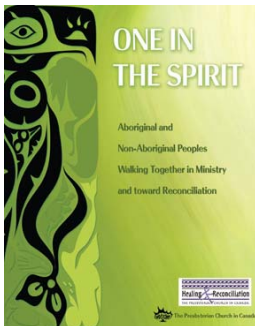


STREAMS OF JUSTICE



...let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream" (Amos 5:24)

New Resource



"One in the Spirit" explores The Presbyterian Church in Canada's relationship with Aboriginal peoples in Canada. It includes information on the Native Ministries of The PCC. Available from Justice Ministries.

What's in a name?

Have you noticed our newsletter's new name "Streams of Justice"?

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Report on KAIROS' fall regional meetings

Nineteen Presbyterians across Canada attended the 2010 KAIROS fall regional meetings. Speakers and workshops are different at each meeting. All meetings introduced the new campaign "The Land, Our Life" which explores the impact the extractive industry has on indigenous communities in Canada, and around the world. Leadership resources for "The Land, Our Life" are available from Justice Ministries.

From the BC/Yukon regional meeting, Allen Aicken (Vancouver BC) reports that meeting participants were able to witness the Sockeye Salmon run (near Sorrento, BC). This year's run was the largest in a century. Participants learned about First Nation communities that relied on salmon as a traditional food source. It was a powerful reminder of the connection between the land, and the First Nations people who were the first people to call that land home.



Presbyterians at Great Lakes-St. Lawrence regional meeting. Top: Raphael Vallejo, Maureen Murray, Jim & Mary Campbell. Bottom: Janet & Peter Houghton.

Gayle Ewin (Grand Prairie AB), a Prairies North meeting participant, was excited by the new KAIROS Companions & Communities initiative. Individuals, church groups and congregations can identify themselves as KAIROS Companions & Communities without necessitating membership in a regional KAIROS group.

Nine Presbyterians attended the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence regional meeting. The keynote speaker was Mary Jo Leddy, a theologian at the University of Toronto. She likened social justice work to the disciples' work after the death of Jesus; lacking a road map and a leader, the disciples found ways to faithfully continue with their work. Her hope-filled words were appreciated.

Douglas Mitchell (Lethbridge AB) and Cathy Scott (Fredericton NS) will be involved in "Drumming for Indigenous Rights" activities December 5.

“For I was hungry and you fed me; I was thirsty and you gave me water.” (Mt. 25:35)

The congregation of St. James Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg, is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Our theme for the year is “Remembering – Rejoicing – Rededicating.” To observe this milestone we are looking beyond ourselves and will focus on three special mission projects. During each month from September to June, the congregation is collecting at least 100 food items for Winnipeg Harvest from the food bank’s “Ten Most Wanted Items” list. We are providing 100 volunteer hours, preparing, serving, and cleaning up meals served to the poor and homeless at the Siloam Mission. The children and youth of the congregation are raising funds through smaller projects to provide 100 meals for youth through Inner City Youth Alive. On October 17, St. James joined with many around the world by marking the International Day for

the Eradication of Poverty. A special announcement and bulletin insert encouraged all to endorse the “Dignity for All”* campaign by signing and sending in the distributed postcards. Through this anniversary year we at St. James are remembering our past with thanksgiving, rejoicing in the love of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and rededicating ourselves to service in Jesus’ name.

Betty Trevenen, St. James Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg MB.

*“Dignity for All” is a campaign for a poverty-free Canada. The campaign was endorsed by the 136th General Assembly (2010) and is organized by Citizens for Public Justice and Canada Without Poverty. Visit www.dignityforall.ca.

KAIROS Calgary group purchases social housing complex

The KAIROS Calgary group holds the annual forum, “Churches Doing Good Stuff”. In 2007 we tackled homelessness. One of our speakers, Dermot Baldwin, then CEO of the Calgary Drop-In and Rehabilitation Centre, challenged us to develop affordable housing for families. Over the subsequent three years, KAIROS Calgary investigated building and operating its own affordable housing project. We determined that we did not have the financial or operational capability to do a project on our own.

We partnered with Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF) and, with considerable help from the Alberta government, purchased Acadia Place, a 58 unit apartment complex. Acadia Place provides affordable housing for families at risk or experiencing homelessness.

