

my friends Intotemak

Summer 2009 Vol. 38, No. 2



Neill von Gunten wraps Barb Daniels in a star-blanket during a commissioning ceremony recognizing her leadership of the Riverton Fellowship Circle congregation.



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Mennonite
Church
Canada

Witness

A Place to Feel at Home

About 75 people gathered to celebrate the commissioning of Barb Daniels as leader of the Riverton Fellowship Circle congregation. They sat in a circle, a tradition that goes back many generations, with an opening to allow for newcomers to join the group. The walls of the church were decorated with various traditional ornaments that had acquired a sacred meaning: the pictorial medicine wheel/drum divided into four coloured parts to signify the four directions and tribes that inhabit the earth, Yellow (East), Red (West), Black (South) and White (North) were under-girded by three eagle feathers, the Trinity; and paintings of nature by native artists. Central to all of this was a table in the centre of the circle containing a braid of sweet grass (purification), a Bible (God in the Word) and a white candle (God in Christ).

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Continue on the journey of reconciliation

Greetings from Winnipeg on this beautiful spring day! We trust that by the time you read this we can say we are having “summer.” Let me share just a few things with you that have kept us busy this spring: Thank you to the Pearl River and Nanih Waiya congregations on the Choctaw Nation in Mississippi for hosting the spring Native Mennonite Ministries council meetings at the end of April. It is always a joy to meet with your Council and discuss the work and ministry of the Native congregations in North America.

The first weekend in May we helped host the alumni weekend of former Mennonite Pioneer Mission / Native Ministries staff. It was a time to reflect on our lives and ministries in Aboriginal settings over the past sixty years.

Next was a good trip to Alberta – to the Siksika Nation, an event in Calgary, and meetings in Edmonton.

The *Reaching up to God Our Creator* resource box that we launched last summer has been so well-received this past year that our original thirty boxes are gone and we are re-printing the material for making another sixteen boxes. The French and Spanish translations of two of the books – *Maskipiton: Peace Chief of the Cree and The Teachings of the Sacred Tree* are at the printers now and will be available for sale this summer.

We in MC Canada Witness have been working with MC SK and MCC SK to plan an Aboriginal Learning Tour for June 8 - 9, right after the Mennonite Church Canada annual Assembly in Saskatoon. The Cree and Metis people have lived alongside the Mennonite settlers of that Saskatchewan River area for over 100 years now and we want to hear the stories and visit the historical sites. We trust that relationships will only grow stronger between the cultures as we meet each other and share our stories.

A big project for the past year and more has been planning our North American Indigenous Tour to the Chaco areas of Paraguay and Argentina after the Mennonite World Conference Gathered sessions in Asuncion in July. There is so much excitement among the twelve Canadians in our indigenous group (plus Janet Plenert of Mennonite Church Canada Witness) because of the many opportunities we will have during those days to meet indigenous peoples from around the world. We look forward to hearing what God is doing in their lives and churches and sharing ourselves and our churches with them as well!



“I need to tell you about a conviction that is growing in me, as I walk alongside many gracious and wise servants of God, particularly Aboriginal church leaders and theologians, all of them committed to justice and reconciliation. I am convinced that the wholeness of Canada, and of the church here, is linked to reconciliation with Aboriginal People.” [Mike Hogeterp of the Committee for Contact with the Government of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. Taken from the CCG Mobile Justice: April 2009.]

Hogeterp’s assertion later in the article that many Canadians don’t understand the need for reconciliation with Aboriginal people, or the need for the apology to survivors of Indian Residential Schools (made by Prime Minister Stephen Harper on June 11, 2008) rings true for some of our Mennonite constituency and we hear that sentiment as well as we visit churches and communities across Canada. Do we see each other as neighbours, in the sense that Jesus talked about in Matthew 22:37-39: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.”



We need to learn what happened during colonization, it is crucial for us to listen to each other’s stories, and we as Christians should be poised to open the doors of Christ’s hope for reconciliation and healing to occur between our cultures.

It is exciting to read about places where that is happening – in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario in this issue of Intotemak. Keep it up! We like to hear these stories of building and strengthening relationships across the cultures, of starting to break down walls of separation and working at reconciliation instead. These are good steps to build on!

Thank you for this opportunity to share a slice of our lives and ministry with you! That’s all we have for now. Megwetch.

Neill and Edith

—Neill and Edith von Gunten,
Co-Directors, Native Ministry



Intotemak

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Intotemak translates as *my friends* or *my clan* and are people who walk together as friends. Intotemak is a quarterly newsletter featuring news items of interest to friends of Native Ministry, published by Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

Purpose statement of Mennonite Church Canada Witness...is to lead, mobilize and resource the church to participate in holistic witness to Jesus Christ in a broken world, thus aligning the being and the doing of the church with God's work.

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VISION HEALING & HOPE

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.



