



Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre



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Wahkotowin by Shanley Spence

Wahkotowin is a Cree (Nehiyaw) word that translates to Kinship, reciprocity, responsibility and the interconnected nature of the circle including relationships, communities, natural systems and all living things.

We have chosen “Wahkotowin” to encapsulate the entirety of what my role as Cultural Coordinator provides to the Sandy-Saulteaux family and beyond. It is a word that is often associated with Cree law and teaches us about our individual responsibility to have towards each other and the earth. It is also associated to the act of weaving and how we weave it all together to be stronger in our values, intentions, integrations and embodiment as we move forward together.

I believe that as a general principle, actions must consider seven generations ahead and ensure the balance needed, taking only what’s needed and acknowledging the interdependence of all life.

Lisa Shepherd and Kristi Bridgeman say, “When we respect Wahkotowin, we recognize and honor our responsibility to all our kin. All plants, animals and elements are related and stand equal in the circle, connected to one another.”

Shanley Spence is the Wahkotowin Cultural Coordinator at SSSC. She organizes events like this drum-making workshop where we weave together teachings that show us how to live with respect for each other and all our relations.



Understanding Apocalypse

Our Ministry Learning Circle last fall focused on apocalyptic biblical literature. Students studied the books of Daniel and Revelation, not as predictors of the future, but as a way of knowing, resisting, renewing, and taking responsibility in the face of empire. Brian George reflected:

“I understand the term “the end” as a turning point. But I also concede that endings can be physical destruction, such as earth changes, and deep unrest at many levels among the people on a planetary scale. The end can be and is transformative. As an example, the forest fires of 2025 brought havoc, sickness, destruction, and death to many locations in North America. All life forms suffered whether they were in the fire zone or not. Oddly enough, the end of those ravaged forests also caused a renewal. In the coming spring life will burst upward, through charred wood and ash. Ecological health will rise out of the end times for those lands and a transformed and renewed ecosystem will create a sustainable future.”



Ministry students looked at dreams and visions in the Bible that speak to us today about resistance and renewal in the face of destruction. They met at Five Oaks, on the Grand River in Ontario. Pictured: Vanessa Benoit, Donna Moore, Iona Laughler, Deanna Zanting (resource person), Brian George, Janet Kewaquom-Root.

Keepers of the Vision

We welcomed four new members to our board:



Meg Olmstead's spirit names are Sappowtay Ussinee giimaa Bimisewin Waabishkii Migizi Ikwe. She is a Métis, Ojibwe, and settler social worker from Treaty 1 territory with experience in mental health, youth mentorship, land-based healing, and cultural education.

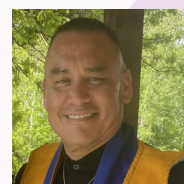
Robert Greene is Anishinaabe from Iskatewizaagegan No. 39 Independent First Nation. He has served as an Elder, Spiritual Caregiver, and Complex Trauma Therapist across health, justice, and community settings, including the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.



Crystal Chagnon is a Métis woman who helps others as a psychotherapist and art therapist. She brings over twenty years of experience in diverse roles across Manitoba—including palliative care, crisis intervention, and program development.



Rev. Wayne Monague serves as a Minister in his home Gahoendoe in Ontario. He is a community wellness worker with experience counselling high-risk offenders in federal institutions and supporting high-risk youth. He graduated from SSSC in 2024.



Welcoming Indigenous Wisdom

We continue to gather your stories of truth shared and Indigenous wisdom honoured, on the journey to reconciliation. Here's an example from here at Sandy-Saulteaux:

“I attended the 2024 Program at your beautiful Centre called “Mamawe Ota Askihk”. It changed the way I looked at how we Welcome and Repel inclusive worship in our United Church settings. As a result I developed a way of having discussions in communities of faith about what it is to be a Stranger, and how do we respectfully engage and welcome those from other cultures and faith perspectives which name the Creator in words/actions different from our own.” – Rev. Lynda Dickson, Diaconal Graduate, Centre for Christian Studies



Upcoming Events at SSSC

**Traditional Medicine Learning Circle:
May 25-29**

**Graduation & Honoured Elders Ceremony
of Celebration: May 30**

**2SLGBTQ+ & Healthy Relationships
Learning Circle: June 1-5**

Mamawe Ota Askihk: July 3-5

Mamawe Ota Askihk is an all ages spiritual gathering, that brings together Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to share land-based skills. For Rev. Lynda Dickson, pictured with the sweetgrass she braided, “The immersive time spent being welcomed and finding my own sense of relationship with the earth through Indigenous ways of being was transformational.”

