

# my friends Intototemak

Fall 2006 Vol. 35, No. 3



## Inside

Eagles Nest...2

A Growing Family...3

Welcome to Canada...3

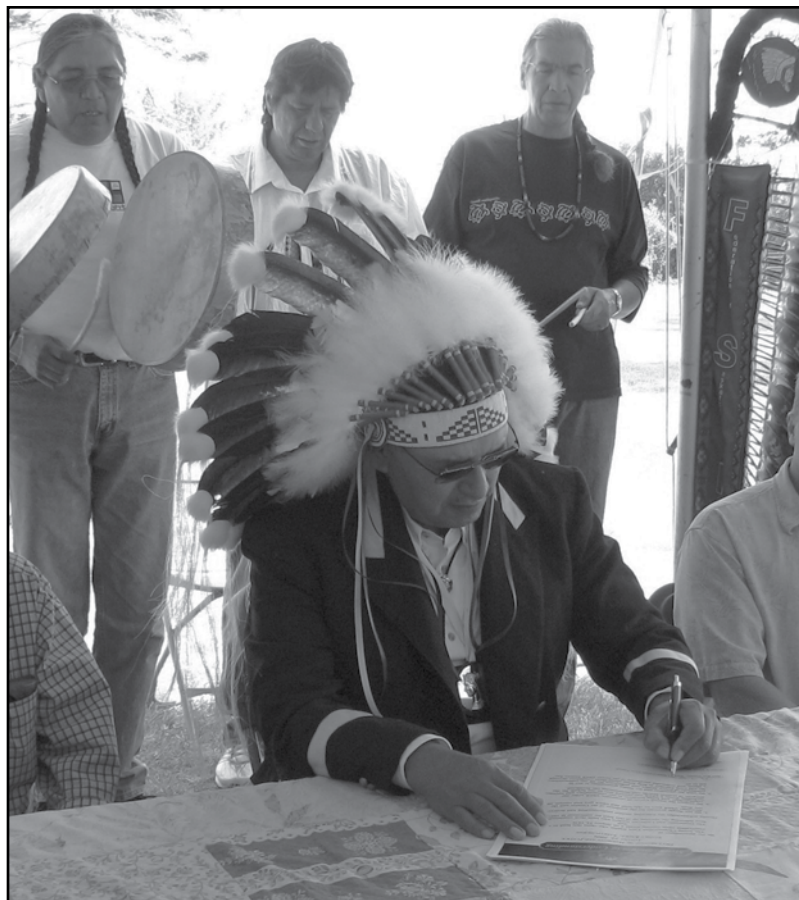
Matheson Island Camp...6

Building Relationships at  
Ahousaht...8

Meditation...16



Witness



*Chief Ben Weenie representing the Young Chippewayan.*

## An Historic Meeting on Stoney Knoll

It was a beautiful clear, hot Saskatchewan late summer day with just enough breezes to ruffle hair and the feathers on the ceremonial staff and headdress. If one stepped outside the rectangular enclosure of pine trees that marked the former Lutheran churchyard, one could see over miles of ripening cropland to the river valleys on either side. Stoney Knoll is said to be the highest point in the 'Valley' (the region between the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers, running from Saskatoon to Prince Albert); a broad, low, typically Saskatchewan mound that doesn't impress much until you reach the top and see the view in all directions. Stoney Knoll is holy ground, in the aboriginal tradition, and in the minds of the settlers who came later.

*See Stoney page 4*



Eagles Nest

## Sharing Our Stories

What a beautiful summer we have had across Canada! Hot summer days, very few mosquitoes and few rainy days have buoyed our spirits, enabled us to enjoy many adventures with family and friends, and were a real contrast to last summer's cool, wet weather that often seemed to stifle our creativity. We hope that you were able to find opportunities to relax in our Creator's handiwork and, as one Native elder told us, "Let your spirit catch up with your body."

Building relationships with one another is what breaks down the societal walls that so easily build up between people, and we grew increasingly excited last spring as we heard of the many connections that you as Native and non-Native people were making with each other across the country this summer. Only a few of these connections were able to be reported in the pages available to us in this issue -- which, you will note, is four pages longer than our issues normally are! -- but we would still welcome others of you to share your stories and pictures with us and our readers for our next issue.

Visiting the Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) site and touring Bayou la Batre, Alabama just before the Assembly began was a real eye-opener for us Canadians who are not used to seeing the devastation that results from being in the path of a hurricane. All in all it was an awesome trip for our busload, and we are grateful to God for safe travels.

The Point Aux Chenes area south of New Orleans, in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, is home to several Native American communities, and they still need much help to rebuild from the heavy devastation they received from hurricanes Katrina and Rita over a year ago.

There is a MDS site in their area and they are always looking for volunteers to work there. Maybe you would be interested in helping!

