215 times, counting out the number of children found in Kamloops.



SSSC student minister Joyce Johnston, speaking to those gathered to honour the children.



Joyce (centre) helping ring the bell.



Hearts to honour residential school survivors on the palisade.

Sandy-Saulteaux staff took part in a pop-up pow wow and bbq in Winnipeg on August 1, organized by Diandra Rose Powderhorn and her team as a follow-up to the Every Child Matters Walk (see story, page 1). Your donations helped

feed the crowd with 500 hot dogs, a great way to share some Return of the Buffalo funds we couldn't spend on retreats this summer.



Flag Carriers at the grand entry.



Pow wow dancers in the park.

Place for Prayers by Murray Pruden

I call upon all of you, my sisters and brothers, to take the time to listen to Spirit, to reflect and to pray. Light your medicines, light your candles, connect to the land and find that place for prayer. Because prayer is needed at this time. Open your hearts, minds and breath to unite as the good and loving people we are:

Creator,

We give thanks for this day and each day you grant us life to walk on this great land, our Mother.

Give us the heart and strength to come together in prayer in time of mourning, reflection and peace.

The news we have heard these last few days of our relations, families, the children who have been physically taken away from us and have now been found.

And with this news, we grieve for their memory, for their struggle, for their spirit.

We pray for good understanding, guidance and love for all

our families and communities who will need the direction and resolution at this time.

And we come together in prayer and ask for your light to guide us to be a part of that needed peace, support and resolve for everyone who is reacting to this great tragedy in our Indigenous Nations of this great land.

Creator be with us, allow us to be brave. Allow us to be strong. Allow us to be gentle to one another. Allow us to be humble. But most of all, allow us to be like the Creator's love.

Peace be with us, we lift up our prayers to you. In love, trust and truth, peace be with us all. In Jesus name. Amen.

SSSC grad Rev. Murray Pruden is the Executive Minister of Indigenous Ministries & Justice, United Church of Canada. He shared this prayer in May 2021, upon hearing the news that the remains of 215 of our ancestors and relations were found on the grounds of the former Kamloops Residential School.

Remembering Rev. Frank Evans by Adel Compton



Adel standing in between Susan and Frank Evans at a United Church conference in 2019.

Frank Evans and his wife Susan from were both students from Red Sucker Lake United Church when I taught at former Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre from 2005-2008. They were a team. My initial reflections honouring Frank include Susan, as they complemented each other's participation and leadership.

I admired their mutual commitment to each other/their family/their community/their faith and all of it part of a day by day adventure in living. They were fun loving, passionate and modeled faith as relationship to God and others with respect for Creation. Their participation and leadership with summer culture camps as well as local church leadership included generous pastoral care service to all ages.

Frank brought experience from local social service needs to share as he served on conference United Church committees. Quiet or assertive, Frank was attentive to opportunities inviting him and all he loved to grow, learn and serve in ways that brought joy to every day. Rest In Peace Frank.

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was attentive to opportunities inviting him and all he loved to grow, learn and serve in ways that brought joy to every day. Rest In Peace Frank.
Frank Evans, a graduate of Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre, passed away in January 2021. We continue to hold his family in our prayers.



Farewell Gail

We wish Gail Larson all the best in her retirement! Gail began her time here at the Centre as housekeeping staff and went on to be our Administrative Assistant. Her breadth of knowledge of the Centre and our community, built up over her 26 years here, will be dearly missed.

Any questions you used to send to Gail can now be sent to connect@sandysaulteaux.ca. If you'd like to send Gail your best wishes, we'd be happy to pass those on too!

◀ *Gail (right) with former Keeper of the Learning Circle, Mary Courtenay.*

Keepers of the Vision

Your Centre is guided by a board of ten thoughtful, caring and dedicated individuals, including Kelly Selkirk, Eileen Antone, Joyce Johnston, Jamie Scott, Ken Thomas, Steve Willey, R-W Hoekstra and Rob Murray. Carmen Lansdowne and Esther Wesley joined the Keepers of the Vision in 2021.

