



my friends **Intotemak**

Fall 2013 Vol. 42, No. 3



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Lost and Found: Remembering our Covenants



October 7, 2013 marks the 250th Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation of 1763 – a foundational ‘scroll’ for Canada. Have you heard of it? It wasn’t something I was aware of until a few years ago. But this thing is written on the hearts of Indigenous peoples all across the country.

When the Crown’s surveyors first arrived in northern BC to map out “their territory,”

the Indigenous folk there said, “No you don’t!” and told them all about the Proclamation. Delegations of chiefs went all the way to the pope (1903), to the King (1906), and to Ottawa (1908), to remind the “powers that be” about this sacred scroll. In 1982, when the Constitution was repatriated to Canada, Lord Denning said, “the guarantees of the Royal Proclamation must never be broken.” And today, Idle No More is trying to get settler society to honour, at long last, its promise.

To celebrate this sacred Canadian covenant, I begin this edition of Intotemak with a Royal Proclamation riff on an old biblical story, in which King Josiah and the people of Israel remembered a forgotten covenant essential to their land. What would happen if we Canadians did the same?

At 38 years of age, she’s the youngest Prime Minister to take office. She’ll serve for eight years, and she’ll do her best.

In her fifth year, Ottawa is experiencing significant struggle with host peoples – grassroots demonstrate, elders cry out. They speak of broken covenants. They proclaim “Treaty rights!”

The PM is confused – Why the frustration? The Department of Aboriginal Affairs tells her to ignore it. They’re blowing off steam... it’ll pass. But the PM decides otherwise. She summons a trusted secretary: “Go to the federal archives; see what you can find.”

That’s when they find it – the Treaty of Niagara, 1764. “It was buried in the records, covered with dust!”

The Treaty is passed to the Prime Minister; a beauti-

ful wampum, the sacred belt that Indigenous and Settler governments once used to share their collective obligations.

As the PM runs fingers over the beaded scroll, her secretary invites elders into the office – two indigenous, two settler – to explain its meaning. With shared understanding they offer these words:

“In August of 1764, two thousand chiefs gathered at Niagara to meet with representatives of the Crown. The year prior, King George III issued a Royal Proclamation, declaring all lands west of the Appalachians to be ‘reserved to the Indians as hunting grounds.’ No land could be taken by settler society without Indigenous consent.”

“The chiefs discussed this proposal with their communities. They prayed as they discerned its implications. Twenty-four Nations then came together at Niagara to clarify the principles that would govern this relationship – principles of peace, mutual respect, and non-interference.”

“Your government, Ms. Prime Minister, affirmed these principles. The Indigenous, in turn, accepted the Proclamation. To ratify this pact, wampum belts - like the one you hold - were exchanged, gifts were given, and pipes smoked. The treaty was alive! It was a covenant that was to last forever; a chain never to be broken.”

The PM is shocked. “Why didn’t I know this? Why don’t we all know this?” Visibly shaken, she weeps... talks to herself... prays. Then, straightening her suit, she gives orders:

“It’s time to redress the wrongs of the past. We haven’t honoured our Treaty. No wonder there’s no harmony in our land. It’s not about lazy Indians. We’ve betrayed our promises. It’s not a native issue. It’s our problem. Call my cabinet and get the Governor General. Things are about to change.”

And the Canadian public marvelled. The PM did not need to heed the Treaty. She did not need to be alarmed. She did not need to depart from the practice of other PM’s. But she did. It would cost her. Yet she would be remembered, because she did right.

Steve Heinrichs
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Intotemak translates as my friends or my clan and are people who walk in solidarity. *Intotemak* is a quarterly "zine" of particular interest to friends of Indigenous Relations, published by Mennonite Church Canada Witness.

Cover – *Thousands came out to False Creek, British Columbia, to see canoes from all nations - including two Mennonite canoes - ask permission of the Coast Salish Peoples to enter traditional territories and partake in the BC TRC.*

October 7, 2013:

Idle No More Mass Action. In honour of the 250th Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Idle No More movement invites all Canadians to publicly show their support for Aboriginal treaty rights. Every city across Canada will be hosting an event. Go online to find out where it's being held in your community.

November 2, 2013:

Manitoba Partnership Circle. In Mennonite Church Manitoba, native and non-native congregations come together to form a circle of strength and support, sharing gifts and wisdom, and planning cooperative activities.

November 10, 2013:

Peace Sunday - Mennonite Central Committee encourages Canadian Anabaptist congregations to observe Peace Sunday on November 3 or 10, just prior to Remembrance Day (November 11) resources available at <http://mcccanada.ca/peace/peacesunday>

February 14, 2014:

Stolen Sisters Solidarity March. More than 600 native women in Canada are missing or have been murdered. Every city across Canada will be hosting an event. Everyone is welcome to show support for grieving families and to push the Canadian government to address this epidemic of violence against native women.

March 27-30, 2014:

Alberta Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Edmonton)

May 20-21, 2014:

Christian Peacemaker Team Aboriginal Justice Delegation to Treaty #3
Explore what it means to live in right relationship with the earth and each other. Find out what it means to be an ally to indigenous communities engaged in healing, resisting colonialism and struggling for sovereignty. For more info see www.cpt.org/work/aboriginal_justice.

June 16-20 and 23-27, 2014:

Canadian School of Peacebuilding - Peacebuilders of the world gather in Winnipeg, MB., for a selection of 5-day courses in June. See csop.cmu.ca for course listings and details.

July 3-6, 2014:

Assembly 2014 - Mennonite Church Canada delegate Assembly, Winnipeg, MB.
www.mennonitechurch.ca

July 28-31, 2014:

Native Mennonite Assembly (Winnipeg, MB). "Listening to God through the Land" is our theme, based on Job 12:7-9. Key teachers include Randy Woodley, Stan McKay, Anita Keith and Dave Courchene Jr.



