



Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre



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Hope Happens Here by Kelly Selkirk

As an Indigenous educator, my journey with hope is coloured by colonization, the residential and day schools, and the child welfare system. These truths impact me both personally in my lived experience and professionally through the students I am lucky enough to work with. My own hope can at once be ravaged by the oppression, disadvantage, and marginalization I witness, while at the same time it can be lifted by the grace and strength I see in our Indigenous communities every day in the face of those things.

Tom Bodett tells us that "... a person needs just three things to be truly happy in this world: someone to love, something to do, and something to hope for." Like most of us, my family, my students, and my community are the things I love. They give me purpose and they give me the work I do. They give me something to hope for.

One of the teachings I received growing up was that of Pimatisiwin - living the good life. To live the good life means we all have a responsibility to nurture good relationships (to love). We all have a responsibility to give back to our communities (to do). And perhaps most importantly we have a responsibility to build for the generations to come. This requires hope.

Some days hope is the encouraging friend that walks with me. Some days hope leads me. And some days, hope drags me along. In Proverbs 23:18 Creator reminds me "For surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off."

Kelly Selkirk is chair of the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre Keepers of the Vision. She is Métis and lives in Fisher River Cree Nation where she is the post-secondary coordinator.



Handprints of hope – Participants worked together to learn from our elders and build a powwow drum here this summer - see more on pages 4-5.

As a friend of the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre you are a part of our story of hope! Thank you for giving generously to the work of cross-cultural education and Indigenous ministry training, work that nurtures our shared hope for Pimatisiwin – the good life for all. Enjoy the stories of love in these pages and the invitations to give and to hope.

At Christmas and always, we wish you hope, peace, joy and love!

Hopes & Dreams Fulfilled

In a moving covenanting service, SSSC student Robert Patton was appointed as a congregational designated minister for the United Church of Kahnawake. Robert came to Sandy-Saulteaux to sit in the Learning Circle as an elder in 2020. He loved the experience. Robert decided to return as a student and pursue his dream, one that has been with him for much of his life, of becoming a minister.

The dreams of our elders, that we would raise up our own people for spiritual leadership in the church, in ways that honour Indigenous cultures, go back even further. Since the 1980s, Robert has been involved in the movement to bring these hopes to fruition. Now, about to turn 80, he's getting ready to graduate from Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre's Indigenous ministry training program – a program he helped lay the groundwork for years ago.



SSSC student Robert Patton is in team ministry with Rev. Jan Jorgensen at Kahnawake United Church. Your gifts give life to long-held hopes for Indigenous leaders who can support their communities in ways that honour Indigenous ways of being.

Return of the Buffalo by Diandra Rose Powderhorn

Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre has been pivotal in my reconnection to Spirit as well the reunification with my children. I first joined the centre as a participant and am now on the leadership team for the Return Of The Buffalo Retreats, and am honored to have the opportunity to give back to other families what the centre has given to mine.

One memory from our last retreat of the summer that remained with me was of a toddler who has autism. He's a very sweet boy and at times can be hard to settle which we were expecting and prepared for.

Robert Greene, the Elder overseeing this retreat came to conduct a Pipe Ceremony with the families and the helpers. We all sat around the beautiful turtle shaped fire pit on the centre grounds. He placed the Sacred Items and once ready he opened with a drum song.

As soon as he started singing, this little boy approached the Elder, got as close as he could while being respectful to steer clear of the sacred items, and smiled at Robert as he sang. The Spirit in this little boy was awakened and the smile on his face is one I will never forget. His mom, myself and another helper were brought to tears seeing this deep and powerful connection he was making. His mom expressed that her son had never been to ceremony before, making this moment even more impactful, which I didn't believe was possible. Mom hopes to return to the centre with her family.

Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre's Return Of The Buffalo Retreats truly leave a lasting impact on families

and I am hopeful for its future, as well as the futures of the families who get the honor of connecting with the ancestral lands and reconnecting to Spirit.



A Life Saving Ministry

Ministers from the Keewatin Circle gathered at Sandy-Saulteaux in October for fellowship and training. This Circle includes Indigenous United Church Ministers from across Northern Manitoba and Ontario. It was good to see many of our graduates sitting again in the circle here!

One afternoon was spent learning about harm reduction. This approach saves lives. Instead of judging people for using drugs, we offer ways to make it as safe as possible, recognizing that drug use and addiction is a normal response to trauma and systemic abuse.

Many Keewatin Circle ministers see young people in their communities using drugs, sometimes with deadly consequences. They have led too many funerals for their young people.

SSSC Keeper of the Vision Rev. Grant Queskekapow teaches that when we hear about the pain, we can ask "where is the medicine?"

Naloxone is one medicine that counters the unwanted effects of an opioid overdose. SSSC graduate Rev. Elenor Thompson explains "Many church leaders in the remote reservations are often the first ones to be called to the scene of a non-responsive person so having the naloxone training we've all received here might help save a life."