Supporting Barb Daniels (top) in her role as leader of the Riverton Fellowship Circle congregation. Barb Daniels (below) speaks at the service.

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The people who were gathered represented three Riverton area congregations, a church on the Peguis Nation (Barb's home community), four Winnipeg congregations -- Bethel Mennonite, Douglas Mennonite, Home Street Mennonite and Sargent Avenue Mennonite -- who are part of the Riverton Ministry Circle along with the Riverton Fellowship Circle, Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, Mennonite Church Manitoba, and Mennonite Church Canada. As well, the group included family and friends who had come to join in the celebration.

Norm Voth of MC Manitoba based his meditation on the text from John 3:16-17. He spoke of the love of God as it was expressed through the creation of humanity in the beginning, rejected by his creation, prophesied to be restored in Isaiah 61 and then came to be reinstated in the death and resurrection of Christ.

Norm Voth, Neill and Edith von Gunten and Barb Daniels reflected on the path that had culminated in the events of this day. Norm spoke of the various qualities of leadership, including humility, which Barb had shown over the past several years. Neill von Gunten noted that Barb had been identified as a leader many years ago but that the very quality she needed for the work also made her hesitant to accept the role. Barb shared her experience of moving to Riverton and searching for a church in which she could "feel at home". This search became a reality when she was approached by Neill von Gunten in the local coffee shop and was invited to work together with others having



a similar need, in order to form a new church. This new group eventually led to the building of this meeting place, a place where Barb and the others could worship and feel at home.

After the words of commissioning by Norm Voth and prayer by various participants in a prayer circle, the microphone was opened for greetings. The words of encouragement from various groups and individuals and the giving of gifts, including a "peace lamp" and a star-blanket, were followed by communion to bring a close to the formal part of the commissioning service.

The sharing, visiting and renewing of acquaintance during the informal lunch that followed were a wonderful experience. Truly this is a place of worship where one can "feel at home." —*Martin Penner, Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, MB*



Looking Back, Looking Ahead

Past and present aboriginal ministry workers reflect on 60 years of mission. Last year marked 60 years of Mennonite involvement with aboriginal ministries. What the Manitoba Bergthaler Church began in 1948 as Mennonite Pioneer Mission looks and feels very different today, but has left indelible influences on the northern communities of Manitoba and on the people who served there.

Long-time Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry workers Neill and Edith von Gunten, MC Canada Witness executive secretary Janet Plenert, and Mennonite Church Manitoba evangelism and service director Norm Voth decided to mark the milestone with a series of events over the next year-and-a-half. The first event was a retreat at Pinawa in early May for former Pioneer Mission and Native Ministry workers.

“We want to honour the work of the past 60 years,” said Plenert. “We want to honour the wisdom and learning of this group, and hand it on into the future.”

Nearly 40 people came to this alumni gathering, a first of its kind. Some of their stories went back 50 years. Many of them went as newlyweds to serve as teachers, preachers or nurses in remote First Nations communities. Whether it was for

We think we can bridge the gap to aboriginal culture easily, but they are always facing the wind while we have the wind on our backs.”

three years or for a lifetime, they were very significant years.

Abe and Ruth Hoepfner last lived and worked in Bloodvein 33 years ago, but only two months ago they were called back for a funeral. Such are the relationships that run deep despite years of separation and challenging geographic barriers.

Time at the retreat was spent piecing together a time-line that spanned the 60 years of ministry. It was noted that the years 1968-78 had the largest bulge of workers and memories. Plenert said those years “were the high point in terms of the number of communities we were relating to. Our contacts after that were fewer. It reflects a shift in how we are relating.”

Native Ministry has for the past five years focused on Ministry Circles in which a partnership is formed between a congregation in southern Manitoba and a community in the north.

