

SOME IDEAS FOR HEALING AND RECONCILIATION PROJECTS

Background

For information on the process to apply for Healing and Reconciliation project funding, please see the document: “Criteria for Funding Healing and Reconciliation Projects.” It is available on line at www.presbyterian.ca/funding.pdf.

This document consists of just a few suggestions for individuals and groups interested in pursuing Healing and Reconciliation activities, who may need some ideas to get started. Individuals and groups are encouraged to be imaginative in coming up with their own ideas to build bridges and new relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

A Few Ideas for Getting Started

Funding is available to support activities in a number of ways, including but not limited to providing for refreshments or meals; purchasing supplies; and/or paying honoraria to Aboriginal speakers or workshop leaders.

Please remember that funding is available to support a large range of projects:

- Small fellowship gatherings are very powerful means to begin forming relationships, and are therefore highly recommended.
- Groups who already have some connections with Aboriginal people or communities, or groups who are keen to begin with something on larger scale, may be drawn to one of the more ambitious ideas listed below.

You may wish to:

Invite an Aboriginal speaker or Aboriginal Elder to talk to members of your group, including youth groups, on any topic of interest such as Aboriginal history, culture, or modern day concerns. You may wish to have a discussion about the needs of your community with a local Aboriginal leader of a community group or service organization. If no potential speakers are known to your group, a local Native Friendship Centre, Native Women’s organization, or post-secondary campus Aboriginal association may be of assistance. If you are near a First Nation community, you may wish to try contacting a First Nation Band Administrator or, if available, a First Nation Education or Cultural Officer for assistance. A teacher from a First Nation school or an Aboriginal university professor or lecturer may work in or near your community and be available to speak or lead a workshop.

Have an informal social or recreational gathering and invite representatives of a local Native Friendship Centre, Native Women’s organization, local First Nation or Métis

community, or other Aboriginal group to join you. This includes sports or cultural activities for adults or youth groups.

Talk to an Aboriginal service group in your community. Perhaps there is a joint project members of your group and the Aboriginal group can work on together, providing an opportunity for you to get to know each other better in the process. Funds could buy some supplies to assist with completing the project, and/or provide some refreshments while you work together to complete the project.

Arrange a visit to a local Aboriginal community to learn about your neighbours first hand. This could include talking with leaders in the community (i.e. political, social, cultural, or educational leaders), taking a tour, and/or attending a pow wow or other cultural event or spiritual ceremony accompanied by Aboriginal people. Funds could be used to support modest travel costs. Remember that funding is designed to support relationship building, so it is important that any Aboriginal community visited be close enough geographically that relationships may be maintained and developed in the future between your group and the community.

Work with a group of local churches to organize a workshop or even a conference. Funds could be used to pay a portion of event costs: venue rental (if necessary), food, honoraria for speakers/workshop leaders. Emphasis again should be on building bridges at the local level.

Again, these are only some possibilities. You are invited to put your imagination to work to come up with something that's just right for you and your group!

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