Keewatin Circle Ministers with new Keeper of the Circle Christy Anderson (4th from left, standing) and Harm Reduction facilitators from Central Neighbourhoods. Thank you for supporting these leaders with your prayers and your gifts so that they may share good medicine with our people.

While learning the skills to limit the harm that drug use and addiction is causing right now, these ministers are also walking with their communities to address the underlying causes. To heal the intergenerational trauma of colonization, Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre students and graduates know that the recovery and celebration of Indigenous cultures is the way forward. Connection to land and spirit is good medicine too.

A Christmas Greeting in Mohawk

Shared by Alma Ransom

Sewatonharen.
Iesos. Rotonni. Onwah.
Sesonkwaskonthakwen.

*Be happy (you all) in this season.
Jesus became a human being to save us.*

Nehl algyax'n Gitsanmx'na?
Kih-ininamowin nah?

We want to include stories in our newsletter in our languages! Help us celebrate Indigenous languages. Let us know if you speak a language you'd like to see shared in the pages of this newsletter.



Glimpses of Good News

Mamawe Ota Askihk – Sharing Life Together Here on Earth – is a week-long gathering in August where Indigenous and non-Indigenous people come together at SSSC to share skills from the land and work side by side on tasks like smoking fish, making cheese, picking berries, building a drum.

At Christmas, as we celebrate the coming of Christ, we sing about peace on earth and we are reminded of the good news of a God who lives amongst us.

What are your hopes for the kingdom, or kin-dom, of God and the coming of peace on earth?

Might it look like Indigenous and non-Indigenous people sitting down at a drum together, learning words in the language of the land and blending their voices in song? New friends letting the mud ooze up over their toes as they wade into a river, rinsing tobacco leaves in the water, taking care with each step in a process that leads to ceremonies of thanksgiving?



Twila, Laci and Kaylee make their mark on the drum.



Minhyuk and Randy cut out a skin for the drum.



Ashley dances on wild rice.



Pat and Duku make mint jelly.



Hugh and Val share some smiles.



Joy helps Tord sew a ribbon skirt.



Picking sage in the garden at Brokenhead Ojibway Nation.



Kerry and Randy set up the smoker.



Washing tobacco leaves in the river.



Light streams through the fish laid out in the smoker.



Marlene with bannock dipped in cracklings.



Minhyuk washes the cheese with care once a day.



Keeper of Learning Pathways Bruce Neal Kakakaway demonstrates how to dry meat for pemmican.



Drumming with Knowledge Keeper Rey Anderson and SSSC Keeper of the Learning Circle Susie McPherson Derendy.



SSSC graduate Rev. Deb Anderson-Pratt is ready to lead the drum awakening ceremony.



Saying farewell with a circle of hugs.

Guardian, dreamer, friend and more...

by Deanna Zantingh

In my relatively short time as Adrian Jacobs' colleague in the ten years of his care and leadership of the Sandy-Saulteaux circle, he generated a relatively long list of names and descriptions from those who came to know and love him: fearless leader, guardian, strategic thinker, storyteller, teacher, protector, sacred clown, poet, writer, dreamer, dynamic speaker, and perhaps most importantly -- friend. Adrian, we are all deeply

grateful for your friendship and these good gifts you shared with the circle over your many years of leadership. While you are already deeply missed we also know you will keep sharing these gifts in a bigger circle and we wish you well in all that you pursue!

Deanna Zantingh is part of the SSSC Keepers of the Vision and a former Keeper of the Learning Circle.



Farewell Adrian and best wishes as you move on from Sandy-Saulteaux to new ways of working for Indigenous justice and reconciliation!

In the Spirit of Reconciliation by Ken Thomas

Sandy-Saulteaux recently received a donation of \$136,780 from the sale of the building following the closure of Central United Church in Brandon MB.

Former Central United chair Bill Myers writes "This has been a difficult time for our congregation but we are most happy to support your endeavours in a way that Central United can live on in the work of Indigenous Ministry and in the spirit of reconciliation."

In response to the Calls to the Church*, which include a reminder that "the sale of United Church properties involves Indigenous claims to the land", Prairie to Pine Regional Council of the United Church adopted a policy that 10% of the revenue received from the sale of property arising from the closure of a church be directed to the work of Indigenous ministry and justice.

The congregation of Central United chose to direct this portion to vital work for reconciliation at Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre.

Central United was located at the corner of 8th St and Lorne Ave in Brandon. It was the result of an amalgamation, in 1970, of two churches at that corner, originally First Methodist and St. Paul's Presbyterian. The old First Methodist (United) building was demolished

and the congregation worshiped at the renamed St. Paul's. In 1986, the building was struck by lightning and destroyed by the resulting fire. A brand new building opened in 1988 and continued as one of three United congregations in the city until voting to close in early 2022. The building was purchased by a Hindu society, who will keep it as a place of worship and symbol of interfaith cooperation.