“We in Manitoba now have three aboriginal churches in the north become,

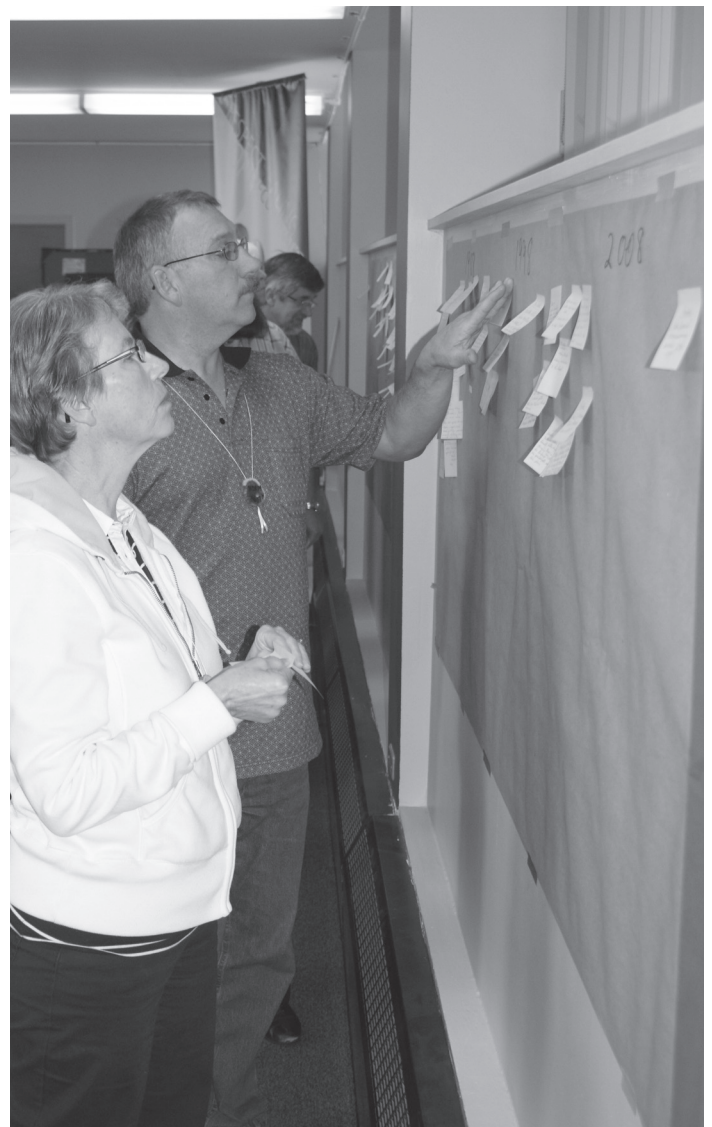
or are in the process of becoming, incorporated as congregations of Mennonite Church Manitoba,” said Voth.

Memories, some painful and some heartwarming, were shared. Some of the hardest challenges they faced were bridging a vast cultural gap.

“We had to learn to listen, learn that you don’t have to talk all the time,” recalled Ron Peters, who served in Bloodvein.

Many in the group expressed regret that they had not entered those relationships and responsibilities with a greater sensitivity and understanding of the culture, language and traditions of the First Nations people.

John Funk, former executive secretary of Native Ministry, said the experience makes him “think more deeply about what it means to be Mennonite and Anabaptist. We think we can bridge the gap to aboriginal culture easily, but they are always facing the wind while we have the wind on



our backs.”

Grateful for what they experienced and learned from their aboriginal brothers and sisters, the alumni group also felt a deep sadness that sometimes their good intentions were not enough.

“I only realized I needed forgiveness long after,” said one of the participants, voicing what many felt. “I am amazed at the forgiveness and acceptance we received despite our insensitivities.”

Another regret was not addressing the peace aspect of the gospel more clearly.

“Why are you so quiet about the peace position? Why do you carry it in your backpocket?” was a question several of them heard in their ministry.

At the end of the weekend the group discerned pieces of wisdom that they wanted to give to the future: Don’t be silent about our own past, our own faith journey. Just as we need to be firm in our understanding of who we are as people of peace, we need to affirm the spirituality of the aboriginal people.

—*Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Carman, MB*
Taken from the May 25, 2009 issue of the Canadian Mennonite.
Used by permission.

INTOTEMAK (My Relations)

This past weekend (February 27 and 28, 2009) I had the pleasure of attending, by invitation, an annual event of the Mennonite Church designed to build relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Christians. I was invited by my friends Henry Neufeld and Neill von Gunten.

Henry told me that the presenter was Anita Keith, a Mohawk/Algonquin woman who teaches at Red River College. I was intrigued by the topic “Understanding the Impact of Generational Trauma” because I had just finished telling Henry that I worked at assisting residential school survivors filing abuse claims. And so it was that I got to go to this gathering.

I looked forward to seeing and hearing the Northern Gospel Light Singers of Manigotagan and Hollow Water again. I have heard them sing at both Hollow Water and in Bloodvein and I know that their singing and their presence surely does bring comfort to people in need.

When I got to the gathering I was so happy to see people that I had not seen in awhile as well as meeting people whose names I had heard many times but had never met. There was Egon Enns and his wife Erna. Mr. Enns was my teacher (maaaany years ago) in Bloodvein after Indian Affairs first took over church-run schools on reserves. I also met Hilda Franz, whose husband was Walter Franz. I had had the pleasure of knowing Walter and I was saddened by the news that he had passed on, although we all know that his spirit still remains with us today. Of course I was happy to see Henry and Elna, as well as Neill and Edith. Their love for our people just shines through their eyes, facial and physical expressions and tone of voice. Their presence brings comfort to many of our people. They don't even have to say anything – their energy speaks to you without words.

I was happy to see Norman and Thelma Meade, the ever-bubbly couple who just enjoy sharing their experience, love and joy with everyone. I met, also for the first time, Jake and Margaret Harms, a wonderful couple who fortunately do not live up to their name. They are really a loving, harmless couple.

