

my friends Intototemak

Spring 2006 Vol. 35, No. 1



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Photo courtesy of Hollie Hodgman

First Nations voice actors help Aboriginal people "hear" Jesus speaking their language.

Jesus Speaks My Language!

For many people, it's not hard to "hear" Jesus speaking our language. Along with most other North Americans, I grew up with the Bible in my language. (As a child, I probably even naively assumed that the Lord spoke only English!) But to many of the world's peoples – including many Indigenous Canadians – Jesus speaks a foreign language.

Fortunately, through efforts over the past two decades, this barrier exists for a lot less people, thanks to efforts to translate the JESUS movie. This ministry-aid became available in the 1980s and has proved exceptional. The two-hour movie was originally produced by Warner Brothers in 1979 and is a vivid and faithful re-creation of the life of Christ based on the Gospel of Luke.

In following years it became the world's most translated film. Campus Crusade's JESUS Film Project reported (in October 2005) almost 900 language translations, with over 200 in progress.

You might ask, "With most First Nations now speaking English, is such an effort worthwhile in Canada?" Many say, "Yes!" Besides being of great benefit to those who speak only their native tongue, the JESUS movie presents the Gospel to bilingual people in the "language of their heart." That is crucial for spiritual understanding to take place.

Into Canada's Native Languages

A few other missions in Canada have also been involved in translating this movie. For us at Northern Canada Evangelical Mission it began in 1988.

See Language page 3



Cross-country trip

Greetings! As we look out of our office window today we see big snowflakes falling and welcome the fresh layer of snow on the ground that makes everything look bright and clean again. Such a day lifts one's spirit and underscores the promise of cleansing and healing in Psalm 51:7: "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

We had a wonderful cross-country trip in November and December, and many of you honoured us with your hospitality and shared your insights. Thank you! It truly was a learning tour for us and enabled us to put faces and geography to the wide variety of people and ideas that make up Canada. We had more than 70 contact sessions with individuals and groups in the four provinces we visited. We met with at least 135 individual contacts in addition to the contacts we made in the adult Sunday School classes and Sunday morning worship services in the three congregations we visited.

Here are just a few of the observations that we made on the trip:

- This quote sums up much of what we learned from the Native people that we met. "If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together" by Lila Watson, Australian Aboriginal Woman.
- There has been an upswing of Native church leaders and theologians who are at the forefront of creating new church models that incorporate their Native heritage and culture while, at the same time, being honest to their relationship with Jesus Christ and their understanding of the Biblical text.
- We heard many times on our trip that we need to work together as churches, denominations and agencies, and we need to pool our resources.
- Facilitating constituency education was expressed many times over as being a high

priority for the Native Ministry office -- from Aboriginal organizations as well as from our Mennonite church people.

- We were challenged to be the people that facilitate bringing people together in a wide variety of ways. There is so much to learn from each other and often the forums are not there for the sharing to happen.
- We sensed a refreshing newness to the conversation as we talked about focusing our attention on what we as Mennonite people can learn from our Native neighbors.
- We have opportunities for promoting reconciliation in our country. Our Native brothers and sisters are asking us to walk with them through their struggles - socially, politically and with the church structures - as well as their joys.

We look forward to meeting more of you in the months to come and hearing your stories and ideas for "Broadening the Vision" of the Native Ministry program.

We are renting a bus to travel to Native Assembly 2006 in Atmore, Alabama the end of July. Please call or e-mail the Native Ministry office as soon as possible to get more details and to reserve your seat on the bus. Registration forms and other information will be sent out after the March planning meeting in Busby, Montana. Please contact the Native Ministry office with your interest so that we can send you that information when it becomes available.

We hope you like the new layout changes to INTOTEMAK. This is your newsletter and we want it to reflect what is happening in your community and province, and on our national scene. We welcome articles and pictures about relationship-building, events of interest, and issues that help us learn more about each other as "friends" (INTOTEMAK). We also welcome your comments and further suggestions. Thank you!

That is all we have for now. Migwetch.

Neill and Edith

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



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.

Intotemak

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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.



New Look for a New Time

The first edition of this newsletter was printed on blue paper in the Conference of Mennonites in Canada office in 1972 with the name TOTEMAK. The name change to INTOTEMAK is first seen on the March/April 1980 issue.

Back issues also tell us that the familiar black on white design of INTOTEMAK has been around since the March/April 1979 issue. It was time to give it a new look! Hopefully, new readers will also follow.

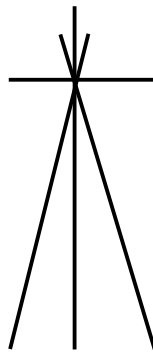
The new INTOTEMAK masthead now incorporates its English translation, "my friends" on the left side. The feather, a sacred Aboriginal symbol, acts as the accent mark over the "o" and appears throughout as a symbolic pointer to highlight columns and sections.

Inside you will find readable, organized

information, and hopefully, informative and inspiring articles. A new feature is the highlighted resources column (books, videos and DVDs of interest) that are available from Mennonite Church Canada's Resource Centre and other sources.

We hope you like our new look, and welcome your responses. We also invite you to pass each issue on to a friend, invite someone to subscribe, or give a gift subscription.

*Tammy Sawatzky,
Art Director/Designer of INTOTEMAK,
in co-ordination with INTOTEMAK staff*



Thank You, Kathy!

We said farewell to a staunch ally of the Native Ministry program on January 31. Many of you will remember Kathy Fast from the various meetings she attended or organized these last few years. Her infectious laugh,

boundless energy and attention to details stood her in good stead in her role as National Director of Mennonite Church Canada Witness.



Photo courtesy of MJC Canada

Kathy Fast

Kathy and her husband Eric still live in Winnipeg, but Kathy began working in the Material Aid department at Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba in February.

Thank you, Kathy, for all of your support, encouragement and words of wisdom!



VISION of Mennonite Church Canada 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.

GOAL of Mennonite Church Canada WITNESS

Every congregation and all parts of the church will be fully engaged in God's mission, reaching from across the street to around the world.