The event at Stoney Knoll in northern Saskatchewan was a particularly poignant event for building relationships between Native and non-Native people, and we are sorry that we were not able to be a part of it in person. We featured the event in this issue because of its significance and we look forward to hearing more about it from some of the participants when we are in Saskatchewan to attend the Equipping Conference on October 28 and speak in an area congregation on Sunday.

We are privileged to be a part of the Mennonite Central Committee Aboriginal Neighbours Network from across Canada, and we will be meeting at the Tatamouge Centre in Tatamouge, Nova Scotia in mid-September. An important part of our being together will include participating in the centre's "Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Peace and Friendship Gathering."

We are also anticipating a visit to Ontario in early November. In addition to speaking at a Mennonite Church Canada congregation on Sunday, we want to learn more about relationship-building that is happening on a variety of fronts, and learn more about issues that our Aboriginal brothers and sisters are facing and need support with.

It was good to meet many of you at the Edmonton Assembly in early July and hear your stories and concerns. We look forward to meeting more of you as we travel across the country again this fall.

That is all we have for now.

*Neill and Edith*

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



my friends Intotemak

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

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

### 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.



# A Growing Family *Two Congregations Join Mennonite Church Manitoba*

At the Annual Delegate Sessions in Gretna, MB on February 24, 2006, the Riverton Fellowship Circle and Living Word Church in Cross Lake formally joined Mennonite Church Manitoba. When representatives were asked why they wanted to join MCM, they identified the need to be part of a larger body as well as gratitude for the years of support and encouragement they received from supporting congregations.

Having these congregations formalize their membership benefits them and the larger community of congregations known as Mennonite Church Manitoba. It shifts the identity from being "mission projects" to being sister congregations.

Both congregations participate with other MCM congregations in a variety of ways. The Riverton Fellowship Circle partners with the Sargent, Home Street and Bethel congregations of Winnipeg in a Ministry Circle. In addition, the Douglas Mennonite Church youth group will be in the community for a week of DVBS again this summer.

The Living Word Church in Cross Lake received assistance from many congregations and individuals in their building project last summer. This summer they are working with Mennonite Disaster Service in hosting a summer youth project in their community. Several southern congregations are currently exploring a partnership with the Living Word Church Ministry Circle.

Receiving new members into the conference is always a



L-R: Joyce Grimard, Pat Palson, Doris Kozub, Barb Daniels, Hilda and Walter Franz and Norm Voth

highlight. At the Annual Delegate Sessions one delegate, affirming their membership, observed that this moment marked the harvest of years of mission investment in the past. The growing independence is a healthy sign of development and we look forward to these congregations sharing their gifts of experience, wisdom and insight with the larger body as we all share in the work of presenting Jesus Christ to the world.

*Norm Voth, Mennonite Church Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB*

## Welcome to MC Canada



Left - Standing in front of the congregation of Living Word Church of Cross Lake, MB on Sunday evening, May 28, 2006, marked an exciting milestone in the life of Native Ministry, Mennonite Church Canada, and the Cross Lake congregation. Neill and Edith von Gunten, present co-Directors of the Native Ministry program, were in the Cree community of northern Manitoba to present the congregation with the title to the land on which their church building sits and to celebrate two other milestones with them, namely the completion of their newly-constructed church building and the church joining Mennonite Church Manitoba and Canada



in February 2006. Accepting the plaque on behalf of the congregation was Florence Benson – Umpherville.

Right - Riverton Fellowship Circle receiving their MC Canada plaque. At the spring Manitoba Partnership Circle meeting, Neill and Edith von Gunten of MC Canada Native Ministry presented members of the Riverton Fellowship Circle with a plaque from Mennonite Church Canada to acknowledge their membership in the wider conference. Riverton Fellowship Circle members present were L-R: Barb Daniels, Emily Sigurdson, Emily Collins and Joyce Grimard; Walter and Hilda Franz, in back.



# Stoney

Continued from page 1

Inside the natural 'walls' of the churchyard pines, a stone cairn commemorated St. John's Lutheran church, which stood here from 1910 until it was moved into the town of Laird in the 1950's. More recent additions to the clearing included two tents; one, intentionally pitched where the church vestry used to be, was a white tipi, with its opening facing the centre of the clearing, and its floor covered with blankets and mats. The other tent was a rectangular construction with open sides, filled with neat rows of steel stacking chairs facing towards the white tipi and the fire circle between the two tents, where a fire was kept burning all day. The two structures seemed to symbolize the two groups meeting here: the square-cornered, carefully-ordered Germanic Mennonites and Lutherans, and the more circular and natural First Nations peoples meeting at the fire. As the day began, the order quickly began to relax into the more natural.