This gift will support training for Indigenous ministers who are working, every day, to help heal intergenerational trauma, a serious and destructive legacy of residential schools in their communities. We greatly appreciate this gift that gives life to our shared hope that reconciliation will become real, something meaningful and positive within the United Church and our broader society.

Ken Thomas is the Treasurer of the SSSC Keepers of the Vision.

If you would like to explore how supporting Indigenous ministry at the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre can be part of your congregation's journey of reconciliation, contact Keeper of the Centre Rob Smith at 204-268-3913 or robert@sandysaulteaux.ca.

* The Calls to the Church were prepared by Indigenous communities of faith, outlining our long history of Indigenous ministry and putting forward nine specific ways for the whole United Church of Canada to support Indigenous self-determination. We encourage you to get familiar with the Calls at bit.ly/CallstoChurch.



Donor Connections: Lorraine Kakegamic, Keewaywin First Nation



I felt very honoured to be asked to join the board of the Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Resource Centre (DJSRC) back in the 1990s. I served on the board at least eight years. It was exciting to be a part of the centre in its early years. The site had been previously used by the Boy Scouts and required a lot

of renovations. The cabins on the site were renovated to house ministry students and others. While attending board meetings I stayed in one of those cabins renamed as lodges and found my time at the centre very peaceful and spiritual. Property adjacent to the centre and along the Brokenhead River was purchased while I was on the board. What a difference the expanded property made as the centre grew and flourished.

The dream of the late Jessie Saulteaux was taking place to train Indigenous students to become ministers. DJSRC became the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre

(SSSC) when we amalgamated with the Francis Sandy Theological Centre. Many students have graduated and have gone on to work in First Nation communities and elsewhere. It is a wonderful experience to attend the annual Ceremony of Celebration for graduating students and honoured elders. There are many events taking place at the centre such as Learning Circles, Spring and Winter Ceremonies.

I love the excellent newsletter and enjoy reading what's happening. To all the staff, students, volunteers and donors, keep up the great work! I'm happy to support the SSSC by being a monthly donor. I encourage anyone to donate to this most important theological college. It is definitely a worthwhile cause.

Will you join Lorraine in making a monthly donation to the Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre? This is a convenient way for you to become a regular partner in our life-changing work. Contact erica@sandysaulteaux.ca to set up a monthly donation today.

Thank you to everyone who's made a gift to Sandy-Saulteaux since our last newsletter!

Your generosity nurtures Indigenous leadership, helps families find wholeness and move us all along a path to reconciliation.

Betsy Anderson	Olive M. Flett	Dyanne Marlock	Ploughshares Community Farm	Bri-anne Swan
Olive Beebe-Meilleur	Lillianne Gauthier	Megumi Matsuo Saunders	Sandy Popham	Ken Thomas
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Hilda Dysart	Twila MacNair	Susan Palmer	Susan Sorensen	
Rob Fennel	Shelly & Richard Manley-Tannis	Robert Patton		

We also acknowledge with gratitude grants from the Winnipeg Foundation, Dorothy Jenkins Estate fund and UCC Justice and Reconciliation fund. Along with these individuals and organizations, Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre is supported by our major funder, The United Church of Canada, through Mission and Service.



Mike Maunder led a Four Directions Walk on the land here before our AGM, continuing an annual tradition of encircling this sacred space to hang a new flag in each of the four directions and be reminded of the teachings of the medicine wheel that ground our work.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our 2022 Annual General Meeting!

It was great to see many faces both virtually and in person as we reflected on the past year and our hopes for the year ahead.

Special thanks to all our Keepers of the Vision who guide the work of the Centre year-round.



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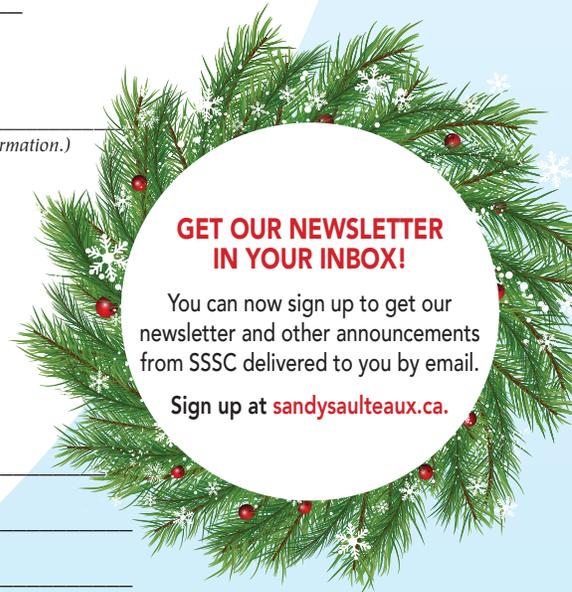
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- I am considering including Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre in my will. Please contact me.
- I offer prayers for the ministry.



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