Just get over it?

A Story from two Lands

Elmer Courchene is an Anishinabe elder who carries himself with dignity, but offers carefully chosen words that reflect the uncertainty within. "I'm 77 years old and without a word of a lie, I'm still trying to find love."

Elmer Courchene introduced himself as an Anishinabe elder whose home is Turtle Island. He carried himself with dignity, but his carefully chosen words reflected the uncertainty within. "I'm 77 years old and without a word of a lie, I'm still trying to find love."

When he shared that statement at a healing conference in Winnipeg last June, he was talking about his search for self-identity and belonging. Courchene is an Indian Residential School (IRS) survivor torn from his home and family at the tender age of 7. After 10 years of heart-wrenching trauma in the IRS system, he said, "I wasn't a human being anymore. I was a product."

Because of his own search for acceptance, he admitted that it was difficult to know how to love his own children and grandchildren.

When the Canadian government co-opted the help of institutional churches to "kill the Indian in the

child" by removing children from their homes and families, it accomplished more than it bargained for. At best, thousands of innocents lost the emotional and spiritual foundations essential to personhood. At worst, they endured emotional, physical and sexual abuse. As a result of the IRS experience, generations have been shattered.

"The behaviours we learned at these schools are passed to our kids, even if we don't intend it," said Nathan McGillivray, a survivor at the healing conference.

Those remarks address truths that settler folk would rather sweep under the carpet. Let's move on! Canada has treated indigenous people unjustly. We offered a public apology in 2008. We made reparations through the IRS Settlement Agreement – including financial support for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) so that stories about our oppression would

become part of the public record. Isn't that enough? Can't they just get over it?

On the surface, it's easy to throw blame back at indigenous communities. Bad news abounds; misuse of public funding, substance abuse, child neglect, and welfare dependency. According to a 2010/2011 Statistics Canada report, the indigenous are over-represented in the Canadian prison system. But without negating individual responsibility for individual actions, it's important to realize that the circumstances of Canada's host people go deeper than media headlines and finger pointing, and further back than the abhorrent IRS experience and broken treaty promises. It's far too complicated to comprehend at a glance.

Since the 2008 apology, awareness is on the rise among Canadians including a growing number of Mennonites. However, the web of tyranny is so pervasive, the consequences so entrenched, that it's easier to throw our hands up in despair than to untangle the mess.



This “freedom” graffiti carries significance and irony. It is emblazoned on a bridge connecting Soweto to the informal settlement of Kliptown, an area of extreme poverty.

The TRC is intended to expose the truth and provide support for survivors, but most people say it will not bring closure. So what’s next?

A Story from South Africa

Mpho Putu has been on the steering committee of the Anabaptist Network in South Africa (ANiSA) since its inception. ANiSA’s objective is to “walk with, support, and grow communities of peace, justice, and reconciliation within South Africa.” In Anabaptism, Putu sees hope and guidance for the country as it recovers from apartheid’s ravages. But Putu’s vision was not always so clear.

Putu grew up during apartheid in the black-only township of Soweto. Like other townships, Soweto was structured with separateness in mind. White people lived in the central area – in Soweto’s case, Johannesburg – while those of other races were each assigned to separate, designated areas on the outskirts. They were close enough to provide cheap labour for whites but far enough away that racial paths would seldom cross beyond the workday.

In an email interview, Putu said life for blacks was “determined by other

people, white people in particular, through draconian laws that prevented and denied the black majority their human rights.”

Putu was just 13 in June 1976 when the infamous Soweto Uprising captured the world’s attention. Already frustrated with an educational system that deliberately disadvantaged blacks, Putu joined thousands of junior high and high school students who rebelled when the government changed the language of study from English to Afrikaans – the language of the oppressor. For the most part they marched peacefully, but police reacted swiftly and with force. The first of hundreds to die was a boy about Putu’s age.

Then more adults got involved and police violence escalated. “Our freedom did not just come easy, blood had to flow, and many died,” Putu wrote. “Personally I went through what many young people experienced, got beaten, arrested, tear gassed and treated badly by white Christians who confessed Christ as Lord.”

Migrant labour separated generations of fathers from families and local communities, causing widespread emotional, spiritual and physical damage. In a society that never had the opportunity

to develop an economy, poverty and vulnerability persist. Violent crime, HIV and other diseases flourish.

“Even when the country is in its 20th year of democracy,” Putu wrote, “one can see the rampant effect of 300 years of colonisation and apartheid legacy.”

Here in Canada, that legacy sounds hauntingly familiar.

History of Legalized Oppression

Legalized oppression of indigenous people began when church and state operated as one. In the 15th century, Pope Nicholas V instituted the Doctrine of Discovery, giving Christian explorers moral permission to dispossess the original inhabitants of foreign lands. That sense of entitlement was unquestioned by church reformers who came later, and it was imposed upon countries around the world by European settlers, including South Africa and Canada.

By 1948, centuries of segregation and even slavery in South Africa evolved into the legal system of apartheid. For almost 50 years, racial division governed everything from housing to public service access, dra-



Mpho Putu (foreground) grew up in the midst of apartheid and took part in the Soweto Uprising of 1976 as a 13-year-old student. A member of the steering committee of the Anabaptist Network in South Africa (ANISA) since its inception, Putu sees hope and guidance in Anabaptism for the country as it recovers from apartheid's ravages. He is pictured here with Cobus van Wyngaard, an ANISA steering committee member who says that although the legalized racism has ended, it continues in various aspects of South African life.

updated through the years, it continues to exert paternalistic control over the lives of those with “Indian status” and those who live on reserves, including the ways in which they are allowed to draw an income from their land.