To one side, in the shade of the pines, a line of tables covered with white tablecloths created a long island which was continuously stocked with coffee, drinks and water and later, as noon approached, bannock and buns, bison meat and sausage, potatoes, corn, Saskatoon berries and other delicious foods appeared there.

The people gathered slowly, arriving one car at a time, meeting friends first, then renewing acquaintances with others and finally approaching strangers to introduce themselves, eventually numbering well over 100. When the time was right, Chief Ben Weenie of the Young Chippewayan First Nation invited people to bring chairs and form a circle around the tipi opening, apologizing that the pipes must stay inside the tipi, so not everyone would be able to participate directly in the pipe ceremony. He asked the women to take seats to his right, while the men sat to the left. We Mennonites immediately identified with the men-on-one-side and women-on-the-other tradition.

About a dozen men, representing Mennonites, Lutherans and First Nations, crowded into the small tipi, and with instructions to the rest of us to pray as well, the pipe ceremony began.

A lot of history leads up to this event. In 1876, 30 square miles of prime agricultural land surrounding Stoney Knoll was given to the Young Chippewayan band as reservation #107 in return for their signing on to Treaty 6. For various reasons, the Young Chippewayan people never made the reserve their permanent home, settling instead on various other reservations. In 1897, the Canadian government

*A highlight was the signing of a memorandum of understanding by all three groups; - Giving thanks to the Creator; - Indicating respect for Covenants, including Treaties and - Calling for and committing to peace, justice and sufficiency for all communities.*

unilaterally, and possibly illegally, took back this land and in 1898 it became part of a larger area reserved for Mennonite settlement. Eventually it was settled largely by Mennonites and German-speaking Lutherans.

Over the years, relationships between members of the Young Chippewayan band and the settlers have not been cordial. Deeply felt feelings of betrayal and injustice on the part of the band have resulted in some intemperate threats to push the settlers off the band's land. This reinforced existing alienation and led in turn to equally deeply held mistrust and even fear on the part of some settlers. Previous efforts at resolving, or at least easing, this tension have fallen on 'stony ground'.

This day of meeting on Stoney Knoll, August 22, began with the initiative of Chief Ben Weenie of the Young Chippewayan First Nation. As the third largest signatory group of Treaty 6, the Young

Chippewayans had been invited to host the Annual Treaty 6 Celebration at nearby Fort Carleton. Chief Weenie felt that one of the things standing in the way of accepting this invitation was the unresolved relationship with the settlers on their former reservation. He contacted Leonard Doell of Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan, who had worked at this issue for 29 years, to see if something could be done. Over the next months, meetings including representatives of the Young Chippewayan band, the Mennonite community and the Lutheran community found a way forward and planned this day of connecting and reconciliation.

The program of the day included prayer (from pipe ceremony to pastoral), the recounting of history, dancing, singing, eating, greetings from dignitaries and exchange of gifts. Treaty Commissioner Judge Arnott's excellent presentation on the meaning of treaties merited an overheard vehement comment that "We needed to hear this thirty years ago!"

There was time to visit, to relax, to mix and get to know and to enjoy each other's humor. A highlight was the signing of a memorandum of understanding by all three groups; - Giving thanks to the Creator; - Indicating respect for Covenants, including Treaties and - Calling for and committing to peace, justice and sufficiency for all communities.

Chief Weenie made it clear that the Young Chippewayans respected the current ownership of the land by the settlers, and in return, the Mennonite and Lutheran communities pledged to support the Young Chippewayans' ongoing struggle to obtain compensation for the land still owed to them under Treaty 6 after 130 years.

It was indeed a beautiful day!

*Eric Olfert, Saskatoon, SK*

**Visit [www.mennonitechurch.com](http://www.mennonitechurch.com)  
for information about  
conference, resources and events.**

# Native Assembly 2006

The Poarch Creek reservation near Atmore, Alabama was the location of Native Assembly 2006 from July 24 – 27, 2006. A busload of 34 Canadians joined people from across the United States in the gathering hosted by Pastor Steve Cheramie Risingsun and the congregation of Poarch Community Church.

There were two immediate consensus from our group on the way home: “The highlights of the Assembly were the worship services and the singing. I gained a lot of knowledge and wisdom” and “I’m looking forward to the next Assembly in 2008!”

The theme of this Assembly was “God is One ... We are One.” Howard Jolly, a Cree pastor from Winnipeg, Manitoba, was the featured speaker for the Assembly. Morning and evening services were held each day, and a full slate of workshops focused on various topics of interest. Tuesday morning we met at the tribal PowWow Grounds with leaders of the Creek Tribe, and also had the opportunity those days to hear and see more of the tribe’s history and some of the initiatives they are working on now.