PRIORITIES of Native Ministry

1. Resourcing and training Native leaders and congregations
2. Networking with agencies, groups and communities
3. Facilitating and resourcing partnerships
4. Constituency education – building bridges between communities, educating on Native issues.

Language

Continued from page 1

With the financial backing of a Christian businessman,

NCEM missionary Carroll Hill began coordination of the Cree language production. The film was completed and released in October 1991 and, with continuing support available, work on the Denesuline (Chipewyan) version immediately got under way and was released in 1993.

The fall of 1995 saw the release of the Inuktitut (Inuit) version, while planning for the Slavey, Tlicho (Dogrib), Chilcotin, Innu (Montagnais) versions had begun. A couple of our sister missions have worked to complete the Ojibway and Blackfoot versions. And, in 2002, we released a unique English version with Native North American voice actors.

"Dubbing" the Film

Production for each version begins with translation of the script. The challenge is much greater than doing a "free" translation, though, because to achieve "lip-sync," syllables must be counted. If possible, every lip movement of the actor equals one syllable in the Native language. That's why, out of necessity, it is a "thought-for-thought" translation.

Then a one-voice "video-fit" recording is made and carefully field tested for cultural appropriateness, and grammatical and theological accuracy. The voice recording takes place next with up to 35 Native voices. Technical assistance has been provided by JESUS Project people, usually working in a makeshift studio.

Voice recording is followed by a second field-test check. Then, in Orlando, Florida, audio adjusting and the mixing in of original music and sound effects takes place. But final production of the film/video doesn't happen until a copy is sent back for a third and final check.

Now They Understand

Missionary Gilbert Bekkatla provides a special perspective on the JESUS film project, being Denesuline himself. He was personally involved in most aspects of the translation and recording, and subsequently traveled many miles showing the film and distributing videos in over 30 communities.

When Gilbert talked about it, it wasn't hard to tell that his dedication to the project was due to a strong desire to see his own Denesuline people come to Christ. "I have never seen anything that has caused as much spiritual awakening among the Denesuline people. During the showings in community halls, city auditoriums and correction camps, people sat on the edge of their chairs and some pointed at the projection screen. Young and old cried, and I also cried watching them. Some people would not look at the scene of Jesus being whipped and nailed to the cross.

"People commented that they had never understood about Jesus and his life, but now they understood who Jesus really was and what He taught."

Originally released in 16mm film and VHS video, the JESUS movie is now available on a multi-language DVD. "Indigenous Languages of Canada Volume 1" includes: Cree, Inuktitut, Ojibway, Innu (Montagnais), plus English (North American Native Voice) and French.

Volume 2 will be released this spring and will include: Blackfoot, Chilcotin, Cree, Denesuline (Chipewyan), Slavey, Tlicho (Dogrib), plus English (North American Native Voice), and French.

*Rollie Hodgman, Northern Canada
Evangelical Mission-Prince Albert, SK*

Sharing in Life at Siksika

Helen and I continue to visit the Blackfoot First Nation (Siksika) near Gleichen, Alberta on a regular basis. By now our lives are very entwined with the people we have come to know over the years in that community that is spread over many miles south of the #1 highway east of Calgary.

I always count it a great honor to receive a call to pray for someone. One such call came just after midnight earlier this year. I prayed for this family over the phone. After the call, I felt a powerful urge to keep watch in prayer for this request. It was just after 4 a.m. when I felt a peace come over me and I fell asleep. After breakfast that morning I called my friend to see how things were going. I was so blessed to hear that at 4 a.m. the entire matter had been resolved at their house, as the one who caused the problem came at that hour to apologize in tears and ask for forgiveness.

Calls come on numerous other occasions by phone or through visiting a family or meeting others in their place of work, shopping, or other places. I often deal with these prayer requests on the spot and relay them to a prayer chain we are a part of. Visiting people in hospitals and prisons again this year gave me opportunities to get to know more families with special needs of counseling and prayer. We have also wept with families at a number of wakes and funerals this year.

Our intent is to work in unity with the Christians on the reserve and with churches in close proximity to Siksika. We are assured by the Gospel writer John that God is stronger than any of the evils and problems we have around us and need to face. As Christians work together, we show that God's spirit and His word live in our hearts. The "Bridging the Gap" ministry on the reserve brings us together (Native and non-Native) and demonstrates our unity through Christ.

We are happy that we can distribute Christian material to the people we visit and thank the Alberta Missions and Service Committee for helping with some of the costs. We have purchased copies of the Scriptures in the Blackfoot language, CDs of the Word of God in Blackfoot, and "How to Find God" Bibles through Life Light Ministries in Steinbach, Manitoba. We also hand out copies of the "Our Daily Bread" devotional to those who request one. The response has been excellent to a new resource we just received – the JESUS video in the Blackfoot language on DVD.

We were privileged to have Neill and Edith



Herman Yellow Old Woman and his son Dalray at their new home in the West Gleichen area of the Siksika First Nations. Herman teaches the Blackfoot language and syllabics at the Crowfoot School on the reserve.

von Gunten of the Native Ministry office visit with us in November for a weekend. We spent two of the days at Siksika and were happy that Marvin Baergen from the Alberta missions committee was able to join us for the second

day, too. They were well-received and we enjoyed the time with them.

Thank you for the support we received in many different ways this past year.

Alvin Lepp, Rosemary, AB

An Opportunity to Listen and Learn

For generations Aboriginal and Mennonite communities have resided in close proximity. Sometimes their children have gone to the same schools, or their parents have worked together. At other times there have been distinct tensions between the communities. More often, however, there is little contact between the two communities. Children are born, live and die in worlds that rarely intersect in intentional ways. Worse still, ignorance and stereotypes begin to cloud what exists of the relationship even further.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if there were a venue in which we could share the gifts we've been given with one another? Might we, if we were to listen, find that Aboriginal people have much to offer? Might we find that the solutions are not all ours, and the problems all theirs?