Settler society legislated equality and opportunity out of host people’s grasp.

Ironically, in the late 1970s while the Indian Act remained a legal document of oppression at home, Canadians expressed horror at apartheid. They joined other nations around the world, implementing economic sanctions against South Africa, pressuring for reform.

matically favouring the minority settler population.

Andrew Suderman is a Mennonite Church Canada worker in South Africa, and a member of the ANISA steering committee. In a recent article for Mennonite Church Canada he explained that the church determined “the separation of races was not only good but the desire of God. Although Afrikaners believed they were called to bring God to other races, they viewed those other races as inferior and felt that mixing races would dilute the purity of God’s “chosen” people.”

Like apartheid, Canadian legislation infringed upon indigenous people’s human right to self-determination – and it’s that aspect of history settler society has trouble grasping.

The disturbing details are simply not public knowledge.

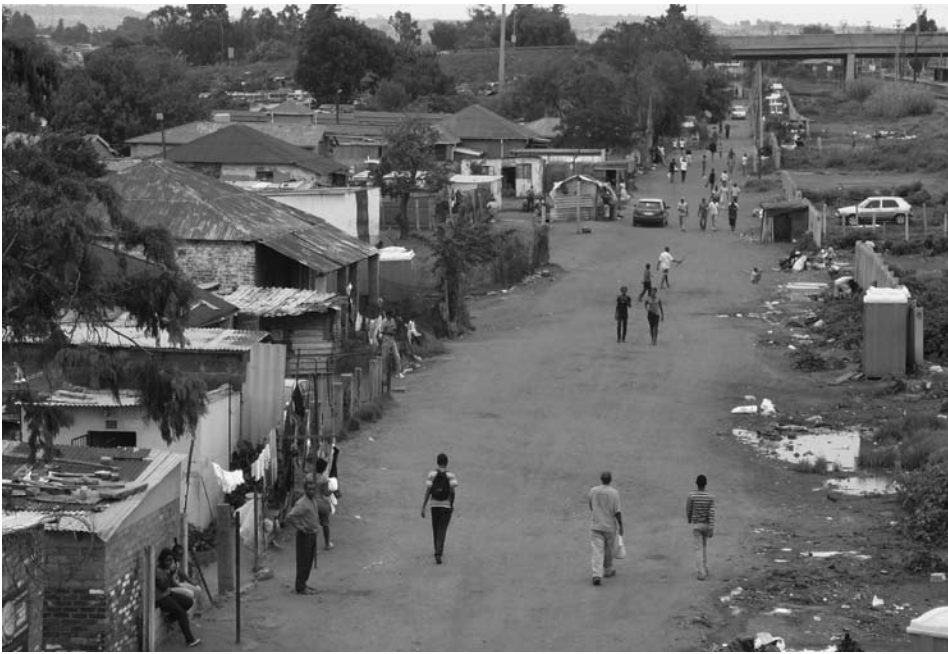
The Gradual Civilization Act, an 1857 precursor to the Indian Act, was designed to forcibly assimilate host people into settler society despite its alien worldview. The Gradual Enfranchisement Act followed in 1869, giving the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs the right to determine who among host people could own land or qualified for other benefits. A series of additional legislative measures followed, culminating in the Indian Act.

At various times the Indian Act prohibited host people from practicing centuries-old ceremonies pertinent to cultural survival and from hiring lawyers to defend their collective grievances. Although the Act has been

Truth and Reconciliation

Both South Africa and Canada established TRCs to publicly acknowledge the vicious legacy of apartheid and IRS, but the process differs somewhat in each country. In South Africa, survivors shared their stories and perpetrators of violence were allowed to testify about their role. In exchange, they could request legal amnesty. Stories told to the Canadian TRC are not considered legal testimony and primarily consist of survivors’ accounts. Despite repeated calls from TRC Commissioners for perpetrators to come forward, there has been little response from individuals. Involved churches have offered corporate apologies.

The TRC is not about assigning



Even after the fall of apartheid, extreme poverty continues. The informal settlement of Kliptown is predominantly comprised of people living in shacks.

blame, according to Steve Heinrichs, Mennonite Church Canada Director, Indigenous Relations. “It’s an attempt to encourage settler society to address fractured relationships with host peoples.”

In both Canada and South Africa, financial settlements were made to those who matched certain criteria of abuse. But not everyone who was affected met the criteria and financial settlements are not enough, say indigenous leaders.

“Beyond the settlement, the healing process and spiritual reconciliation is paramount,” said Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Grand Chief Derek Nepinak at the June 2013 healing conference in Winnipeg.

Challenges to Healing

Cobus van Wyngaard, an ANiSA steering committee member, shared some of his views about apartheid via email. He said that although the legalized racism has ended, it continues in various aspects of South African life.

“An obvious example,” the white Afrikaner wrote, “would be times when I continued to assume that it was ‘natural’ for black and white people to continue to worship separately.” But he also pointed to racism embedded in architecture and city planning – like townships. They continue to grow

as more black people move closer to the city, while gated communities for whites grow, increasing separation.

The economy is also a challenge. Various economic pressures and perhaps even bribery affected the outcome of negotiations leading up to apartheid’s demise, van Wyngaard wrote. Property rights were enshrined into the new constitution without adequately dealing with the history of unjust property distribution. The settlement debate was complex “and many would say that the global economic situation of the early 1990’s left the ANC [African National Congress] with little choice. Choosing a hard-line socialist agenda right after the fall of the USSR would have resulted in extreme poverty.”