Here is a sampling of the comments people wrote down on the bus as we traveled home:

“The bus trip was long but good. I enjoyed getting to know a lot of good

“I loved meeting the people I had met before at other assemblies.” (Joyce Grimard, Riverton, MB)

“The way the conference brought together different tribes and people and church groups was very encouraging and exciting. The efforts to include young people and children with activities was very good. The food was terrific. (Rochelle Martin, Sioux Lookout, ON)

“I enjoyed the music by the different Native American groups singing in their own Native tongues.” (Marge Johnston, Pine Dock, MB)

“A highlight was the water blessing ceremony where water from rivers, lakes and wells across North America were mixed and participants told of God’s blessings and human sufferings alike that occurred around that water source.” (Norm Voth, Winnipeg, MB)

“Reports from Argentina as well as Russia made us aware of the wider (indigenous) community. (Erna Enns, Winnipeg, MB)

“It was more than I expected – in every sense of the word. I attended excellent workshops. (Florence Benson Umpherville, Cross Lake, MB)

We Canadians arrived in Atmore on Sunday evening and traveled to Bayou la Batre, Alabama on Monday to visit the Mennonite Disaster Service site that was set up in that community after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Bill and Esther McCoy, project directors, welcomed us warmly and gave us a tour of the area ravished in 2005 and the work that MDS is doing to help. It was a very enlightening trip for all of us, and we also

got a chance to put our feet in the Gulf of Mexico while there.



Marge Johnston of Pine Dock, MB wrote: “To drive by shrimp boats tied up at the dock because the bank owns them, to see boats one year later still up on shore, these people not only lost their homes but lost their livelihoods as well. I can’t even imagine the hardships these people endured.”

Pat Palson of Riverton, MB: “Seeing firsthand how the volunteers choose to take time out to help others was a blessing which I felt very strong about. It made me feel more thankful for the riches I’ve been blessed with.”

Hilda Franz of Riverton, MB summed up what we learned on this trip: “Seeing hundred of damaged shrimp boats docked because the owners can’t repair them so banks have repossessed them, leaving the owners destitute and unable to make a livelihood, were a stark reminder that the ‘kingdoms of this world’ don’t have the poor and needy as a top priority on their agenda.... The Assembly then reminded us that we worship One great, awesome God who calls us to “be One” in the midst of a very needy, troubled, diverse world; to be one great, mighty river of love and healing, flowing forth from Him who is Love.”

*Native Assembly participants*



people. The conference was informative and inspiring. Lots of good messages and good worship. Great variety! And the southern hospitality was great!” (Eric Olfert, Saskatoon, SK)



## Matheson Island Camp

The long-awaited camp session at Matheson Island, Manitoba took place July 10-14, 2006 with 24 campers, ages five to fourteen, registered. The 5-8 year olds went home each evening and the 9-14 year olds stayed overnight in tents set up in the Chapel yard. One night we had a raging thunderstorm, and those tents were squeezed under the 30 x 40 main tent in the middle of the night! Despite the small numbers of campers, they represented a variety of communities, including Matheson Island, Pine Dock, Koostatak, Little Grand Rapids, Saskatoon, Edmonton, and Winnipeg.

The camp session was a unique partnership. The invitation to hold the camp came from members of the Matheson Island Chapel and was received by Norm Voth (Evangelism and Service) and Bob Wiebe (Camping Ministries) of Mennonite Church Manitoba, who did much of the background work ahead of time. The foot soldiers arrived when Kyle Penner (youth pastor), his wife Ashley (who Kyle says is super-organized and awesome!) and 20 youth from the Springfield Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg got to the Island. Island church members who helped as support staff, assuming the cooking and maintenance responsibilities under the direction of Brenda Lea, head cook, were Doreen Bennett, Nicole

Lea, Hazel Bird, Beverley Puetz, Margaret Klassen, Cameron Lea and John Klassen.

The camp was held in several locations on the island. Some activities took place on the church property, meals were at the community hall, and swimming took place on the other side of the island at the beautiful beach. Our very weather-variable days were filled with four main activities: archery/games, nature, crafts and swimming. We also had Chapel each evening with many wonderful song, stories and skits. I have never, in my life, heard twenty-four children sing with such energy and heart.

Some awesome experiences come to mind, some that I will never forget.

1) I'm pretty sure that everybody there experienced God in one way or another. Whether it was through devotions, or a smile, during chapel, or wonder at creation, God was present and almost everything we did pointed to God.

2) Positive relationships were formed. The kids loved their counselors, and our youth were able to experience a different culture and lifestyle.

3) In the face of adversity, we all pulled together. It rained a lot at one point, and apparently our tents weren't waterproof, but we all pulled together and made things happen. We moved all the

little tents under the big tent (we called it our refugee camp), and everybody lent their towels and blankets and pillows so we could all have a good sleep.