MCC invites you to become a part of a listening and learning process that will take place over the course of the next year. Come participate in bi-monthly varied events which will include the arts, camping with Aboriginal people, and interacting with leading Aboriginal thinkers, theologians, politicians and elders.

To begin this process, MCC BC and Men-

nonite Church Canada Native Ministry are co-hosting Cree theologian Ray Aldred for a series of sessions. We've asked him to reflect on the question "How can traditional spirituality and understanding be fulfilled in the gospel, or transformed by it, in the same way that European cultures interpreted the gospel into their context?" Two evening sessions are being planned for March 28 and 29, 2006 in the Abbotsford area. Please contact MCC BC or check our website for details (telephone: 604-850-6639; 604-857-0011 toll free from Vancouver; 1-888-622-6337 toll-free elsewhere in BC; www.mcc.org/bc.)

Other group activities throughout the year will include the annual MCC camping trip, which is built around ground level interaction with aboriginal people on Vancouver Island from August 8 - 13. Families and individuals are encouraged to contact MCC BC for more information on this event as well.

MCC BC encourages all interested persons to contact Darryl Klassen. We hope to structure a group that will be committed for this one-year learning experience.

Darryl Klassen-MCC BC, Abbotsford, BC

Kenora Reflection

The Kenora team completed a six-week anti-racism project in December 2005 and will begin a ten-week project on 6 February 2006. The foci of the February-April project will be human rights documentation with an emphasis on outreach, street patrols and supportive meetings with Kenora church, youth, and police leaders who are attempting to deal with racism.

For the Kenora Team, the abduction of the four CPTers in Iraq on November 26th must have been particularly difficult. I saw [Jim Loney] the first weekend the team was back in Kenora, when I helped Lisa Martens with a de-colonizing / un-doing racism workshop. I was impressed by Jim's quiet wisdom, his ability to analyze a situation, his patient listening and his willingness to empathize and to understand. It seemed to me that he embodied the soul and heart of CPT, its aspirations and its humanity.

From what I could see, it could not have been the best of living conditions, living in one church, moving to another, back again. Sleeping on the floors and couches. Phone connections were not always the best. I never heard one complaint. The CPTers were there for a purpose and normal creature comforts were put on hold.

The abduction of one of their teammates in Iraq could have sent things into a tailspin. Their faith and their training taught them to

put one foot in front of the other during times of great trauma and build strength from each crisis.

I was in Kenora during the last weekend that the CPTers were there, the 10th and 11th of December. I was privileged to spend time with them, to lean on their strength and gain from that strength. I went to the Sunday service at the First Baptist Church; I had not been to a service there for over 40 years. Old memories came back as I entered the church, old feelings, but mostly I felt new feelings, feelings of acceptance, of camaraderie, of welcome. I paid attention to the songs and the prayers; thoughts of the four CPTers abducted in Iraq were constant.

At the end of the service is a section called the benediction and, on that morning, as David Milne got up to speak the benediction, a man stood up from the congregation. He excused himself for his highly unusual action of interrupting a church service to speak. He

welcomed the six of us Anishinaabe women who "had the courage" to come to this church service and went on to talk about what he was learning from the CPT. He said he had never thought of himself as racist but he was learning that, in fact, he was. He said that if any of his relatives, his children, were injured or murdered on the streets of Kenora, he would surely take notice. He said that, because it was happening to Anishinaabe people, he did not notice. It took the work of the CPT for his eyes to be opened.

In the midst of the vulnerability that many of us were feeling, just one day after the deadline had passed for the demands of the group in Iraq, the power with which the speakers that morning at the First Baptist Church gave their messages unleashed torrents of tears. Tears of release and healing and hope overcame the tears of fear and anxiety.

Printed with permission from Kaaren Olsen-Danneman

Kaaren is an Anishinaabe grandmother / trapper / de-colonizer who worked with Christian Peacemaker Team's (CPT) Kenora, Ontario team. Her article has been edited for length. People wishing to see the complete article may send their request to kkcpt@earthblink.net

Rebuilding after the Hurricanes

We want to remember our Native Mennonite Ministry brothers and sisters in the southern United States that have been affected by the hurricanes that have devastated their area in the last few years.

The Poarch Community Church in Atmore, Alabama, for example, had to go through all the preparations for a hurricane three times in less than one year and then deal with the aftermath. Hurricane Ivan hit on September 16, 2004 and a year later there were still 85 families in the community with unmet housing needs. The cleanup and recovery work from Tropical Storm Cindy and Hurricane Dennis (July 2005) was not yet completed when Katrina hit on August 29. This latest hurricane did minor damage to some homes and buildings in the Poarch community, but the church was heavily involved in hosting people who had to flee their homes and seek shelter elsewhere.

The Native Christian Fellowship (NCF) of Louisiana was right in Katrina and Rita's path and the area was underwater. The community was affected heavily and several members lost their homes, while others had extensive water

and roof damage. It took days and weeks before people could find each other and know their friends and loved ones were safe. Church supplies, tables, chairs and songbooks were lost in addition to many personal belongings.

There are many health and ecological concerns for the people and the land as well to watch for as a result of the recent hurricanes. The focus now is on rebuilding physical structures and a way of life. Mennonite Disaster Service is involved in the Gulf States area, and is working with the church, community and government people to help bring a measure of healing and hope to the devastated area and its people.

Steve Cheramie Risingsun, pastor of both the Poarch and NCF church, reflects: "Life along the coast of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama has a different look, feel and sound after Katrina. We will get back to a normal life, but it'll be a different normal. When you go through what this area has experienced, it changes you." (*The Mennonite*, October 4, 2005 issue)



<http://www.smallchotiesusa.com/images/News/Hurricane>

Learning about FASD

The meeting room at the Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan Centre is full, but people still continue to push in. Social workers, educators, mothers – they all want to learn about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

What is it? How is it treated? And why doesn't the government give more money to programs that will support and help people with this disability?