“Indigenous peoples across Canada continue to face a grave human rights crisis,” according to a Dec. 2012 Amnesty International report citing access to housing, healthcare, education, and water. A June 2013 study released by The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives reported that poverty among Métis, Inuit and non-status First Nations children averages 27%, while 50% of First Nations children live below the poverty line. For all other children in the country, the poverty rate sits at about 15%.

In a telephone interview, Norman Meade, a Métis elder and the recently

retired coordinator of Mennonite Central Committee’s (MCC) Aboriginal Neighbours program in Manitoba, says the Indian Act was designed as “...an act of coercion that kept them [the indigenous] dependent upon the central government in Ottawa.”

“Some of the leaders say the Indian Act would be better abolished,” Meade adds, “but if you’re going to abolish legislation that’s been in place for a long time, you have to have some kind of relationship between the government in Ottawa and First Nations governments in communities.”

The relationship between the Crown and indigenous communities is complicated by ongoing treaty concerns regarding compensation to host peoples for settler use of their land and resources. Change, Meade explains, must take place through a gradual, defined process that honours the relationship that treaty agreements were meant to establish.

Differing worldviews also create complications. While the indigenous typically consider man to be one thread in the web of creation for which they assume responsibility, the European/settler view is more apt to see man as central, holding dominion over the rest of creation. The indigenous perspective places high importance on relationships with creation and other people, while the alternative view tends to place higher priority on economics and development.

A View of Transformation

Carl Brook, a white Baptist pastor and the director of “Crusade for Christ” in South Africa served in the military during apartheid. He has battled not only with his role in apartheid but with his church’s theological justification of it. He first began to question his beliefs about apartheid when he couldn’t see the Christian vision of an alternative society in the church around him.

In email correspondence he wrote about his “conversion experience” as the only white student in his year at the Evangelical Bible Seminary in Pietermaritzburg. “Three years in a crucible of learning where community was key led me to profoundly re-evaluate my worldview, my ideas of truth and falsehood.”

Brook, an ANiSA Pilgrim, wrote: “It has been remarked that hindsight is an exact science, ‘20/20 vision. Looking back, it’s easy to see the heresy. But we grow up perceiving and accepting what parents, teachers and society – consciously and unconsciously – want us to see. Apartheid was endorsed by most white South Africans out of blind ignorance and stark fear. Authority structures feed on and reinforce such emotions to entrench hegemony.”

Isn’t that essentially what happened in Canada?

Where do we go from here?

Mennonites cannot claim total innocence in the history of oppression; individuals and churches in and beyond Mennonite Church Canada have been involved with indigenous schools. Like other immigrants, Mennonites benefited from a colonial system that bestowed them with land seized from host peoples. However, as awareness rises, so does Mennonite involvement with the TRC process and other efforts that are building bridges between settler and host communities.

Those bridges are key to building relationships, and we can’t move forward unless we move forward together.

Was Jesus a Shaman?

Jesus is walking alone one night in the wilderness. It is getting cooler. Does he know how to make a fire? Shall he just pull out his Bic or a book of matches? Then he gets thirsty. Do you think he knows how to find water? And what about food? Would he eat wild edibles?

When most of us imagine Jesus alone in the wilderness we have a tendency to imagine him as a civilized human. We project on him our insecurities of being “in the wild,” we quickly jump on the “Jesus was divine” bandwagon. Ravens must have fed him, as with Elijah. Heavenly manna must have fallen, as with Moses. What we fail to consider is Jesus’ potential ‘shamanistic’ (i.e., wilderness) background. It’s something that I was introduced to a few years ago through Tom Brown Jr., and his mentor, Stalking Wolf.

Stalking Wolf was an Indigenous ‘anthropologist’ who wandered the Americas for decades - from the time of Ulysses S. Grant to Richard Nixon - all the way from Argentina to Alaska. He had been trained in a highly specialized Medicine Society, in the way of the ancient shamans. Stalking Wolf collected and distilled everything he could learn about Mother Earth and the various lands/bioregions that comprised her. He sought out elders wherever he went to learn as many of the ancient skills as possible. Stalking Wolf was a treasure trove of earth knowledge. He learned from the best of the best, including the infamous Geronimo.

Stalking Wolf met Tom Brown Jr. when he was eighty-three years old. For ten years, he mentored Tom. Today, at 63, he is arguably the nation’s foremost survivalist expert. Like Stalking Wolf, Tom spent extended periods of time wandering North America’s wilderness areas, learning and cultivating his survival and tracking skills. Out of that experience, he founded The Tracker School in the Pine Barrens of Central New Jersey. Students come from all over the world to learn the skills Stalking Wolf taught Tom. And what do they learn? Concrete practices that will enable one to thrive in the wilderness, and a way of seeing the world that helps one live in conscious awareness that we humans are a part of creation.

In his book, *No Future Without Forgiveness*, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Chairman of South Africa’s TRC, compares South Africa’s struggle to a scene from the 1958 movie, *The Defiant Ones*. Two escaped convicts who are manacled together – one black, the other white – attempt to climb out of a slippery ditch. One makes it to the top, but falls back because he is bound to his mate. They can only climb out together. “So too, I would say we South Africans will survive and prevail only together, black and white...as we strive to claw our way out of the morass that was apartheid racism...God had bound us, manacled together.”

A similar approach is also imperative in Canada. “What I hear from

indigenous communities is a desire for radical respect that is often connected to traditional spirituality and culture, land justice, and redistribution of wealth. It’s going to take a costly, communal effort to cultivate,” said Steve Heinrichs. “This is not an indigenous problem. Settlers created the woes in ‘Indian country’ with policies most Canadians are unaware of. We have to understand that this is a justice issue affecting all of us.”