4) Community support. The community on Matheson Island was hospitable beyond words. We were given a small bus for the week. We were given permission to use people's docks. We were given boat rides. We borrowed a bike pump for bottle rockets when ours died. A highlight for many of us (and our stomachs) was the community potluck we had on Thursday night. Wow, did we eat. Deep-fried bannock dogs are my new favourite food. The hospitality was unbelievable.

Looking back, it was a wonderful week. We are grateful to everybody who offered their help, support and prayers, and trust that God's kingdom got a little bit bigger after our week on Matheson Island. A special thanks to all the volunteers of Matheson Island for their gracious help and support, to Kyle and Ashley Penner, for their enthusiasm and organization, the youth who were there for each other all week, and of course, each and every camper. This has been a week I know is in my heart to stay.

*Taken from reports by Bob Wiebe, Melanie Kampen and Kyle Penner.*



# Cross Lake Youth Community Project

Mennonite Disaster Service is widely known for how it responds with volunteer labour after a wide variety of disasters throughout the world; however, they also have a summer youth community program whereby youth groups can build bridges between people while they learn and serve for a one-week time period. This year the Canadian youth program was invited to the community of Cross Lake, Manitoba by its community and band councils and the local Mennonite church.

Five church youth groups from Ontario and Manitoba participated this year, and the Saskatchewan Mennonite Youth Organization also formed a group from several of their churches for one of the weeks. In all there were 107 volunteers in the community throughout the month of July. Building relationships was an important focus of the project, and the volunteers each week were overwhelmed with the welcome and affirmation they received from community and church leaders and local residents and the invitations to local events.

During the week of July 23 - 28, 2006, Breslau Mennonite Church and Prairie Rose Mennonite Church of Landmark, Manitoba sent delegations of youth and their sponsors to Cross Lake, Manitoba, to participate in the Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) summer youth community project.

Cross Lake is a Native community of about 6000 people north of Lake Winnipeg at 55°N. The community is made up of on-reserve status and off-reserve (Métis) non-status people. Half of the population is under the age of eighteen years and few job opportunities exist. The reserve surrounds Cross Lake, which is a large lake intersected by the Nelson River. The Nelson River, in turn, flows into Hudson's Bay and Cross Lake intersects the Nelson River east of the JEN-PEG hydroelectric project.

The youth participants in the project ranged in age from fifteen to twenty years. The local MDS directors for the summer project were David and Betty Hoepfner of Winkler, Manitoba, and the cooking services for this week were ably provided by Ed and Betty Reimer of the Arborg, Manitoba area. We, like each group of MDS volunteer staff during the month, had our sleeping quarters in the D. R. Hamilton School gym.

The youth enjoyed a pleasant mix of work and play during the week we were there. Three cemeteries were tidied, three houses and the Community Centre were painted, and garbage bins were built and painted. Many bags of garbage were taken to the local dump, where an extended family of black bears feasted on the delicacies found there. When weather permitted, the groups worked on projects that created such appetites that the cooks noted very little food was ever left on the plates. Perhaps this says more about their excellent culinary abilities!

The MDS workers enjoyed activities with Cross Lake

residents such as soccer, swimming, fishing and watching community cultural events. We were fortunate to be at Cross Lake during the 39th Annual Indian Days organized by the First Nations Band Council. During the day there were sporting events, canoe races, and games for all ages. During the evenings there were fiddling, singing and "jigging" competitions. A few of us participated in a "loonie" race, crawl race and a canoe race. All the prize money won by the MDS participants was donated to a memorial baseball tournament for youth which was to take place later in the week.

We had wonderful opportunities to mix and build trust with the local Cross Lakers and after a few days we were recognized by name by several community members. We realized anew that it

is important to remember not to get so wrapped up in getting the work done that we alienate ourselves from the community. Our youth learned many life lessons, including not judging a book by its cover, and that it is okay to ask questions that do not appear to have easy solutions.

We attended the service at the Living Word Church on Sunday night in their new church building. Pastor Lorna McIvor delivered a meaningful message about looking past the differences between people and opening ourselves up to

permit relationship-building to take place between various cultures.

Devotions were held each morning, led by various group sponsors and the local MDS Director. Each day participants were given themes to reflect on and to apply throughout our day's activities. On Thursday night David Hoepfner led a devotional sharing time and it was interesting to see how various MDS workers were making real connections with the local people and each other.

We were the last groups of the summer project so we were joined by Eileen and John Fehr, and Ben Funk, the Provincial Director for MDS, on our last night together. We gathered at a local restaurant where we had arranged for the restaurant to serve a pickerel fish fry with bannock, the traditional Native bread.

We wish to thank our Cross Lake hosts for their hospitality and for making us feel welcome. On Thursday the Cross Lake Community Council provided us with a thank-you supper and gifts around the eagle-shaped table in the Community Council boardroom.