I was happy to see Barb Daniels and the group from Riverton. I call them my neighbors albeit about sixty miles apart and separated by the tenth largest lake in the world. And, finally, I was happy to see Allan Owens from Pauingassi. He was always helpful to me when



Participants in Spring Partnership Circle, from right to left; Abe Bergen (Bethel MC), Allan Owens (Pauingassi), Louis Young (Bloodvein River), Jake and Margaret Harms (Lowe Farm MC), Henry Neufeld (Springstein MC). Inset, Anita Keith.

Pictures courtesy of Deb Froses

I worked in Pauingassi. Allan is called upon a lot in his community when people are in need of spiritual help and he goes out of his way to do what he can with limited resources.

The topic of the evening was a tough one. Anita dug deep and showed us the worst. I say, sometimes, “It's like opening up your chest, looking in and seeing the maggots.” We don't want to do that. We'd rather look the other way. I commend the Native Ministries of the Mennonite Church for having the courage to look within. I shared with some the words of Scott Pec who told a story about himself, and I paraphrase...



“I was invited by a group of retired nuns to facilitate a retreat. I was having problems of my own. I was drinking too much, I was a workaholic, my wife and kids were going to be leaving me, I was a mess. During a break I looked around for the most motherly face I could see. I went to this old woman and told her my problems. She smiled sweetly, rubbed her hands together and said “Oh, I'm so happy for you.”

I didn't think she heard me so I repeated myself. I was drinking too much, I was a workaholic, my wife and kids were going to be leaving me, I was a mess. The old nun smiled sweetly, rubbed her hands together and said, “Oh, I'm so happy for you.”

Now I was getting mad. I raised my voice

so she could hear me. I don't think you heard me -- I am drinking too much, I am a workaholic, my wife and kids were going to be leaving me, I was a mess.

“Oh yes, I heard you, you are drinking too much, you are a workaholic, your wife and kids are going to be leaving you, you are a mess. I am so happy for you because now you know your problem – now you can do something about it.”

The point of this weekend's presentation and topic was not to lay blame. It is about taking responsibility on both sides. It is about healing and building on our relationships. The past is gone. We can never change what has gone on but we can learn and grow from our mistakes. We can become stronger and better in our effort to become the best that we can be. Life itself is the teacher. We live and learn – sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly. It is all up to ourselves as individuals and as a collective.

—Louis Young, Bloodvein River, MB

This “Building Bridges ... Removing Barriers” spring gathering of the Manitoba Partnership Circle congregations was held at the Sterling Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Neill and Edith von Gunten of Native Ministry, Mennonite Church Canada and Norm Voth of Mennonite Church Manitoba co-hosted the Friday evening and Saturday gathering.



Linda and Roy Little Chief (left). Roy Little Chief and Dan Jack (right).

A Time to Listen and Learn

Roy and Linda Little Chief of Siksika Nation were invited to share their perspective on the Residential School legal settlement and its ongoing issues to a gathering of interested members of Mennonite Church Alberta congregations at First Mennonite Church in Calgary, Alberta on May 8, 2009.

Dan Jack served as moderator of the event and introduced the evening by urging us to move beyond old ways of relating to one another as a dominant society vis-à-vis Aboriginal people. Paternalistic treaties need to be replaced by working agreements based on equality. We need to come to a place of accepting the other as also capable of choosing what to believe and what they want. In the course of his comments Roy Little Chief echoed that sentiment when he stated “We are all treaty people.” The dominant society is also a party to the treaties which the Aboriginal people signed.

Roy began by offering some background to the situation in Siksika. He stated that the Blackfoot reserve was divided into east and west, with the eastern half of the reserve being given to the Catholic Church to minister to and the western half to the Anglican Church. Each church was authorized to set up a school for their district. He noted that the arbitrary school division led to other harmful divisions on the reserve and sometime divided families when some family members became Catholic and some Anglican. Some children were day pupils and some children lived in the schools during the week, going home on weekends.

It became clear by listening to Roy that his

schooling experience was not a positive one. He recalled reports of emotional, physical and sexual abuse of classmates and experienced a sub-standard level of schooling by teachers not well-equipped to teach the Bible or academic subjects. This experience brought him to a life-long conviction that the future of the church on Siksika Nation must be non-denominational – that individuals like him can, and must be, trusted to read the Bible for themselves.

He talked briefly about the outcome of legal actions against the government and churches. Although a settlement has been reached in principle, it has taken -- and continues to take -- a long time for everyone to receive justice. Roy serves on the board of the Residential School Survivors Society, an advocacy group which, he feels, is not being offered due recognition. It appears that they continue

to be stonewalled by lawyers and government inaction while, all the while, victims of abuse are in need and are dying without seeing justice done.