So, why can’t they just get over it?

Because we aren’t yet “clawing our way out of the morass” together.

Deb Froese,

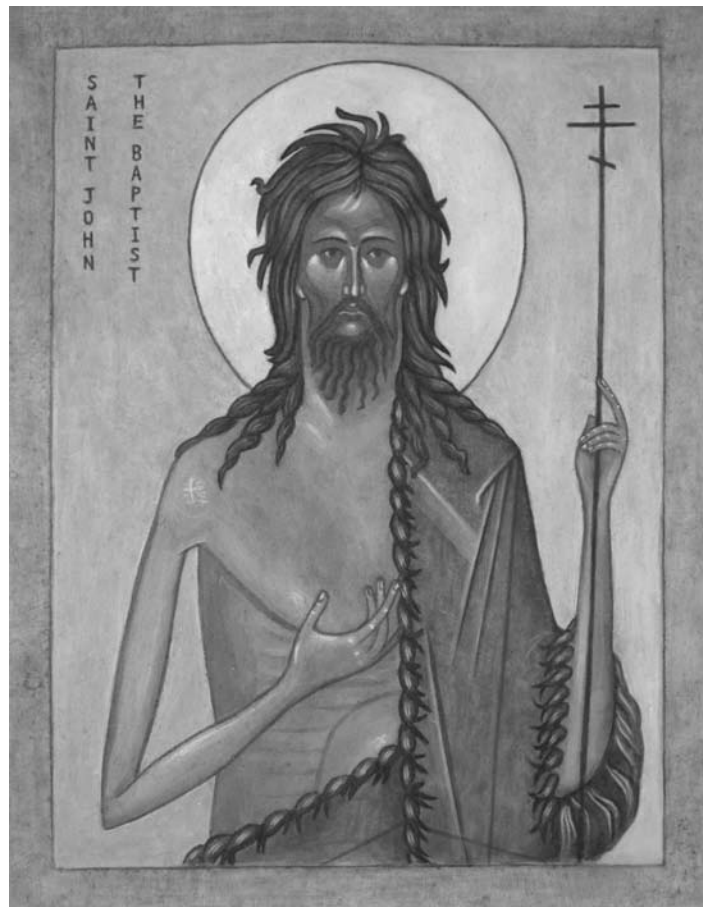
Director of News Services
Mennonite Church Canada

Over the years, I've had opportunity to be taught by Tom. In class after class I've learned some of the ancient skills of the shaman/scout. I recognize that there are dangers in this journey. It can be done for narcissistic reasons. And native spirituality - intimately connected to these ancient skills - can simply become another commodity for the spiritually bankrupt to consume. I'm also aware that some in the Native American community - dubbed 'plastic shamans' - have passed on questionable skills and rituals with even more questionable benefits to sate the desires of non-natives (who so often extract spiritual resources without giving anything back). The dangers are real. But if done with humility and an ethic of respectful mutuality, it's important that we find ways to learn from the elders and shamans who live nearby. It can profoundly shape our lives. I'm sure it shaped Jesus' life.

I have often wondered how Jesus survived apart from the economic system of his day, and I'm not satisfied by the explanation that wealthy women supported him (Luke 8:3). The generosity of the women would have been an essential support for the other mouths, especially the Twelve. Yet I suspect that Jesus had a comfort zone in the natural world, that he could take care of himself with his knowledge and skills, whatever they might have been. Some might object that Jesus had no contact with those who practiced ancient skills, but such is not the case. The Dead Sea Scrolls reveal an herbalist's awareness of plant life and it's quite plausible that Jesus, either on his own or through John the Baptist, had some connections to the Essenes. There are only four basic survival skills to learn. These are the skills related to the sacred order: shelter, fire, water, food. You can learn them in a week, if you want. Almost every other lesson you learn after that comes back to one of these four elements.

Can't you see Jesus living out these skills/ways? His overwhelming preference for nature analogies in describing the Father's kingdom should already indicate to us that he spent a lot of intentional time relating to the creation. This is expected behaviour of a shaman. In the gospels Jesus is continually in the wilderness, for short times of seclusion, for lengthy times of solitude and discernment. It is in the natural world that Jesus is able to perceive the goodness of the Creator, the one whom he called - to the shock of many - 'daddy' (Abba).

It's taken me time, but this has also been something of my experience of the wilderness. In that "lonely" place I am constantly stripping off layers of false comfort on all levels, and learning to trust in God, our provider. The wilderness helps me to differentiate between want and need. I may want my cozy bed in my nice warm house, but all I need is a



John the Baptist was a wild one. What about Jesus?

debris hut or a scout pit to stay plenty warm, dry, and alive. I may want pizza and soda but find that the earth offers me with plenty of trailside edibles and so meets my need. I need water. And I will find some in the early morning dew. The wilderness doesn't give a hoot about our manufactured desires. But if we surrender, and trust, she will meet our animal needs. Does that sound familiar? It's the same lesson taught by Jesus with regard to discipleship.

We know Jesus as the Word, we know him as the light. He is the life-giving vine and the good shepherd. All of these images teach us something significant about him. All shape our relationship with God and one another. But what if we started seeing Jesus as shaman too? How would that impact our relations with Creator, community and creation? How could that save us?

Michael Hardin

*Michael Hardin lives in Lancaster, Pennsylvania with his partner Lorri. He's the author of *The Jesus Driven Life*, and the Director of Preaching Peace (www.preachingpeace.org). Michael's passion is to see the church re-examine its theology in the light of the good news of Jesus who proclaimed a truly distinct vision of God.*



Pauingassi, MB

summer camp

A number of northern Manitoba communities held DVBS or Family Camp together with a partnership church from Mennonite Church Manitoba this summer.