It was abundantly clear that the youth enjoyed this opportunity to serve others in a tangible way, and that they will be ready to serve again as opportunities arise in the future.



*Breslau Mennonite Church, Breslau, ON*

# Building Relationships at Ahousaht

A group of seven youth and three youth leaders from First United Mennonite Church and First United Spanish Mennonite Church in Vancouver, B.C. spent the two weeks from July 1 – 15, 2006 in Ahousaht -- a First Nations community on Flores Island, B.C., which is a 40-minute boat ride north of Tofino and has a population of approximately 800 people.

The first week we lived at the church on the reserve and participated in their annual community sports weekend, spent a lot of time playing with kids, and hung out with some of the youth. We also helped set up a camp on another island called Vargas Island, building a stage, digging holes for the outhouses and building outhouses, mowing the lawn, raking kelp off the beach, plus much more!

The second week we helped run a Christian youth camp for the youth from Ahousaht, together with another group from a Korean church from Delta, B.C. We were counselors and participated in many different activities, including worship sessions, Bible studies, and traditional Native activities such as cedar-bark picking and a sweat lodge. This camp was really roughing-it for us “city folks” as there was no running water and we had to use outhouses and bathe in a murky creek (if you could handle how cold it was). The camp was a blast and we had the opportu-



nity to build relationships with the youth and share Jesus with them.

The highlight for us all was the friendly and welcoming people we met and the new friendships that were made. One of the first days we were there someone came to the door with two huge, freshly-caught salmon and halibut for us to have for dinner. None of us had ever seen such big fish! Thankfully there was an Aboriginal man living with us and he showed us how to cook them for dinner.

We experienced and learned a lot about Native culture in the short time we were there. We saw the importance of family, the way they support each other

when difficult times and issues arise, and how they really put others before themselves, which is something we are not always so good at in our culture. Also, friendship is something they really value. More than once I heard someone say that friendship is for life. Their language does not have a word for “goodbye”; instead, they use the word “choo”, which means “until we meet again”.

We left with a new appreciation for their awesome and rich First Nations culture. God touched each of our hearts and really blessed us through this experience.

*Shelley Dyck, Vancouver, BC*

## God at Work Riverton Fellowship Circle Church

We have had some wonderful events taking place at the church this spring and summer.

### March

Way back in 2005 our church group began to fundraise for some of us to attend Native Assembly 2006, which was to be hosted by our southern brothers and sisters in Atmore, Alabama the end of July. We had one such fundraiser in March. We were very pleased to have the puppeteers from Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg with us for an afternoon of stories and drama. It was exciting for the young and old alike to see these puppets in action. Thank you to Tim and his gang for a job well-done. God bless!

### April

Our annual Easter breakfast was very delicious and well-attended. A Men's Chorus from Altona came on April 23 to share with us through song and testimony. A lunch and time of fellowship ended

a wonderful service. Peter Rempel of Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba also visited us in April. We enjoyed supper together and he was here for our games night.

### May

Three families from Winkler, Gretna and Winnipeg came for a cross-cultural afternoon of sharing and making crafts together. They were also a part of our morning worship service and shared their gifts of music and drama with us. It was wonderful! We had a chance for more sharing after our potluck lunch together. We set up a display of Native crafts and items for the group to see and invited them to ask questions. The highlight was making mobiles with the children and dream catchers with the women. My ten-year-old granddaughter Kristine was delighted to show the others how to make the mobiles. It was a great afternoon of sharing of ourselves and getting to know one another and building relationships.

### July

A group of young people from the Douglas Mennonite



# It's Time to Renew Our Relationships

“We know that you Mennonites have 25 churches that are within 6 miles of the Grand River, and we consider it our job to renew relationships with each and every one of them. It is time to rebuild those friendships.”

These words were part of the opening presentation of Wes Elliott and four other guests from the Six Nations of the Grand River when they gathered with 120 people at Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church in Kitchener Ontario, June 28. MCC Ontario had invited Wes, along with Floyd and Ruby Montour, Lehman Gibson, and Arnie General, along with all area Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches. But a special invitation had gone to those churches Mr. Elliott referred to, those 25, which include Stirling, who hosted the evening, whose meetinghouses are situated within 6 miles of either side of the Grand River. This puts them inside the Haldimand Grant which had been given to the Six Nations in 1784, before the first Mennonite settlers arrived in the Valley.

It was to be a first step in having at least these churches begin to better understand the story of their neighbours who welcomed them. Throughout the evening there were several stories of past



friendships between Mennonite people and Six Nations people, and a hope to rekindle that spirit rather than see more of the conflict and tension that has emerged in Caledonia.