Donor Connections: Dr. Ruth Swan



Edward & Ruth

Dr. Ruth Swan gives to Indigenous ministry training because Indigenous people are the ones best able to share how the church matters in their communities. In the 80s, when we found our current home in rural Manitoba, Ruth remembers the significance of having a place for sweat lodge ceremonies, something that many Indigenous Christians had been taught were wrong. Ruth attended many ceremonies led by one of our graduates, Melody McKellar. Having experienced sexism in her own life, Ruth likes to support women leaders.

Ruth's partner, Edward A. Jerome, is Métis. Their research on the Pembina Métis highlighted the discrimination Ed's family faced. This work informed Ruth's Ph.D. on the origins of the Métis in the Red River Valley. She has shared her research widely, including teaching Métis history to our ministry students, and as an expert witness in a Métis hunting rights case.

Will you join Ruth in expressing her commitment to ceremony, women's leadership, Indigenous history, and justice, by making a gift today?



Thank you for your generosity!

These recent donors are nurturing Indigenous leadership, supporting traditional ceremonies, and moving us all along a path to reconciliation. We are also supported by The United Church of Canada, through Mission and Service.

Marita Athaide	Fredericton NB	Lynette Miller	Rob & Deb Smith	United Church in
James Ball	Marcie Gibson	Richard Miller	Janet Smith Zenwirt	Meadowood UCW
Barton Stone-Mount Hope	Robert Gillingham	William Miller	Vince Solomon	Aileen Urquart
United Church	Gladstone United Church	Virginia Mills	Susan Sorensen	Jan Van Aertselaer
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MacLauchlan	Jarvis	Wenh-In Ng	St. Paul's United Church,	Rhonda Wideman
Carolyn Branton	Ray Jones	Jerry Bushie	Boissevain MB	Matt Wiebe
Liz Brasier	Cheryl Jourdain	Robert Ronwahaweta Patton	St. Paul's United Church,	Vic & Danna Wiebe
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Lisa Byer-de-Wever	Lorraine Kakegamic	Andriel Pitter	St. Paul's United Church,	Steve Willey & Carol
In memory of Honorary	Mary Kalberg	Carolyn Pogue	Oxbow SK	Hancock
Elder Paul Campbell	Kimiko Karpoff	Sandy Popham	Bob Stevenson	Joan Wilton
Jordan Cantwell	Janet & Tim Kroeker	Port Hope UCW	Lynne Stott	Don Winstone
Churchill Park, Crescent	Pat & Murray Krug	Irene Rainey & Tim Sale	Bri-anne Swan	Ellen Wood
Fort Rouge, Young,	John & Heather Lea	Ken & Willa Reddig	Ruth Swan	Emily Wooster
Augustine, Westminster &	Little Britain United Church	Matthew Wiens & Elizabeth	The United Church of	Erica Young
Fort Garry United Churches	Sandy MacGean	Redekopp	Canada in memory of the	Joan Zaretsky
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Etonia Princeton UCW	Lila McNeil	UCW		
Faith UCW	South Cayuga Community	Janet Silman		
Olive Flett	Church Men's Club	Betty-Lou Skogen		
Forest Hill United Church,				

Wish List

These are practical items we could put to good use, helping our guests and students get the most out of their time here. If you can donate, please get in touch!

- Skirts & shorts for sweat lodge ceremonies
- Portable fire pit
- Badminton net & racquets / Outdoor games
- Canoe
- New dining room windows



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: \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other _____

I would like to make my gift monthly! Please contact me to set this up.

My gift is 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 wish to designate this gift to:

- Return of the Buffalo - fostering family well being
- Legacy Fund - an endowment to provide long-term support

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

I enclose a cheque made out to Sandy-Saulteaux Spiritual Centre.

I will donate by: Visa Mastercard

Name on Card _____

Card Number _____ Expiry Date _____

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



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