Pauingassi, MB



Pauingassi, MB

- Sterling Mennonite Fellowship, Winnipeg, MB partnered with Cross Lake, MB – DVBS.
- Steinbach Mennonite Church, Steinbach, MB partnered with Manigotagan, MB – DVBS.
- Grace Mennonite Church, Winker, MB partnered with Matheson Island, MB – DVBS.
- Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach, MB partnered with Pauingassi, MB – Family Camp.



Cross Lake, MB

Live in the sunshine,
swim in the sea,
drink the wild air.

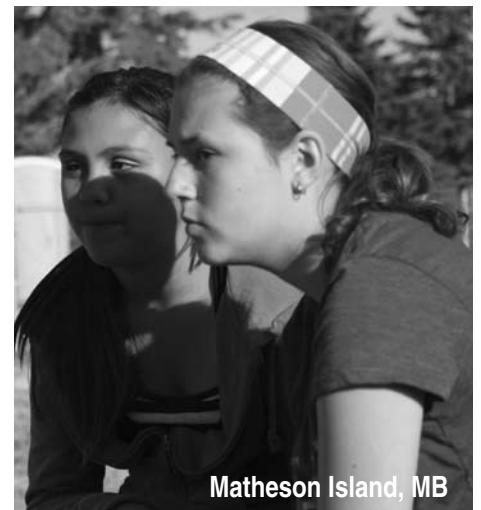
-Ralph Waldo Emerson



Matheson Island, MB



Manigotagan, MB



Matheson Island, MB



Mennonites in BC Offer Expression of Reconciliation

Mennonites with the Commissioners sharing their expression and the gifts of a quilt and documentary video.

On September 21, 2013 a group of Mennonites from various communities (MCBC, MBBC, and MCCBC) shared words of repentance and hope at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Vancouver, BC. Before a large public audience, Garry Janzen, Dave Heinrichs, Isidore Charters (Stlat'imx), Don Klaassen, and Christa Giesbrecht offered up the following words:

Garry Janzen - We give thanks to the Coast Salish peoples for allowing us to meet in their traditional territory. We recognize that the lands on which we live, work and worship are lands originally given by the Creator to the First Nations people. As Mennonite settlers we [acknowledge that we] have benefitted greatly by your dispossession and marginalization.

Dave Heinrichs - Jesus said we are to love God and to love our neighbour:

We confess that we have failed in our love and care toward [you], our Indigenous neighbours.

We commit to working towards reconciliation as we follow the

example of Jesus whose life and mission modelled reconciliation, peacemaking and bringing justice.

We commit to growing in our understanding of your history and culture, your attachment to and care for the land, and to educating those with misconceptions in our communities.

We commit to growing in mutual relationships of trust and respect.

Isadore Charters - My [Indigenous] name is Yenmo Ceetza. I am a survivor of eight years in the Kamloops Indian Residential School. My family, my faith, Alcoholics Anonymous and my art have all been part of my healing journey. Now we have made a video of my story to help others to be reconciled and to heal.

Don Klaassen - My name is Don Klaassen. Isadore's friendship with me has helped me understand what it means to be on a healing path. I hope our video will help Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across Canada

to join us on this journey.

Christa Giesbrecht - An Amish/Mennonite quilter in the 18th century is said to have expressed her reason for quilting this way: "I make my quilts warm to keep my family from freezing. I make them beautiful to keep my heart from breaking." Quilting is a slow, meticulous, intentional work. Women gather around a quilting frame and as we tell our stories, we are stitching the fabric of our lives together. Every quilt carries a message of care and compassion, an expression of community and of belonging. This "Log Cabin" quilt was hand stitched by the Mennonite quilters group which meets twice a week in Abbotsford, and we present it as a gift of warmth and friendship.

Garry Janzen - I would like to ask those in the gathering today who are part of this Community of Mennonites to stand with us in affirmation of this expression and action.

Approximately 75 Mennonites stood in response.

Red Indians and the Cowboy Christ

One Saturday morning, Soren was watching cartoons (*the Boondocks*) and reading a thick theology paper (by sir Victor Anderson) during commercial breaks. Inspired by the collision of ideas (and that Coyote-Spirit!), he penned the following gospel satire. Soren shares it with prayer and laughter.

Willy Bearfoot grew up on the rez at Kanawake, but out of work and down on his luck, he moved to Montreal, and now lives in Verdun, couch-surfing his way through life. Not long ago, a friend lent him a lazyboy, and he had the best sleep he had had in years. And that night Willy dreamt a sacred dream. A dream of heaven.

There at the pearly gates, Willy meets his hero, the famous Duncan Campbell Scott – the former head of the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs. Scott is the ambassador of “White God,” and his son, “White Jesus.”

“Welcome Willy, to White heaven. It’s a beautiful place, isn’t it?! No beggars or drunks here.”

Scott tells Willy that because there are many types of people, God has made separate, but relatively, not quite, but almost-equal-heavens for these different people. There is a heaven for White Catholics, a heaven for White Mennonites, a heaven for almost-White Korean Presbyterians, and even a heavenly reserve for red Indians. Scott assures Willy that God doesn’t have a problem with racism, but that he personally isn’t so fond of Indians. In fact, White God has worked hard over the years to take the Indian out of the man, and make them more like those other people. More like himself. That’s why he inspired the church to start residential schools, moved Jean Chretien to write the 1969 White Paper, and asked Stephen Harper to find ways to give natives opportunities to enjoy all the economic benefits of mass

resource-extraction.

Willy Bearfoot’s admiration for Mr. Scott increases with awe. Here is a man of White god... a civilized man.