The questions pour out of the participants at a Brown Bag lunch on this Friday afternoon

Seven Points You Should Know about FASD

1. Drinking during pregnancy can cause permanent damage to a developing fetus.
2. FASD is one of the most common causes of mental retardation, and is the only cause that is 100 percent preventable. There is no safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy! Women should stop drinking prior to trying to conceive – alcohol can cause damage to a developing fetus even before a woman knows she is pregnant.
3. FASD is the leading cause of developmental disabilities in Canada and a root cause of numerous health and social difficulties. People with FASD are at high risk of having birth defects, learning disabilities, chronic health issues, drug addiction, alcoholism and mental illness. Individuals affected are also at high risk of experiencing child abuse, chronic unemployment, poverty, homelessness, and trouble with the law.
4. Researchers believe that as many as 30 births in a 1000 are affected with FASD which is estimated to cost more than \$2 million per person in North America. Intervention and support from the community is essential.
5. FASD is found in all races and all socio-economic groups – wherever women drink alcohol FASD exists.
6. Obtaining an FASD diagnosis can improve an individual's ability to function in the world, and may reduce secondary disabilities like depression and school failure.
7. With the right diagnosis, support and understanding, many individuals with FASD are living happy and full lives.

in January, prompting Doctor Dolores Logan and Cheryl Charron from the Regina Community Clinic to grope for answers in their rush to uncover the agony behind the acronym.

"It's an umbrella term that covers several related disorders," explained Logan, who attends Grace Mennonite Church in Regina. Partial FAS, Alcohol Related Neuro-Developmental Disorder and Alcohol-Related Birth Defects all fit into this category.

Sponsored by the Peace and Justice Constellation, which includes MCC HealthLink, Aboriginal Neighbours and the Peace and Justice programs, the event is being offered to help those who work and live with people affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

Most of Logan's patients are between the ages of 12-16 and are referred to her by the Saskatchewan Justice system in an effort to discover why the teens are breaking the law.

"About 50% of people in jail suffer from FASD. Another 25% struggle with Attention-Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). So you have 75% of the prison population diagnosed with learning disabilities," commented Logan.

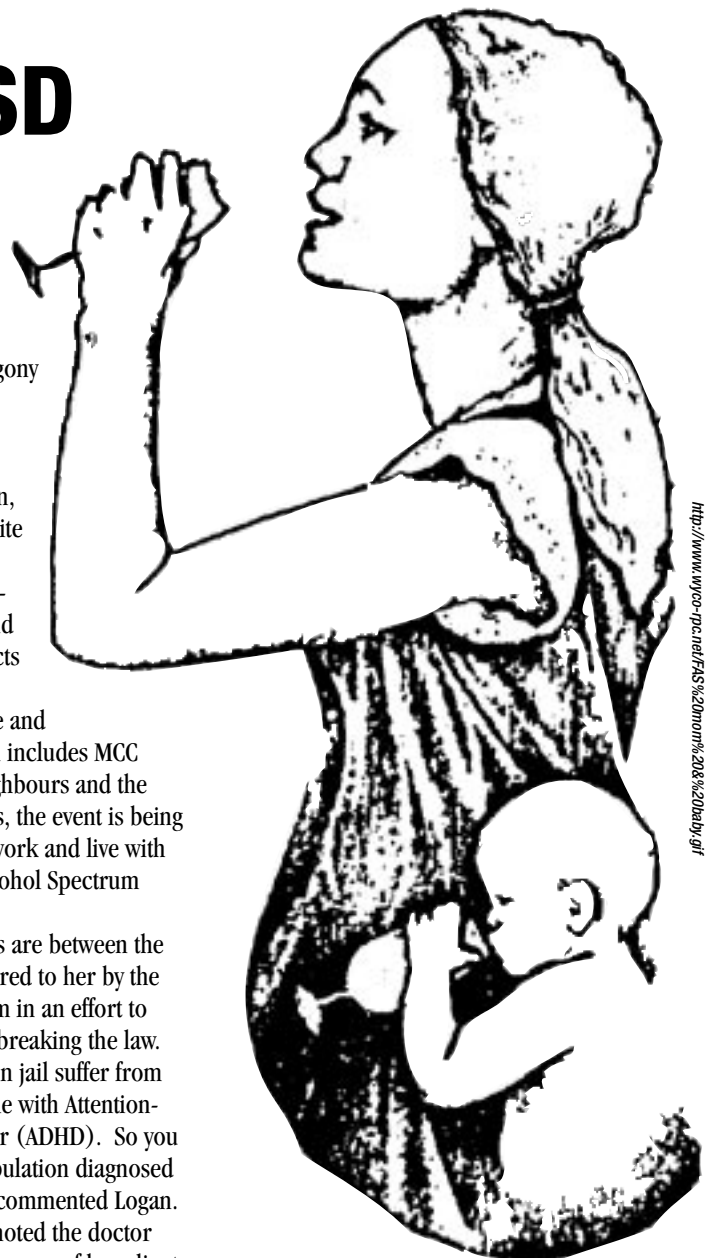
More disturbing facts, noted the doctor and mother of five, are that many of her clients are First Nations people. Many have been in trouble with the law as young as age 8 and many will probably re-offend.

"I have a client who was released and four hours later was arrested again," she noted.

Diagnosing an individual requires assessments on several fronts. There is a physical assessment where a patient's height and weight are measured against the national average and other physical features are noted. A neurological examination is also ordered. Further to that, and crucial to complete any diagnosis, is correct knowledge of the patient's family history, noted Logan.

"The defining difference is prenatal exposure to alcohol," said the doctor, who spends one day each week treating patients before returning to her regular practice.

After FASD is determined, Logan meets with the family and tries to set up support



<http://www.mcc-ccc.net/fas%20mom%208%20baby.gif>

systems and accountability measures to help the individual. It is not a condition that can be managed with medication. Instead, the clinic offers life-skills classes and employment training courses to help clients move into healthy choices.

Leonard Doell is the coordinator for the MCC Aboriginal Neighbours program in Saskatoon.