Core to the presentation was a 15 minute video production by a Grade 12 Six Nations student which showed the passion and tension on all sides as the efforts to settle the land issues at the Caledonia site continue. While there was not a lot of history discussed, there was clearly a determination from each of the speakers to see the Caledonia dispute through to a just and lasting resolution.

During the discussion period, one

Kitchener resident noted that the guest speakers were sitting beneath a Sunday School bulletin board titled in large letters “Our Covenant”.

“Our word ‘covenant’”, he noted, “is really the same word as ‘treaty’ and I think it is important that we realize the power of those relationships that we have through covenants and treaties.” Another local church, also in the Valley, was eager to meet the guests to invite them to be part of their 200th Anniversary celebrations later this fall.

It remains clear that there is a long journey for Six Nations people to reach a place of lasting resolution to long held land concerns. The evening ended without any clear plan or commitment from Mennonite neighbours for how they would be part of achieving such a resolution, though they were invited to consider donations of food for the needs of the people working to have the land returned or money to support improved education for Six Nations children. There was a strong sense though, that neighbours who had not seen much of each other lately, were ready to begin to renew relationships.

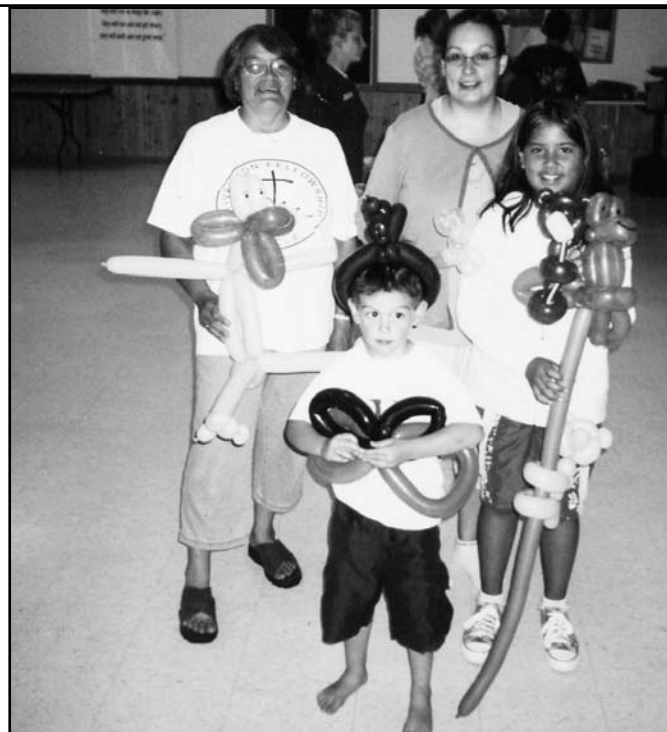
*Rick Cober Bauman*

Church in Winnipeg came to Riverton to hold Daily Vacation Bible School sessions at the church for a week. Each night 30 – 35 children took part in the singing, Bible stories, craft-making and, of course, snack. A highlight was the Balloon Animal (or whatever) Maker on the last evening. He was very busy creating many different items and animals! Thank you again to Ruth and her youth for such a wonderful job! We appreciate and love you all. God bless. The Douglas youth also volunteered in the community during the day. They painted, cut grass, worked at the MCC Thrift Store and helped at the Friendship Centre's Day Camp. Seven people from our church group were able to attend Native Assembly 2006. They reported that it was very hot down south but that they enjoyed themselves very much and it was a good experience for them.

## August

It has been very quiet at the church so far this month and we look forward to getting together again soon to share more about the Assembly and about each other's summer activities.

*Barb Daniels, Riverton, MB*



# Nurturing Crucial Connections

For a small, isolated and resource-limited congregation, connections with other congregations and church bodies are both treasured and crucial. Many connections throughout North America have come to the Riverton Fellowship Circle (RFC) through its long history with Native Ministry. This article will refer to relationships with church bodies and congregations that are extremely important and life-giving to our group and that have taken on specific forms and resulted in energy-giving directions for this small congregation.

One such connection is with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Manitoba. Together with this service agency we are able to sponsor Pete and Elaine Slough in their double role of MCC Thrift Store Managers and children and family ministry workers for RFC. They provide, through God's grace, a loving and energetic ministry to and through our congregation.

Since 2004 Mennonite Church Manitoba (MCM) has related more closely to RFC through its staff persons, namely Norm Voth and John Klassen. These relationships resulted in our congregation officially becoming a part of the MCM family in February 2006. This has given us a new sense of belonging since the changes that took place in our relationship with Native Ministry, Mennonite Church (MC) Canada in March 2003. We look forward to meeting more of our sisters and brothers in Christ in this family of MCM congregations.