Roy and Linda continue to hope for the renewal of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a further means of bring healing to their people. They expressed the hope that the Mennonite Church, as a small denomination and without the vested interest of former partners in the Residential School system, will come alongside with them in seeking the justice which has been delayed so long.

This report would not be complete without commenting on Linda’s beautiful voice. She opened the evening with a beautiful Gospel hymn and really set the stage for the discussion that followed.

—Marvin Baergen, Calgary, AB

THE WAY OF PEACE IS THE
WAY OF LOVE. LOVE IS THE
GREATEST POWER ON EARTH.
IT CONQUERS ALL THINGS.

—PEACE PILGRIM

Creating New Relationships in our City

Instead of focusing on overseas mission for our Missions Month last October, 2008, at the Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Abbotsford, British Columbia, we invited Neill and Edith von Gunten of the Native Ministry office of Mennonite Church Canada. We also invited some of our Aboriginal neighbours, who contributed significantly to our adult Sunday School classes throughout Missions Month, as well as to our Christmas Eve gathering later on.

On December 24th, with the snow softly falling outside, angels, hunter braves, and children of all nations silently brought the story of Jesus' birth to life on stage, as we listened to the "Huron Carol" sung in both English and Inuktitut by aboriginal artists Tom Jackson (on CD) and Susan Aglukark (on video), with Moses Beaver's vibrant woodlands paintings from *An Aboriginal Carol* used by permission as a backdrop.

One of our actors of the Cree Nation helped us with some of the choreography by introducing rhythm into the footsteps of the angels and a circle dance for the children dancing around Seneca, our baby Jesus that night. She brought each of our angels an eagle feather to carry as a sign of Jesus' divinity.

The mother of three Coast Salish brothers who acted as hunter braves, repeatedly expressed her wonder at how they had been remembered and invited to participate in such an evening.

The mother of two young Aboriginal siblings expressed her joy in experiencing such a special Christmas as a family, something that she had prayed for.

Then there was Brittany's mother with tears welling up in her eyes as one of our Emmanuel members read the Huron Carol to her and her daughter in the children's corner of the public library when they first met. Brittany, of the Bella Bella Band, became our lead child "of the forest free". As we heard "Jesus, your King is born, Jesus is born in excelsis Gloria" one last time, actors and audience became one as we knelt before "the radiant Boy", knowing that we too were in the presence of Mighty Gitchi Manitou, "the mighty Lord of all the world", and our Deganawideh, "the Peacemaker".

In response to one of our adult Sunday school classes during Missions Month, one of our Emmanuel members, who sings with the Abbotsford Male Chorus, suggested that we host a benefit concert for Spirit Bear Center and its work with young Aboriginal women.



Pictures courtesy of Vanj Thiessen

So, on February 21st, we had another wonderful evening featuring the Abbotsford Male Chorus, some of Emmanuel's youth, and sharing by Spirit Bear Center founder Lyn Ned and some of the staff and young women she works with. As a benefit concert, it was truly of mutual benefit -- raising funds for Spirit Bear Center and also raising the spirits of all who were present. Before we left the church, we were all given the gifts of drumming and hand-made drums by the young women.

Since then we've also been opening the

church gym on Friday evenings for use by Spirit Bear Center. Their activities include drumming and traditional dance lessons, and they're also welcome to use any of the gym equipment, which they always leave in better order than when they arrived!

We're grateful to God for these opportunities of bridge-building and new relationships, and hope to find further points of connection and cooperation.

—April Yamasaki and Vanj Thiessen,
Abbotsford, BC



Building Bridges of Understanding

Members of the Peace and Justice Committee at Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden, Ontario invited Adrian Jacobs, pastor and peace builder of the nearby Six Nations community, to meet with members of their community over breakfast at the church on Saturday morning, March 14, 2009. "His mandate is to build bridges of understanding," church member Ray Schlegel said of Jacobs.

The congregation wanted to explore the issues of current relevance to the Native community given the large population nearby and the many land disputes in progress through southwestern Ontario.

Schlegel noted that the early settlers got along just fine with First Nations people. In fact, First Nations people helped support the original settlers and ensured their survival.

Schlegel continued, "Adrian's message/challenge was received with appreciation by the ninety people in attendance. The churches of the community were well represented."

For Jacobs, and the church's Peace and Justice committee, it was an opportunity to bridge a gap in understanding about First Nations people and the controversial land claim disputes that threaten to fracture the peace shared between neighbouring communities and cultures.

"There's a real lack of information out there for people," Jacobs says. "They have strong feelings but they don't have much information."

The recent dispute in Caledonia is just one area where Jacobs has been instrumental in helping to resolve conflict by building on everyone's understanding of the situation.

As the Aboriginal Neighbours community liaison for Mennonite Central Committee Ontario, it's Jacobs' job to build and facilitate relationships between Six Nations and the churches through the Grand River watershed.

"Whenever I speak along the Grand River I say, 'Welcome to Six Nations,'" he says, referring to the vast tract of land along the watershed that Aboriginal people once called home.