"Dolores is pioneering this work," he emphasized. "There is no other clinic like this in Saskatchewan."

According to the Saskatchewan Fetal Alcohol Support Network in Saskatoon, clinical assessments for children can be done in Saskatoon and Prince Albert, but the Regina Community Clinic is the only place for adults to receive a proper assessment.

Karin Febderau, Saskatoon, SK

My Child...

You may not know me, but I know everything about you... *Psalm 139:1*
I know when you sit down and when you rise up... *Psalm 139:2*
I am familiar with all your ways... *Psalm 139:3*
Even the very hairs on your head are numbered... *Matthew 10:29-31*
For you were made in my image... *Genesis 1:27*
In me you live and move and have your being... *Acts 17:28*
For you are my offspring... *Acts 17:28*
I knew you even before you were conceived... *Jeremiah 1:4-5*
I chose you when I planned creation... *Ephesians 1:11-12*
You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book... *Psalm 139:15-16*
I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live... *Acts 17:26*
You are fearfully and wonderfully made... *Psalm 139:14*
I knit you together in your mother's womb... *Psalm 139:13*
And brought you forth on the day you were born... *Psalm 71:6*
I have been misrepresented by those who don't know me... *John 8:41-44*
I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love... *1 John 4:16*
And it is my desire to lavish my love on you... *1 John 3:1*
Simply because you are my child and I am your father... *1 John 3:1*
I offer you more than your earthly father ever could... *Matthew 7:11*
For I am the perfect father... *Matthew 5:48*
Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand... *James 1:17*
For I am your provider and I meet all your needs... *Matthew 6:31-33*
My plan for your future has always been filled with hope... *Jeremiah 29:11*
Because I love you with an everlasting love... *Jeremiah 31:3*
My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore... *Psalm 139:17-18*
And I rejoice over you with singing... *Zephaniah 3:17*
I will never stop doing good to you... *Jeremiah 32:40*
For you are my treasured possession... *Exodus 19:5*
I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul... *Jeremiah 32:41*
And I want to show you great and marvelous things... *Jeremiah 33:3*
If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me... *Deuteronomy 4:29*
Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart... *Psalm 37:4*
For it is I who gave you those desires... *Philippians 2:13*
I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine... *Ephesians 3:20*
For I am your greatest encourager... *2 Thessalonians 2:16-17*
I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles... *2 Corinthians 1:3-4*
When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you... *Psalm 34:18*
As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart... *Isaiah 40:11*
One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes... *Revelation 21:3-4*
And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth... *Revelation 21:3-4*
I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus... *John 17:23*
For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed... *John 17:26*
He is the exact representation of my being... *Hebrews 1:3*
He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you... *Romans 8:31*
And to tell you that I am not counting your sins... *2 Corinthians 5:18-19*
Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled... *2 Corinthians 5:18-19*
His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you... *1 John 4:10*
I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love... *Romans 8:31-32*
If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me... *1 John 2:23*
And nothing will ever separate you from my love again... *Romans 8:38-39*
Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen... *Luke 15:7*
I have always been Father, and will always be Father... *Ephesians 3:14-15*
My question is... Will you be my child?... *John 1:12-13*
I am waiting for you... *Luke 15:11-32*

Love,
Your Dad... Almighty God

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www.franmonks.com/families/hello

Cultural Ecology and Bible Translation

With mounting evidence of global warming comes a growing awareness of the threat to our physical environment. But few are aware of an impending ecological disaster in the cultural realm, which is just as imminent and perhaps even more tragic. Indigenous peoples are suffering from the realities of injustice and indifference, which have left many struggling for survival.

Racism and discrimination are harsh realities in Canada and around the world. Many of the First Nations of Canada face the imminent loss of their languages and cultures. With language loss comes cultural disintegration, and all of us are poorer because we lose the contribution of a unique people group. Language is fundamental to cultural survival. Cree language expert Stan Cuthand says, "A lot of healing comes from knowing who you are, knowing your identity. And the Cree language, the culture, is how you get the concepts. ... You can't separate language and culture."

Today many First Nations in Canada are striving to recapture their identity, trying to revitalize their cultures and ensure that their languages and traditions are not lost. An elder in one community identified his language as one of the most important gifts from God. He said, "We disobey God by not speaking our own language." Another indigenous leader commented that since the Church had helped to take away their language, the Church also had a responsibility to help them regain it. The Canadian Bible Society is partnering with these communities to support their quest by publishing fresh and meaningful translations of the Bible in native languages.

For many nations, the Bible has been a powerful resource to support not only spiritual, but also cultural and moral reawakening. Recognizing this important role of the Bible for their lives, the James Bay Cree communities of Québec have partnered with Wycliffe Bible Translators and the Canadian Bible Society on a version of the New Testament in their own language. In 2001 they gathered in the community of Mistissini, Québec to celebrate the published New Testament. This day marked a new and exciting chapter in the lives of many Cree people. For Canada it marked another ecological achievement to ensure that the vibrant language and culture of this community is not lost.

The Dogrib (Tlicho) community around Yellowknife in the Northwest Territories

celebrated a similar achievement on August 23, 2003. Their celebration of the Scriptures in their language coincided with another major victory for the community – the historic land claims and self-government agreement. Former Prime Minister Jean Chretien and many other dignitaries were on hand for the celebration of that agreement. The public profile of the visitors who participated in the New Testament dedication was more modest. However, one of the Dogrib elders was heard to remark on seeing the historic Bible publication, "Wow, this is the real agreement! This one will not be broken." Since then the territorial legislature has begun using the Dogrib New Testament for official "swearing in" ceremonies.

For many years the Canadian Bible Society has also been partnering with Mennonite co-workers on the translation of the Scriptures for the Ojibwe-Saulteaux communities in Northern

Ontario and Manitoba. A di-script (Syllabic and Roman) New Testament was published in 1988, followed by a beautiful leather-bound syllabic New Testament in 1994. Since then work has continued on portions of the Old Testament with the goal of producing a shorter (40%) Old Testament in Ojibwe. This project is nearing completion with the anticipation that the Shorter Old Testament will finally be published in 2006.