Then Scott offers a miraculous opportunity to Willy. If he spreads the message that “God loves White people” and renounces everything that’s native, than he too can join all the White people in White heaven. Willy is overwhelmed with hope.

Taking Willy by the hand, Scott leads him to a clear pool, and tells him to look within: Willy gazes at the water and sees himself transformed into a White-skinned, blond-haired and blue-eyed image. Holy! Holy! Holy! That’s what he could be! That’s the promise of White heaven!

Willy Bearfoot then awakes from his dream, and finds himself with a Bible in hand at the door of the Montreal Native Friendship Centre. Without hesitation, Willy tells his sisters and brothers there that he has just received a tremendous vision; that he’s been given a great commission from White God. He urges the elders to follow him to the street, where, standing on the back of his pickup truck, he announces his call to preach the gospel of White God and his son, White Jesus. His message is simple, tried and true:

“God is White and loves the White man above all others! God doesn’t like red Indians, which is why he made his son in the image of a White man, gave them our land, and gave the church all those good White songs to sing. But there is good news! Everyone with skin as red as blood can enter the gates of paradise if he hates his own redness. That’s the key, hate the skin, not the sinner.”

Willy Bearfoot’s message strikes a chord with lots of streetgoers, especially some White listeners. Willy sees the passion in their eyes, and he turns to them and absolves them of any guilt



Duncan Campbell Scott, former head of the Department of Indian Affairs - “I want to get rid of the Indian problem.”

they may have for their race prejudice toward the Indians in Montreal and those not-so-distant native reserves. Like wildfire, the message spreads quickly, and before you can fry up a baloney-bannock sandwich, Willy Bearfoot has gained a large following of Whites and a handful of good Indians.

Then, with the aid of local Christian businessmen, and some savvy television entrepreneur’s, Willy Bearfoot’s ministry goes big-time. He plans a series of revival meetings at the Molson Center. And the turnout for the first is astonishing – a packed house! Dressed in a white suit and preaching

with ecstatic, spasmodic moves, Willy admonishes the audience to renounce redness and to think of at least five “Indians” whom they would like to smack the red of their faces. One White man in the front jumps up from his seat, and feeling the spirit, shouts “Preach it! Preach it!” and rattles of 5 red names before you can say Rocket Richard or 18 holes at Oka.

Willy Bearfoot then announces an altar call, inviting all who want to renounce their redness to come forward to the front of the auditorium. All those “red of skin and full of sin” are invited so that Willy may lay hands on them. In violent sweeps, he begins slapping their faces in order to symbolically slap the red off, shouting, “Red be gone! Red be gone!” He excites all at the revival meeting to imitate him. And the meeting erupts...women and men, children and aunts, even a few grandmas and grandpas are all caught up in this slapping frenzy.

At the same time, Willy Bearfoot begins praying to White God: “Gracious and loving White God, if anything in my message is a lie, then may you strike me down in the name of the White One, Jesus Christ.”

And suddenly, a bolt of white lightning comes out of nowhere, and strikes him.

Immediately, the frenzy stops. The gathered crowd sighs collectively, and one by one they all leave disappointed.

But Willy... he isn't dead. He gets up and decides to go to the nearest drop in clinic. The doctor checks him out. He's totally fine. In fact, his blood pressure has never been better. And so Willy pulls up his boot straps, and gets to work, travelling across Quebec and all over this home and native land, bringing the good news to those “with ears to hear.”

Soren Mennohawk



Pumpkin Soup

Ingredients

2 cans (30 oz each) pure pumpkin

if using fresh pumpkin, quarter and bake for approximately 20 minutes and scrape out pumpkin

1 can (14.5 oz) chicken broth

2 chicken bouillon cubes

nutmeg

salt & pepper to taste

butter & garlic powder (sauté)

1 cup heavy cream, or half & half or condensed milk

1 can (11 oz) sweet white/yellow corn (cream corn can be used)

Directions

Cook 20 minutes (do not boil).

If too thin add mild cheese, if too thick, add water.

Good Frybread

Ingredients

2 cups flour

½ cup dry milk

1 tsp. salt

3 tsp. baking powder

1 egg

1 cup warm water

Mix dry ingredients together. Whisk the egg and water separately and add to dry mixture.

Add flour or water to adjust mixture to form a very soft dough. Put dough on a well floured board. Roll out to about a 1 inch thickness. Let set for 15 minutes.

Cut into desired size. Makes approximately 24 smaller pieces. Deep fry in hot oil just enough to brown on each side. Dab with a paper towel paper towel to get some of the top oil off the bread.

Note: When making frybread, it's better to make one batch at a time.

*October's poplars are flaming torches
lighting the way to winter. ~Nova S. Bair*



Note from the editor: In our last In-totemak, we accidentally printed the wrong dates for a number of persons who had recently passed away. We sincerely apologize to the families and friends of Brian Keeper, David Owens, Winston Churchill Keeper, Janette Keeper and Delorian John Boulanger-Moar for our mistake.

ANNIVERSARY:

Congratulations to **George and Shirley Selkirk** of Pine Dock, Manitoba who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary this summer with their family and friends!

WEDDING:

Frank Orvis and Gail Jones were married on Saturday, September 28, 2013. The ceremony was held at the groom's home in East Selkirk, Manitoba and attended by their families and close friends. Congratulations!

DEATHS:

Roderick (Rod) Bushie, age 60 years of Selkirk and Hollow Water First Nation, Manitoba passed away on June 14, 2013 after a short battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife Eileen, sons Hjortur and Ivar Helgason, many siblings, a large extended family, and countless friends.