Congregations are involved through volunteering and fundraising. Volunteers help with building maintenance, support for families and community activities. On a rainy Thursday in September, 100 volunteers gathered

at 9:30 a.m. By 2:00 p.m., and (with thanks to the expertise of Kaboom and the support of Home Depot) we had built a playground, community garden and outdoor gathering place for the community. We met new friends as we worked together: church members, tenants, staff.

Fundraising will pay off half the existing mortgage. This is our first goal. By raising \$1.5 million, monthly rents can be lowered by an average of \$200 per month, allowing for lower rents for those who require greater financial assistance. At the end of November a breakfast was held for congregational leaders to launch the campaign. Acadia Place is the largest ecumenical project in Canada dedicated to family homelessness and involves 10 Christian denominations and about 130 congregations.

Helen Smith, minister at Centennial Presbyterian Church, Calgary AB.

Urgent Action on Bill C-49 re human smuggling and asylum seekers

The October 2009 arrival of the Lady Ocean, and August 2010 arrival of the Sun Sea, carrying 76 and 490 (respectively) Sri Lankan Tamil asylum seekers has resulted in Bill C-49, ostensibly to deal with human smuggling. One of our concerns with Bill C-49, is that it grants the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration the power to “designate” certain groups of asylum

seekers based on how they arrive in Canada.

“Designated” asylum seekers would be subject to a different set of rules which would effectively reduce their protection. Please write to your federal Member of Parliament about your concern with Bill C-49. Detailed information and form letters are online at www.presbyterian.ca/justice.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission holds first national event

The first national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) event began around the sacred fire at the Oodena Celebration Circle at the Forks in Winnipeg, June 16-19, 2010. Thousands attended the four-day event. Stories were shared by former residential school students, teachers, staff, and anyone who felt impacted by the legacy of residential schools in Canada.

The Rev. Dr. Herb Gale, Moderator of the 136th General Assembly, national office staff, volunteers from the Presbytery of Winnipeg, and other Presbyterians were present. The Archives of The Presbyterian Church in Canada prepared binders of photographs from our two residential schools: Cecilia Jeffrey (Kenora ON) and Birtle (Birtle MB). Diana Kendall writes about this in the Learning Tent. The four churches who administered residential schools (Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian, United) reflected on the relationships they are building with Aboriginal people in the Interfaith Tent. The Rev. Margaret Mullin shares reflections from the Interfaith Tent.

Reflection from Margaret Mullin, Winnipeg Inner City Missions



Margaret was a panellist in a discussion on the theme, "Living the Dialogue: Native Traditional Spiritualities in Conversation with Christianity."

My deepest regret is that the Government's Apology to Aboriginal Peoples and the first national Truth and Reconciliation event in Winnipeg did not happen in my mother's lifetime. Although she never attended residential school Mum was deeply affected by the Government's policy to "take the Indian out of the Indian". When my grandmother died Ontario Children's Aid re-

moved Mum and my uncle from their Aboriginal family on Sand Point First Nations and they were raised in an orphanage and denied access to their Aboriginal kin, language, culture, or spiritual heritage.

I am her daughter, The Rev. Margaret Mullin, Thundering Eagle Woman of the Bear Clan. I have had to heal and reconcile the wounds created within me by history so that I can live comfortably in my own skin.

I was deeply honoured to have been asked to participate in the first national Truth and Reconciliation event held in Winnipeg. Invitations to speak and to participate in sharing circles came to me and to Audrey Bone – Winnipeg Inner City Mission's Elder - through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and the Presbytery of Winnipeg.

It was an incredible first step. To witness apology given and received, anger released and accepted, tears shed, forgiveness offered, and new relationships forged was incredible. As we continue this journey together as a nation and as Presbyterians I can only pray that the church and the government will listen; whether you agree with the stories or not, they are my people's truth. Only when truth is told and accepted without judgment, can healing and reconciliation begin. Let it be so!

The Rev. Margaret Mullin, executive director, Winnipeg Inner City Mission.

Reflection from Diana Kendall, The Archives

After spending several months researching residential schools for The Archives of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, I was excited and nervous to attend the first national event of the TRC. I did not know what to expect. It was hard to imagine what meeting survivors and their families would be like.

The Archives of The Presbyterian Church in Canada was present, and had prepared binders containing hundreds of our residential schools photographs for survivors to view. Photocopies of the pictures were provided to anyone who wanted to take an image home. Since June, several people have contacted us for information.