The Canadian Bible Society is delighted to be able to work in close partnership with indigenous communities and numerous church and mission agencies who share our passion to serve the Canadians who were here long before our immigrant ancestors arrived.

*Hart Wiens,
Director of Scripture Translations
Canadian Bible Society, Kitchener, ON*

Justice as Healing

For a number of years, the third week in November has been designated as a time when people committed to pursuing Restorative Justice gather to reflect, pray and take action in their local communities. Workshops, seminars, rallies and liturgies are some of the events that have been held in the past.

On November 16, 2005, Mennonite Central Committee of Saskatchewan hosted a Brown Bag lunch at the MCC Centre in Saskatoon and invited Wanda McCaslin as their guest speaker. Wanda is a Metis woman from northern Saskatchewan, who since 1999 has served as the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan Research Officer with the Native Law Centre in Canada. Throughout her career, Aboriginal Issues have been central to her work. She has presented in the areas of Aboriginal justice, case law analysis and International Indigenous matters. In addition to her legal and academic work, she has been actively involved with Aboriginal community initiatives in the areas of healing, restorative justice, housing and youth.

Wanda came to MCC Sask. to talk about the new book which she has edited, *JUSTICE AS HEALING: Indigenous Ways*. This newly-released book is a compilation of writings on peacemaking and traditional Indigenous healing. Drawing on decades of Indigenous writing and community-based healing re-

*Force is not the
Indigenous way of
achieving balance and
harmony in families and
communities.*

sponses to conflicts and crimes, this substantive book features 45 articles from community members, scholars, judges, lawyers and Elders, most of whom are Indigenous.

Wanda reflected on the ageless wisdom of Indigenous ways which have too often been ignored or rarely been sought. Wanda challenged the notion that justice can be established through punishment. Force is not the Indigenous way of achieving balance and harmony in families and communities. "We are all related" is a core teaching of Indigenous peoples and this truth of relatedness forms the backbone of healing. Just as harm occurs when we are not mindful of how we are all related, so we are healed when we live more mindfully of our relatedness. Wanda's presentation was very inspiring to all who had the opportunity to hear her.

*Leonard Doell, Aboriginal Neighbours-
MCC Saskatchewan*

Stuck in Winter

I live in the upper Midwest and I enjoy the changing of the seasons. I have friends in Texas who do not experience this. For them, the seasons are similar and they must cut the grass year round. But here, each of the seasons is different. It begins to warm in the spring and the grass begins to grow. It gets hot in the summer. It cools down during the fall and in the winter it gets cold and the snow falls.

The Creator gave us the seasons for a reason and there is a reason for each season. In the Native world, life is cyclical, not linear. We go from one season to the next and once we have completed the cycle, it begins again.

Spring was a time in which the sap began running, a time we called *Iskigamizige Giizis*, which describes the process at maple sugar time, of “tapping trees, boiling sap down, and separating it out into syrup, sugar and cakes.” [1] We would move our villages to the “sugar bush.”

After the sap stopped running, we would spend the summer months harvesting different types of foods. In late August, a time called *Manoominike giizis*, or “wild rice moon,” we would harvest the food that grows on top of the water-wild rice. “It was a time for Ojibwe people to share stories and work together, strengthening their traditions and cultural practices.” [2] This would signal the beginning of fall.

Finally winter would come.

The elders also compare the seasons with the stages of ones life. An Ojibwa friend writes, “They say that when we are born and young we are in the season of spring. When we are young adults we are in our summer and when we are in our middle years we are in fall. We come to the end of our lives in winter.”

There is a phrase amongst the Ojibwa that one can be “stuck in winter.” The reference is to one who cannot see beyond something they or a loved one may be going through. A friend tells of an elder who is caring for his ill wife. Her care is all he can think of and it consumes every waking hour. For him, he is “stuck in winter.”

Recently I was struck with a severe illness that occurred during winter. When I left the hospital springtime was coming but I could not enjoy it. I was anemic, I had difficulty walking, I lacked strength in my muscles, I had little stamina and found it difficult to concentrate. All I wanted to do was lay on the couch and sleep. I was “stuck in winter.”

During my illness, my wife put her new career as a substitute teacher on hold.

Overnight, she found herself having to run

a household, make life altering decisions and plan for a life without me (because she didn't know if I would survive the illness).

After I got out of the hospital, she stayed by my side, chauffeured me around and took care of me. As I got better and became more independent, I think she had a difficult time letting go. She was “stuck in winter.”

Springtime is here and we have moved beyond winter. I am now driving and getting on with my life. Amy has to. She has returned to teaching and is enjoying it.

There are others, though, that despite the change in seasons, they are “stuck in winter.” For many it is choice, albeit a subconscious one in some cases, to remain in winter. It is a comfortable place to be because they cannot envision life outside of winter. They have been conditioned to believe that it is normal.

Others are afraid to go beyond winter because they fear what lies ahead. Each season brings its own set of challenges and sometimes it is easier to stick with what you know rather than what you do not. Even if it is unpleasant.

And yet others are “stuck in winter” and don't realize it. Life's challenges and trials consume them and they spend every waking hour struggling to overcome these trials, but never moving beyond them. It may be an illness, it may be a set back-it really doesn't matter what the cause, the effect is the same.

In the traditional sense, when an elder is “stuck in winter”, he or she is preparing to walk on to the Spirit World. They are in the twilight of their life and their life will soon be over. Therefore, it is a sad thing when young people are “stuck in winter” because they are admitting defeat, they act as if their life is coming to an end when in reality they may have many long years ahead of them.

Life is cyclical and we are meant to go from season to season. Spring... Summer... Fall... Winter and then the cycle begins again. When we are “stuck in winter” our life is out of balance. If our life is out of balance, then we are not whole. If we are to be whole, then our life must be in balance. If our life is out of balance, then we need to ask “why?” and then go back to that place where our life went off balance.