Rod served as a Band Councillor at Hollow Water for 4 years and as chief of Hollow Water for another 18 years before becoming Grand Chief of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs for a further 3 years. He was respectful of the Elders and especially interested in the future of the youth. He had a good heart and deep feelings for the well-being of his people and the future of all First Nations. After his political career ended, Rod worked as a liaison with Jory Capital and, most recently, the San Gold gold mine in their attempts to partner with First Nation communities.

A celebration of Rod's life was held at the Gilbert Funeral Home in Selkirk on June 18 and a traditional funeral was held in Hollow Water on June 19.

Rudy Delenore Simard, age 62 years of Pine Falls - Powerview, Manitoba, passed away peacefully after a courageous battle with cancer. The funeral service was held on August 2, 2013 in his home town of Manigotogan, Manitoba.

Rudy excelled in academics and sports, winning the Manitoba Lightweight Boxing Championship in 1967. Rudy had a long and varied working life in community development, logging, diamond drilling and working at the Tembec Paper Mill in Pine Falls. He also served as a councillor for the Manigotogan Community Council and several terms as Mayor.

Rudy is survived by his wife of 40 years, Geri (Fenner) and their two sons Jeffery (Denise) and Jamie (Anita), four grandchildren, and many close family members and friends.

Hold on to what is good, even if it is a handful of earth,

hold on to what you believe even if it is a tree that stands by itself

Hold on to what you must do even if it is a long way from here

Hold onto life even if it is easier letting go

Hold onto my hand even when I have gone away from you.

- Ojibway Prayer

Stanford Eaglestick of Little Grand Rapids passed away on August 9, 2013 at the age of 76. He was an ardent trapper and resided at the Central Park Lodge in Winnipeg the last few years. He is survived by one adult that he raised, many relatives and friends. He will be missed by many. Interment took place at Little Grand Rapids.



Willis (Willie) Horst, age 74 years, of Goshen, Indiana was surrounded by his family when he passed away on the morning of September 1, 2013. He is survived by his wife Byrdalene and their four children and seven grandchildren in the United States and Argentina, and many other family members and friends.

Willie and Byrdalene retired in Goshen, Indiana at the end of 2009, following church work in Argentina under the auspices of Mennonite Mission Network from 1971 to 2010. Their role was to accompany the indigenous United Evangelical Church in northern Argentina. Willis developed the Bible Circle, a conversational format that encourages indigenous people to explore their spirituality and the values of Jesus within their own culture.

Some of the indigenous church leaders in North America came to know Willie and Byrdalene during their trip to Mennonite World Conference 2009 in Asuncion, Paraguay and the trip that followed to the Chaco communities in Paraguay and Argentina, where the Horsts and others planned opportunities for church leaders to interact. Willie and Byrdalene also attended the 2010 Native Assembly sessions in Montana and served as translators for our Assembly guests from Paraguay and Panama.



Meditation

2 PFDPL 22:11-13

11 ΔΛ Cϣ PFDPL b.ϣC^x Δσ^a ∇JΛΔbUσ^b Δσ^a ∇.Δ^a ΔΔL Lρ^aΔbσ^x,
 Γ ϣ bΔJ CϣPPΛJ^b ΔPPϣPb^a ∇ΛΓ Γd^bUσ^b. 12 ΓCϣ PFDPL bΔJ Δσ^a
 Δξb^b.Δ^a PΓ Δσ^aΓ∇.ΔPL, Δσ b^a ΔΔΔbL^b. ∇dρρΓdσ^b ρ^a, Δσ b^a
 Δb^aΔ^a. ∇dρρΓdρ^b LΔρ^b.Δ^a, Δσ b^a ρ^a ΔJΛΔρ.Δσσ.Δ^a, Δσ b^a
 Δϣ^b.Δ^a PFDPL bP <ΓΔd^b ∇PΔσ^b 13 Lb^b ΔC b.ρΓΓ^b bΠVΓρ^b,
 ∇b.ρ.UCL.Δ^b, Δd b^a bP^a VΛΠσ.Δ^b ΔΔL bΔ^b.Δ^b JC ΔP^x, ∇.Δ
 PρCJ.Δ^b Δσ^a ∇JΛΔbUσ^b ΔΔ Lρ^aΔb^a bP ΓPbUσ^b. Δρ Δσ PPF
 σ^aPΔσ^b bΠVΓρ^b, Δϣ^b Δσ^a PρU^bΔΓσ^b b.Δ^a ΔP ΛρCρ^a.Δ^a Δσ^a
 ∇JΛΔbUσ^b ΔΔ Lρ^a.b^a, b.Δ^a b^a P ϣCLdσ^aσ^b bP^a bΔJΛΔbUσ^b ΔΔ
 Lρ^aΔb^a.

2 Kings 22:11-13

When the king heard the book being read, he tore his clothes in dismay, and gave the following order to Hilkiyah the priest, to Ahikam son of Shaphan, to Achbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan, the court secretary, and to Asaiah, the king's attendant: "Go and consult the Lord for me and for all the people of Judah about the teachings of this book. The Lord is angry with us because our ancestors have not done what this book says must be done.



Resources

Yummo Comes Home (DVD, Outreach Canada, 2013). A 28 minute documentary that is honest, emotional and hopeful. It provides a window into the harmful effects of Indian Residential Schools through the eyes of Isadore Charters, an Okanagan/Thompson Nation artist and carver. He shares his journey of healing and reconciliation through faith, artistic expression and community. Don Klaassen,



the son of a settler immigrant narrates the story from his perspective and the two men model what it might mean to experience reconciliation and shape a better future. See more at <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2143>.

This resources and others, 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/resourcecentre> for more resources that are available for loan.

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