From the First Nations perspective, recent media coverage of the conflict in Caledonia may have heightened awareness about Six Nations land claim issues, but did little to explore its ties to native history and culture, says Jacobs.

The disputed land in Caledonia was already being developed into a residential subdivision when native protesters intervened in 2006. Fueling the conflict was the fact that the disputed 40 hectares of land is part of a 385,000 hectare plot known as the "Haldimand Tract," which

was originally granted to Six Nations by the Crown in 1784.

Six Nations wanted to protect its rights to the land, but not for reasons most people believe, Jacobs says.

Native culture is deeply entwined in environmental stewardship and the vital role humans play in protecting the natural environment. Left unchecked, development can destroy something that is not only vital to everyone on the planet, but crucial to the history and culture of Six Nations people.

"Six Nations has the largest standing Carolinian forest in Ontario," Jacobs says, adding foresters can easily identify Six Nations on a satellite map of southern Ontario when they see the large green swaths of forest.

Jacobs says his goal is not only to provide understanding of Six Nations people, it's to offer some indication on where to go from here.

"As a Christian, I'm a pastor as well as an advocate for the vulnerable Six Nations," he says. "I'm appealing to people's Christian conscience."

—Taken from articles in the *New Hamburg Independent newspaper, New Hamburg, ON.*



Resources

Rebuilding Trust between the Church and Canada's Indigenous Peoples with guest Anita Keith, Episode 27 of Church Matters, a 15-minute radio broadcast that airs the third Sunday of each month on Golden West Radio, is now available for downloading from the Mennonite Church Canada website at <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre/ResourceView/5/11632>

Canada's indigenous peoples have had a rocky relationship with the Christian church. Can this relationship be healed, and if so, what can the ordinary person contribute to the healing? In this episode, we explore the topic with Anita Keith. Anita is a Christian of Mohawk, Algonquin and British descent. She is an Ordained Minister, an instructor of

Aboriginal Education at Red River College in Winnipeg, and an Administrator for the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies.

The Jacobsons: 'A Kwagu'l Family', a 55-minute DVD produced by Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia, 2007. Includes a study guide for grade 9 to adult.

Julia Jacobson and her son David share their personal journey of life as an Aboriginal family on Vancouver Island, BC. They share experiences of life in residential school and their need to evaluate the relationship between culture and faith through personal and community struggles. Coming to faith in

Jesus began a journey of healing that is a profound and moving story.

Check out the Native Ministry webpage at <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/899>. Read back issues of Intotemak, find materials available for loan from the Resource Centre and preview Reaching up to God Our Creator.

All of these resources can be borrowed from the Mennonite Church Canada Resource Centre – phone 204-888-6781 or toll-free 1-866-888-6785. Check out the Resource Centre website at <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/resource-centre> for more resources that are available for loan.



Community Notes

Sakoieta' Widrick, Mohawk - Wolf Clan, has been accepted into the 2009 Master's Program at Brock University (St. Catharines, Ontario), where he works as the primary Instructor in Aboriginal Studies, teaching courses in the Mohawk Language, Aboriginal Spirituality, Intro to Aboriginal Studies, Traditional Medicines and Traditional Healing, Iroquoian History and Intro to Native American Flute, Music, Song and Dance.

Baptismal Service

Miranada Mallet was born on January 23, 1989. When she was ten years old, she climbed a tree with some friends and suddenly slipped, causing her to strangle as she hung on by her jacket. By the time help arrived she had received extensive brain damage. With Miranada being in need of complete care after this accident, her parents, Joseph and Greta McKay of Cross Lake, Manitoba, placed her in the St. Amant Center in Winnipeg, where she receives excellent care.

Recently her parents, who are a part of the Pentecostal Church in Cross Lake, asked me to baptize her. This took place at a family service in the Chapel at St. Amant with the parents and three siblings present. We wish them many blessings as they continue sharing their love with a member of their family.

—Henry Neufeld, Winnipeg, MB



Miranada Mallet and her family

Obituaries

Jessica Joy Owens, age 16 years, daughter of Roddy and Joyce Owens of Pauingassi, Manitoba, passed away on February 27, 2009 by her own choice. She had been under the care of Child and Family Services in Winnipeg the last few years. Her sudden passing leaves

family and friends in deep sorrow and shock. Interment took place in Pauingassi with Allan Owens officiating.