We were not meant to be “stuck in winter.” We were meant, however, to experience the seasons. Spring comes after winter. It is a time of rebirth. A time to start over. A new beginning.

*Written by Ray Levesque. Taken from Our Daily Frybread, June 2, 2005.
Reprinted by permission.*



I honor the place in you
in which the entire Universe dwells,
I honor the place in you
which is of Love, of Truth, of Light and
of Peace,
When you are in that place in you,
and I am in that place in me,
we are One.

This is “namaste”, a Tibetan greeting.

When enough sparks come together, what happens? Either conflagration or enlightenment. We are, unfortunately, too familiar with examples of conflagration, but when I read INTOTEMAK and other journals that address the ‘stewardship’ of Mother Earth, i.e., respect and care for “all our relations” – self, family, others, animal, plant and mineral ‘beings,’ I can almost see (and definitely feel) the warm glow of the sparks of enlightenment.

When different religious groups comprising diverse peoples dialogue, we know that these sparks can only bring illumination and not destruction. I have always been struck by the fact that when people from differing cultures and/or religions meet there is usually mistrust – ‘our way is the only way,’ ‘WE are the People,’ ‘your practices are unholy, primitive, unkosher, idolistic, etc.’

How come we can't turn this around and say, “You're from a different tradition, let us celebrate and learn from our diversity how to honour Creation more fully.”

In our Jewish tradition a core practice is *tikkun olam*, correcting the world (making it right again). Using the Hopi title, *Koyaanisqatsi*, life out of balance, film director Godfrey Reggio presents us with images of contemporary urban life and technology clashing with the environment.

Your work is definitely needed and appreciated – keep fanning these sparks.

Dan Zeller, Langley, BC

Births

Johnny Lee von Gunten was born to Kevin and Danella (Monkman) von Gunten of Riverton, MB on December 13, 2005. He was welcomed by sisters Vicki and Brittany, and brothers Kevin Jr. and Darren. Johnny's grandparents are Deanna Monkman of Riverton and Neill and Edith von Gunten of Winnipeg. Congratulations!

Weddings/Anniversaries



Photo courtesy of Neill von Gunten

Dawn and James Anderson of Vancouver, BC were married in an outdoor ceremony on September 17, 2005 in Stanley Park. James' parents, Ed and Brenda Anderson of Princess Harbour, MB, held a reception in the couple's honor on December 3, 2005 at Lakeview Resort in Gimli, MB. Congratulations!

Franklin and Cheryl (Monkman) Lea of Pine Dock, MB celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on November 29, 2005. A social evening was held in their honour at the Pine Dock Community Hall on November 26. Congratulations!

Jason David Johnson of Winnipeg, MB and **Victoria Yvonne Scott**, originally of Bloodvein River, MB, shared their vows of faithfulness to each other in marriage on December 31, 2005. Family and friends were present to witness this important event at the Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, with Henry Neufeld officiating. The service was followed

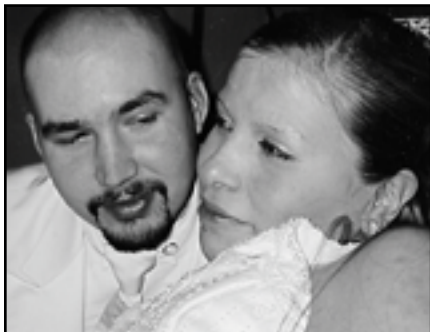


Photo courtesy of Henry Neufeld



Community news

by a meal at the Polish Hall in Winnipeg. We wish the couple many blessings for their life together!

Deaths

Laura Mowat passed away at the Grace Hospital in Winnipeg, MB on November 26, 2005 at the age of 88 years.

She will forever remain in the memory of her children, Marie (Neil) Turcotte, Bernice (Martin) Stebner, Edgar (Terry), Dennis (Ursala), Ron (Judy), Cliff (Maureen), Randy (Grace) and Danny (Karen); 17 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren; her brother Bert and many other relatives and friends.

She was predeceased by her husband Peter, son Garry, granddaughter Nicole, six brothers and five sisters. Laura was born at Loon Straits on Lake Winnipeg to William and Roseanne Monkman. She, along with Peter and their family, lived there and at Matheson Island until moving to Winnipeg in 1965. We will remember her as a caring mother who went far beyond the call of duty in caring for us. Mom's greatest joy was spending time out at the lake. Sincere thanks to all her family and friends who made this possible. A memorial service was held on December 1 at the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Selkirk, MB.

Phyllis Roche, age 74 years, of Hnaua, Manitoba died at the Johnson Memorial Hospital in Gimli, MB on January 10, 2006. Phyllis was born to Hugh and Kate Monkman in Loon Straits and lived there until her marriage to Arthur Roche in 1949. He preceded her in death in November 2004. The couple lived in Winnipeg and various places around Lake Winnipeg before settling at the Roche homestead in Hnaua to raise their family. Phyllis worked at the Arborg Personal Care Home for 20 years until her retirement in 1991. She was a loving and generous lady, always thinking of others, and



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especially enjoyed the weekends and holidays when her children and their families would come to "Rocheville" for a visit.

Phyllis is survived by her children, Darlene (Peter Chartrand), Raymond (Brenda), Debbie (Bruce McKenzie), Dean (Paulette Gislason), Dexter (Wendy), Wanda (Doug Zubrski), Kathy (Darrell Schaak), Karen (Lonnie Olafson) and Jonas (Tanya Jonasson); 17 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren; sisters Ruby Sveinson and Gladys (Bobby) Oddleifson; brother Jack (Joyce) Monkman; and many other relatives and friends.

A memorial service was held on January 14 at the Riverton Community Hall.

Gabriel Aaron Green passed away in a car accident near the community of Little Black River, MB, in January 2006 at the age of 25 years. He is survived by his father, Gabriel Green of Bloodvein River, MB and other family members. He was pre-deceased by his mother several years ago. Interment was at Bloodvein River with Fr. Rheel Forest officiating.