I could not anticipate how survivors and their families would react to the photographs. In some cases this

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was the first time people saw pictures of themselves, their friends or loved ones at the schools. I was amazed at how gracious and kind everyone was. They were thankful that we had brought the pictures. Many people took photocopies of pictures and requested more information. Naturally, these images gave birth to memories of pain, hardship, joy, laughter, excitement and sorrow. Some survivors wanted to silently look through the binders on their own; some with a friend or relative, and others were quite at ease, or even happy, to share their stories with me and ask about my research. I felt truly honoured to be a part of this experience. Sharing stories, silence, laughter and tears was very moving.

Working in the Learning Tent made me realize how alive the residential schools legacy is. It is not only

part of our history but also part of our present and I think every Canadian should become aware of it. Coming together at events like this one is one step on the long journey of reconciliation and healing.

Diana Kendall, The Archives, The Presbyterian Church in Canada.



Diana with residential school photos.

New communion born in the bond of peace

The World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC) was born on June 18-28, 2010 at a Uniting Meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

For indigenous peoples, the WCRC's birth could not have been more auspicious. Twelve Michigan tribal chiefs welcomed the delegates (from 230 international denominations) to their traditional territory. WCRC presidents, Peter Borgdorff and Clifton Kirkpatrick, honoured and presented the chiefs with a powerful symbol of the relationship Christians seek with indigenous peoples: a sword beaten into a ploughshare. The gesture took one's breath away.

In a spontaneous and emotional response, Mike Peters, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, and Ogimaw (leader) of Four Fires Ministries, removed a family peace medallion from his neck and gave it to the WCRC. Borgdorff and Kirkpatrick alternately wore the medallion throughout the proceedings; a motion was passed to hold the medallion in trust for the use of future WCRC Presidents, beginning with its first president, elected in Grand Rapids, Jerry Pillay of South Africa.

The meeting's theme, Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace (Eph. 4), gave expression to the hoped for reconciliation between peoples. Delegates had options to study the history of Canadian residential and American boarding schools in specially organized workshops, and to learn about the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples.

Oglala Lakota/Sioux theologian Richard Twiss gave a powerful keynote address, revealing some of the rich insights into God that indigenous, and other non-western peoples, have to offer all Christians as they interpret scripture from their unique God-given cultures and contexts. Twiss's remarks were a prelude to a wonderful afternoon in the June sunshine at Ah-Nab-Awen Park across from the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in downtown Grand Rapids. Delegates danced and enjoyed the traditional drumming and songs of an Aboriginal peoples' pow wow. Booths featured Native art and goods for sale, along with fried bread, Indian tacos, and buffalo burgers.

As the meeting concluded it became clear the opportunity to learn about the churches' relationship with indigenous peoples had had a significant and lasting impact on delegates. Many sectional group reports recommended work to be done to support healing and reconciliation. A statement of repentance was adopted, and resolutions made to pursue the building of right relationships. And Hummingbird Ministry's Cree leader, The Rev. Mary Fontaine, was elected to the WCRC Executive.

To read more about the WCRC and its uniting meeting, go to: <http://www.reformedchurches.org/>

Lori Ransom, Healing and Reconciliation Program Animator, The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Christmas message from Stephen Allen

By the time you receive this issue of "Streams of Justice," the new name for our newsletter, the first candle of Advent will have been lit. We await with relentless hope for the day when we celebrate the Prince of Peace's birth - a mystery beyond our comprehension.

When John the Baptist was in prison, he kept hearing about the amazing things Jesus was doing. He sent word by his disciples who asked Jesus: "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (Matt. 11: 3b). Jesus' response was: "...the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised. And the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me" (Matt. 11:5-6).

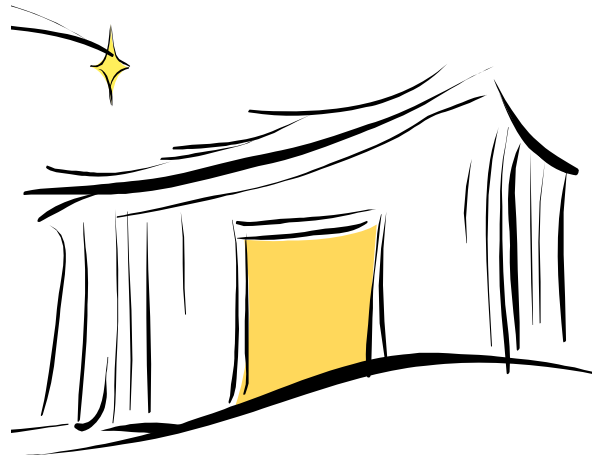
Advent is a holy time. We prepare to participate in Jesus' mission for the world. We are called to be patient and faithful. We are in this for the long haul. James reminded his readers: "Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11).