Julius Gudmundur Snifeld passed away suddenly with his family by his side on Sunday, March 22, 2009 at the Arborg (Manitoba) District Health Centre at the age of 70 years. Julius was born in Finns and lived most of his life in Riverton, MB, holding various jobs through the years before retiring from the Village of Riverton. He also worked at Hecla Gull Harbour Resort before spending these last years caring for his wife Jessie, who died in January, 2009. Julius enjoyed fishing, visiting family and friends and watching his grandchildren play hockey. He was a member of the Riverton Fellowship Circle congregation. Julius is survived by four children, Sherry (Larry), Leslie (Lori), Larry (Linda), Tammy (Rob), ten grandchildren, one great-granddaughter; sisters Sigurbjorg Lupky, Emily Gislason, Sigurros Johnston and Beatrice Johnston, all from Arborg; brother John Snifeld and brother-in-law Ernie Collins, both of Winnipeg; and numerous nieces, nephews, in-laws and friends.

A memorial service was held on March 26, 2009 in the Riverton Recreation Centre, Riverton, Manitoba with Pastor Trudy Thorarinson officiating. Burial was in the Hnauasa Cemetery.

Raven Alexandra Young, age 25 years, passed away on March 27, 2009. She leaves behind common-law husband Timothy Monoyas, children Isabel and Angus Young, mother Yvonne Young and step-father Norman Berens of Bloodvein, and father Rod Traverse of Jackhead; her brothers Jason (Phoebi), Ian (Amy), Norman, Glen, Wesley, Dakota, Dyson, Jordan, Steven, and Edward; sisters Naomi (Tony), Robin (Eric), Rebecca (Howie), Maureen, Kaylin (Robert), Debbie (Hughie). Raven was predeceased by her brother Delmar Young (Sugar), grandparents Charlie and Isabel Young and Arthur and Margaret Traverse. Raven loved helping people in whatever way she could, wherever she felt needed. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

Cello Gilroy Meekis, age 58 years, of Red Lake, Ontario passed away on March 27, 2009 at the St. Boniface General Hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba, after a courageous battle with various illnesses related to diabetes. The funeral service was held in Red Lake on



Meekis

April 1 and interment followed at the Red Lake Cemetery.

He was raised in the only way of life our people knew at that time -- a life of hunting and providing for what was needed to live, a life committed to family and fulfilling common need. He spent his childhood learning the ways of our people with his father and extended family in the Deer Lake area. The family moved frequently between traditional trapping grounds and summer homes at the Deer Lake settlement.

Cello came to know our Creator God through a special relationship with the Alvin Frey family, a missionary family with Northern Light Gospel Mission (NLGM) who moved to Deer Lake

Events Calendar

July 14 – 19, 2009

Mennonite World Conference Gathered, Asuncion, Paraguay.

July 19 – 27, 2009

Indigenous Tour to the Chaco area of Paraguay and Argentina. Participants will come from Canada, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Peru and the United States.

August 29 – 30, 2009

Bridging the Gap weekend, Siksika Nation, Alberta. For more information, contact Todd or Simone Munro at 403-734-2434 or Alvin Lepp in Rosemary.

September 11 – 13, 2009

The 27th annual Family Camp, sponsored by the Manigotagan (Manitoba) Community Chapel, will be held at the Manigotagan Campground. All church friends and associates of the Chapel are welcome to camp with us.

For more events visit mennonitechurch.ca/events. Native Ministry related events can be submitted for the calendar. Submit events in writing to the mailing address on page 2, or email to imiller@mennonitechurch.ca.



for ministry. He made a commitment to follow God at the age of fifteen and subsequently joined a Bible School developed at Deer Lake by Alvin Frey and others with NLGM.

Cello married Sopena Ruth Beardy of Bearskin Lake, Ontario in 1972, a fellow student at the Bible School. They had three sons, Collin Gilroy, Clarence Cello and Carlton James, whom Cello taught the traditional life skills including hunting, fishing and trapping. He is survived by his wife, their sons and their families, his mother, two brothers and seven sisters and their families.

Dad had a deep growing love for his people and went on to pastor the Deer Lake church at the age of 22, after the missionary family moved away. He moved his family to Stormer Lake, ON in 1976, a ministry centre developed by NLGM to help with language interpreting and the training of First Nations ministry leaders for the north. He also traveled extensively with Alvin Frey throughout the northern communities holding gospel meetings during this period, and he would often travel with his family to many places for these community meeting events.

The Meekis family moved to Red Lake, ON in 1978, where Cello became further involved with NLGM and ministry work by committing to Bible translation work, mechanical work of all kinds, and outreach ministry both north and south. Other ministry commitments included leading the Native Mennonite Conference, which later became Christian Anishnawbec Fellowship (CAF). He also committed a great deal of time to the board of Poplar Hill Development School, a residential school hosted by NLGM. More recently, Cello was a founding board member for Living Hope Native Ministries. He always made a conscious effort to bridge relationships with different mission organizations, including Northern Youth Programs, Believer's Fellowship, and NLGM (Impact North Ministries and later Living Hope Native Ministries).

Dad wanted to live every day. He impacted people every day of his life. Even towards the end of his time, he would always take time to prepare and plan his steps for the future weeks, months and years. Achievements or title did not mean much to dad -- he cherished family and friends. He brought out the best in all of us, and at times, made light of the worst in us. Humour was always close. Lessons taught -- Treat everyone how you

want to be treated -- with respect. Taken from the eulogy given by Cello's sons at the funeral service.