Esther Wesley

First and foremost, Esther Wesley is a wife, a mother and a grandmother. Esther was born and raised in Sachigo Lake First Nation in northwestern Ontario. She was raised on a trapline in the traditional upbringing of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation people. She was also raised in the Anglican tradition as her father was an Anglican priest. She has worked for the Anglican Church of Canada as a co-ordinator of the Anglican Fund for Healing and Reconciliation and as an anti-racism educator. For many years, Esther volunteered working with youth in suicide intervention and prevention. In recognition of this work, Huron University College presented her with an honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree.

Carmen Lansdowne

The Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne is a member of the Heiltsuk First Nation. She is an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada and the Executive Director of First United, a community ministry offering programs of advocacy, housing and healing in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Born in Alert Bay, BC, Carmen grew up in the United Church and has been involved in the church in a variety of ways. She holds a PhD from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA and speaks, writes and publishes across North America on issues of Indigenous theology and Indigenous-Christian relationships.

Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre Annual General Meeting

If you have donated money to SSSC, you are a member of the corporation and have a vote at the AGM.

We invite you to join us on September 25 at 2:00 pm.

Come and hear about what's in store at Sandy-Saulteaux as we re-open to guests and in-person events!

To participate by Zoom or to receive an update on the potential to participate in person, email connect@sandysaulteaux.ca.

Donor Connections: Rob & Keiko Witmer



Our hearts overflow with gratitude when we think of the huge impact that the Centre has had on our lives. As overseas personnel for The United Church of Canada, we were on home assignment in 1994-95 when I, Rob, read "Journey from Fisher River" about the life of Stan McKay. That book moved me to work on the translation of a book about the Ainu people, the Indigenous people of northern Japan, in the hope that the Ainu people and Indigenous people in Canada might connect with one another.

I was so pleased to share the content of the book with the ministry students at Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre. I showed slides of Ainu people and while I was speaking one of the students stood up and, shaking with anger, yelled out "What are you doing in Japan!?" I didn't know what to say or do! I wanted to cry because I thought I was doing a good thing. Through his anger I came to see that it was my first time to speak to a group of Indigenous people in Canada and I was doing it from a position of power, as a teacher, whereas I should have been on my knees apologizing, seeking reconciliation, and learning from Indigenous people in Canada first. His anger was a special gift for me.

Another student gave me a loop tie with an eagle feather design that I could wear. She explained to me that the one who holds the eagle feather must speak what he or she believes is the truth and must speak from the heart. This was also a special gift for me and I almost always wear it when I speak before a group for the first time.

We have stayed connected with the Centre ever since and welcomed Melody McKellar, a graduate, to Japan in 1997 where she shared with churches, schools, museums and many other groups including Ainu people. It was a very rich and meaningful time for all.

We brought a group from Japan, including Ainu people, to Jessie Saulteaux in 2000. The Dohoku Sub-district group of churches and the Dohoku Centre in northern Hokkaido where Keiko and I worked for more than 40 years were



Melody McKellar in Hokkaido speaking to a church group in 1997

hoping to receive a group from Sandy-Saulteaux in 2017 but world events prevented it. These churches, some of them very small, are still making an offering to Sandy-Saulteaux each year.

The next trip we planned, to bring a group from the Theological Seminary for Rural Mission in Tokyo, to Sandy-Saulteaux in 2020 was also cancelled but we hope to visit you again one day. The relationship with you is precious and we do want to continue to share and to learn from one another. You are in our hearts always.

Will you join Rob, Keiko and the churches of the Dohoku Sub-district in supporting transformative learning and global connections at the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre? Make a donation today by mailing in the form on the last page of this newsletter or visit sandysaulteaux.ca/donate to make an easy online gift.

To support relationships of global solidarity you can choose to designate your donation to the Global Awareness Fund so that students training for ministry can enrich their studies by learning with Indigenous peoples around the world.

To read more of Rob and Keiko's story, visit sandysaulteaux.ca/rob-keiko-witmer/.

Tell Us Your Story!

We want to know how the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre has impacted your life or the life of someone you care about. Email erica@sandysaulteaux.ca



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

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- For Global Awareness
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- For the Sandy-Saulteaux Legacy Fund

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