A Story of Mother Love

Several years ago, during a prolonged drought in Australia, the wild creatures of the bush became so thirsty that they braved even the dangerous dooryards of settlers for a drink of water. So the settlers, whose cattle and sheep died like flies for the lack of water, were constantly on the lookout lest these wild creatures drink what little water was left. Each man hung a loaded gun near the doorway to be used at a moment's notice.

Such a call came one hot summer's day. Instantly the settler seized his gun and stood ready. Out of the bush a mother kangaroo, with a young one in her pouch, came loping across the brown, powdery open space surrounding the house. Nearer and nearer she came, her beautiful brown eyes fixed beseechingly on the settler. She made her way straight to the tub of water placed there for the use of the few domestic animals that had survived. Still the settler did not shoot.

The water reached, she waited, her soft gaze still fixed on the man, while the young kangaroo in her pouch drank its fill. Then she turned, without taking a drop for herself, and loped back across the parched open space and into the tangled depth of the bush. The settler watched her until she disappeared. Then he hung up his gun and, with a choking in his throat, went back to work.

H. E. Zimmerman

Taken from *The Manitoba School Journal*,
Volume IX, Number 8, April, 1948.

*Neither Wolf Nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads
With An Indian Elder*

by Kent Nerburn

Novato, CA: New World Library, 2002
ISBN 1-57731-233-3

This, I believe, is the key to the enduring relevance of *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*. It is a call to each of us to become brothers and sisters. Brothers and sisters don't have to understand each other; they don't even have to like each other. But they have to trust each other and stand by each other. That's what Dan and Grover and I, as well as Danelle and Jumbo and Wenonah and all the others learn to do in the course of this book. We stand, strong and adamant, within the confines of our own values and self-understandings, but we reach out and care for each other. They didn't try to become white; I didn't try to become Indian. We simply reached across the chasm of our differences and held each other in common embrace." (page xii, Forward)

Justice As Healing: Indigenous Ways. Writings on Community Peacemaking and Restorative Justice from the Native Law Centre

Wanda D. McCaslin, Editor

St. Paul, Minnesota: Living Justice Press, 2005

ISBN 0-9721886-1-4

Restorative justice traces its roots to Indigenous traditions world-wide, yet no book on justice presents Indigenous voices speaking directly about Indigenous ways of responding to harms and restoring harmony in relationships. *Justice As Healing: Indigenous Ways* does just that. It is a collection of articles from the *Justice As Healing* newsletter produced by the Native Law Centre of Canada at the University of Saskatchewan. Drawing on a decade of Indigenous writing on justice and on community-based, healing responses to conflicts and crimes, this substantive book features forty-five articles from community members, scholars, judges, lawyers, and Elders, most of whom are Indigenous."

Can't, Not Won't: A Christian response to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), a Mennonite Central Committee production, 2005.

Mennonite Central Committee has produced a new video, "*Can't, Not Won't: A Christian Response To FASD*." This 45-minute video is available in VHS or DVD and comes with a study guide for six adult small group or Sunday school sessions. It is a tool congregations can use to learn more about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and about creative



Resources

ways in which the church can work toward greater acceptance and inclusion of people who are affected.

You can order this video at www.mcc.org/fasd or by calling 1-204-261-6381 (Canada) or 1-888-563-4676 (United States). The cost is \$28.50 Canadian, \$23.00 U.S. funds.

"Overall, I found the video and study guide to be clear, concise and educational. The main audience is the church although I think other groups would benefit as well. As a physician I was familiar with the definition and characteristics of FASD. What I found most interesting, however, was the challenge to redefine our theology in the light of FASD. That is definitely not something we discussed in medical school. I commend MCC in their ongoing efforts to bring community, church and individuals together."

Dr. Karen A. Toews MD, CCFP

JESUS. Indigenous Languages of Canada:

Volume 1 DVD is now available for the cost of \$5.00 plus shipping from:

Native Ministry Office

600 Shaftesbury Blvd.

Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4

Phone: 204-888-6781 or 1-866-888-6785

(toll-free)

"*Like an Everflowing Stream: Water, Faith and Justice.*" This packet is available online at http://www.mcc.org/canada/peace/Peace_SundayPacket2005.pdf

MCC has produced the "WaterWorks Toolkit" for churches, schools and other groups who want to learn about water and MCC water projects around the world. The kit includes a four-session curriculum, children's activities, etc. and can be borrowed from MCC by calling 1-888-622-6337 or your provincial office.

Visit

www.mennonitechurch.ca
for more resource information
and events.

Events Calendar

March 17 – 18, 2006

Manitoba Partnership Circle meeting at Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, with Ray Aldred as special speaker.

March 22, 2006

World Water Day. Watch for events planned in your area through KAIROS or other community groups. Please note resources available.

March 28 – 29, 2006

Cree theologian Ray Aldred will speak at two evening gatherings in the Abbotsford, BC area for church, community and First Nations people. These sessions, in an area church, will include Aboriginal participation in the program both evenings and a dinner the first evening. MCC BC, Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry and CBC are sponsoring these events.

March 30 - April 2

"Cheyenne, Arapaho, Mennonite: Journey from Darlington" conference, Clinton, Oklahoma.

This conference will celebrate and review the historical relationship and interconnected faith stories of the native tribes and the very first Mennonite mission begun 120 years ago when Mennonites were called as educators to the Darlington Agency in Oklahoma. The Historical Committee of Mennonite Church USA, sponsor of the conference, seeks to nurture a relationship that honors the past, acknowledges the need for healing wounds and contributes to the mission of the church. Connections and expressions of faith will be explored through time and culture, using storytelling and other presentations, arts, music and worship.

July 4 – 7, 2006

Mennonite Church Canada Annual Assembly sessions, Edmonton, Alberta.

July 24 – 27, 2006

Native Assembly 2006, hosted by the Pearch Mennonite Church, Atmore, Alabama.

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