In Hebrew, the proper name Jesus is derived from is the verb "to save." Jesus' birth is God's commitment to save and transform the world.

We wait. We also act as God calls us to do. We do this in many ways - locally, nationally and globally - through outreach in our neighbourhoods; building relationships with indigenous people; advocating for just laws for migrants and refugees; meeting with elected officials about tackling poverty in Canada; reducing our carbon footprint; speaking out and defending human rights; working for peace in the Middle East. This list is the mission God has given us. It never gets shorter. There is always something to tend to in the garden. Through Christ and in Christ, we do this together and with those of other faiths - people of good will are everywhere!

This holy season is a time to wait, to reflect and to celebrate the good news. On behalf of the team in Justice Ministries, I wish you a blessed and joyous Christmas.

Stephen Allen, Associate Secretary, Justice Ministries.



Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church hosts 100-mile meal



Dave Photiadis and Mairin Smit at Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church.

Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church celebrated the bounty of the harvest with its second "100 Mile dinner", hosted by the Mission Committee. Locally grown food sourced at farmers markets provided a sumptuous feast of corn, ham, potato salad and coleslaw topped off with apple crisp. The highlight of the evening was a presentation by Dave Photiadis and Mairin Smit, neighbourhood residents, who have been following a strict 100 mile diet for several months. Their stories of life without coffee and sugar were told in a humorous way. Those in attendance felt challenged to re-evaluate their dependence on products that must travel long distances to arrive on our tables. We may not all give up coffee and sugar, but we can each eat more local, seasonal foods.

Liz Stark, Fallingbrook Presbyterian Church, Toronto ON.

2011 Dates to Remember

JANUARY

31—Deadline for Healing and Reconciliation Project Proposals

FEBRUARY

Black History Month

MARCH

6—World Day of Prayer

26—Earth Hour

APRIL

22—Earth Day

MAY

16—Crossing Cultures Together VII Workshop

22—Healing and Reconciliation Sunday

JUNE

19—Aboriginal Day Sunday

20—World Refugee Day



People helping people

Our voices and our pens can help protect vulnerable people. Please join our Urgent Action Network.

Justice Ministries

Stephen Allen: Associate Secretary
 Lori Ransom: Healing and Reconciliation Program Animator
 Katharine Masterton: Program Coordinator

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Who is my neighbour?

Who is my neighbour? What can we do to walk with low income people in their struggle for dignity? These were a few of the questions that participants from the Presbytery of Lanark & Renfrew wrestled with, as they met for a workshop, on Saturday, October 30, 2010, organized by the Congregational Nurture Committee.

Close to thirty people from seven congregations gathered for worship, bible study, and presentations led by Stephen Allen and Katharine Masterton. The Parable of the Good Samaritan became the theme text for the day.



Participants get to know their neighbours prior to the workshop.

The organizers of this year's annual learning event decided to look at the needs of the communities our congregation are in and look for opportunities for public witness and to walk with our low-income neighbours.

Participants shared in small groups and discussed how their congregations walk with those who are poor. It was evident that care and compassion runs high in the life and witness of the congregations. Supports range from donations for food banks, benevolence funds, communities gardens, and community lunch programs. One congregation partners with a local school making connections, sharing food and clothing.

Many participants found a budgeting exercise to be difficult and eye opening as they faced some of the hard choices made by individuals and families living on social assistance. The ethical dimensions of the growing gap between rich and poor, and the social impacts of poverty on individuals, families and society were discussed.

We shared advocacy ideas. Special attention was drawn to the Senate Standing Committee report "In from the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness." One suggestion was to invite a Senator involved in the writing of the report and share with them the issues that are important to our congregations.

After lunch, the focus was local, as Lyn Smith, from the Child Poverty Action Network (CPAN), spoke about child poverty in Renfrew County. CPAN responds in practical ways, and encourages us to become advocates for the poor. Evaluations of the day scored high. Awareness was raised, good works were affirmed and ideas for the future were shared.

Milton Fraser, minister at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Arnprior ON.