Michael James Duck, age 36 years of Bloodvein First Nation, Manitoba, passed away on April 6, 2009. Menno Wiebe officiated at the funeral service at the Prairieland Chapel in Winnipeg on April 15. Interment followed at Brookside Cemetery in Winnipeg.

Chantele Mary Leveque passed away suddenly at the age of 13 years on April 20, 2009. Chantele leaves to mourn her parents, Raymond Kehler and Quine Leveque, originally of Little Grand Rapids, Manitoba; her brother Deon and sisters Alanna, Roxanne, Katelyn and Maegan; plus many relatives and friends. She will be greatly missed by the many people she touched. Interment took place at Little Grand Rapids with Fr. Paul Syr in charge.

Rita Leveque of Little Grand Rapids, Manitoba passed away at the Pine Falls Hospital on April 26, 2009 at the age of 70 years. She had moved to the George Guimond Care Centre on the Sagkeeng First Nation with her husband, who predeceased her. She leaves family and friends to mourn her passing. Howard Leveque was in charge of services at the Pentecostal Chapel in Little Grand Rapids, where interment also took place.

It is with great sadness that the family of **Lloyd McDonald**, age 81 years of Selkirk, Manitoba, announces his peaceful passing on May 10, 2009 at the Seven Oaks General Hospital in Winnipeg with his family by his side. Lloyd leaves to mourn his wife Margaret (nee Thordarson) of 51 years, his children, Deanna Kardashinski (Ken), Harold (Marilyn), Walter (Anita), Eileen (Les) Johnson, Adriane Calder, Royce, Corrine (Wayne) Waller, Lynette Klein; 20 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; sisters, Audrey Wery, Verna (Frank) Bannish, Belle (Art) Pierce; brother Merv (Verna). Dad grew up at Loon Straits and fished and worked on Lake Winnipeg as well as the Northwest Territories. Dad had a love for the outdoors, and hunting, fishing, camping, picking berries and boating were his favorites. Dad also loved Old Tyme dancing, which led him to call off many square dances in the travels to various places where mom and dad met many new friends.

The funeral services took place at the Sargent Tommy Prince School in Brokenhead (Scant-erbury), Manitoba on May 16. Interment

followed at Loon Straits.

Torrence Merrill Keeper died of self-inflicted death on May 12, 2009 at the age of 19 years. He grew up in Little Grand Rapids, Manitoba but was taking up-grading classes in Winnipeg at the time of his death. He leaves to mourn his sudden death his common-law wife Charlotte, an eight-month-old son, parents Clarence and Jemima Keeper, his siblings and many friends. Interment took place at Little Grand Rapids with Allan Owen officiating.

Emily Pascal, age 33 years, was found dead in her room at the Quest Inn in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on May 16, 2009. She grew up in Pauingassi with her mother Hilda Pascal but needed to move to Winnipeg to be on dialysis three times a week. Her family and friends are grieving her early passing. Burial took place at Pauingassi, with Allan Owen officiating.

Kenneth Owen, age 74 years of Pauingassi, Manitoba, passed away on May 22, 2009 at his home after several months of illness. He was a trapper all his life. He was predeceased by his parents and a number of siblings. His wife Charlotte, daughter Amanda, a grandchild and many friends are left to grieve Kenneth's sudden passing. Allan Owen officiated at the interment in Pauingassi.

Gardening is about enjoying the smell of things growing in the soil, getting dirty without feeling guilty, and generally taking the time to soak up a little peace and serenity.

—Lindley Karstens, noproblem-garden.com



The Prodigal Son

▷▷▷▷L bP.◁◁◁σ^u

The way he fell & rose again

бΔJ<PJ* Γα.◁ C^u б<P.P^u

Luke 15:11-24

Ξ▷^b 15:11-24

Romans 5:1-18

▷Ξ▷Lα^b 5:1-18

v12

Self will1

Δ◁σΠγ1 v13

Selfishness1

γPΔΠP1 v13

Separation 1

<9.ΔσΠP1 v13

Sensuality1

∧J.бΠP.Δ^u1 v14

Penniless1

◁◁◁CJ.Δ^u1 v15

Humbled self1

PC<γσΠP1 v16

Starvation1

LC.Δ.Δ^u _____ P<б9C^u

v23, 24

1 Rejoicing

v22 1 P9CJ.Δ^u

1 Re-clothing

v20 1 ▷◁PPPγPб^u

1 Reconciliation

v20 1 >◁CLd

1 Return

v19 1 ◁P.▽

1 Repentance

v18 1 ΓPα.▽P

1 Resolution

v17 1 P9CJ▷

1 Realization

Adapted from Thompson Chain Reference Bible