The Partnership Circle model has played a crucial role in helping RFC be more closely connected with MCM, MC Canada and with specific Mennonite congregations in Manitoba. This Partnership Circle, made up of representatives from Native and non-Native congregations and staff from the above offices, meets twice annually for worship, fellowship, sharing gifts and needs with each other, and working at faith and culture issues. Within the larger Partnership Circle we have Ministry Circles made up of specific congregations meeting and working in partnership with a Native church or community. The Riverton Ministry Circle currently includes the Riverton Fellowship Circle and several Mennonite churches in Winnipeg -- Bethel, Douglas, Home Street, and Sargent Avenue.



Our last Riverton Ministry Circle meeting took place at Bethel Mennonite Church on June 24. Each congregation reported on the ministries and activities that took place in their congregations during the past three to six months. What an array of ministries and involvements this represented! RFC reported on the pastoral ministry made possible in their congregation through this ministry circle. Currently, Walter and Hilda Franz are serving in that role until Easter 2007 and other leadership training programs and directions are, and will be, worked at in the coming months.

Enriching exchanges between the congregations in this Ministry Circle are taking place by attending and/or serving at each other's worship services, providing a summer VBS in Riverton (by the Douglas Mennonite youth group), and a variety of informal connections.

In June this Ministry Circle looked to the future in terms of possibly extending the circle and looking at ways to nurture the bond that already exists between us.

This Ministry Circle represents a lifeline for the Riverton Fellowship Circle. Again and again members of our congregation have talked about the hope and encouragement this partnership venture has brought into our midst and the incentive it has given us to follow and serve Christ

in our community and beyond. Our hope and prayer is that this circle will thrive and grow in love, understanding and energy.

Jack Suderman, General Secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, made an important visit to our congregation on July 12, 2006, accompanied by his wife Irene and Native Ministry co-directors, Neill and Edith von Gunten. This visit was part of Jack's visits to each of the MC Canada congregations scattered from New Brunswick to Vancouver Island. The visits are intended to help MC Canada staff know individual congregations better, and hear from the congregations in terms of their vision, ministries, dreams, and needs. RFC members shared our history, our concerns, and our gratitude for the relationships developing with the larger church. The group also shared how significant the Partnership Circle is to us. MC Canada, through Native Ministry, played the lead role in developing this concept and initiating its inception.

The Riverton Fellowship Circle looks forward to being actively involved in MC Canada congregations, and especially those within MC Manitoba. Thanks be to God for these partnerships and for the new and ongoing relationships and ministries included through these connections.

*Walter Franz, Riverton, MB*

# Aboriginal, Mennonite Partnerships No Easy Task

Ray Aldred takes you along a path at an easy amble, but all of a sudden you turn a corner and bang; you bump headlong into a new understanding or revelation, was how Norm Voth, director of Service and Evangelism Ministries for Mennonite Church Manitoba, described two days of partnership circle meetings last month at Home Street Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

The 37 participants, already involved in north/south, urban/rural church partnerships, are well aware of the cultural, geographic and financial challenges that they face. Churches in Riverton, Manigotagan, Cross Lake, Matheson Island, Pine Dock and Pauingassi are finding partner congregations in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba with which they can share resources and do exchanges.

Pointing out with humour and candour why some things just don't work when Mennonites try to transfer their way of doing things to a culture that is profoundly different, Aldred gave them an understanding of why the task of partnering is not an easy one.

When an aboriginal father wants to teach his son how to trap, he takes the boy with him to observe the steps, Aldred explained. At the end, he allows his son to do the final step of covering the trap with snow. With each successive trip the son gets to do an additional step. In this way, by the time the son is doing all the steps, he has observed the process many times. Mennonites, on the other hand, tend to start teaching at the beginning, said Aldred, and in the end often end up doing it all themselves — because it is faster.

Aldred noted the withdrawal of financial support to aboriginal churches in almost every denomination across the

country. When success is measured by church growth, aboriginal churches are not seen as a good investment, he said.

A Cree from northern Alberta working on his Ph.D. in theology, Aldred values the culture that has shaped him and his people, and sees many biblical truths in how they live.

"We need to enable aboriginal leaders to embrace the gospel story as their own," said Aldred. "In the aboriginal world, the people make you a leader. There is no such thing as a self-made leader. 'Leadership' is what your people give you."

An aboriginal leader is a listener and reflects back to the community what everyone is saying, according to Aldred. "The aboriginal people practice an ethic of non-interference," he explained. "Nobody has the right to tell anyone what to do. That is the rule and it is rude to do otherwise. Most Christians I've seen are pushy and demanding by comparison."

Neill Von Gunten, Mennonite Church Canada Native Ministry co-director, hopes that relationship-building through the partnership circles will help move the church to see beyond problems and without guilt. "We don't have the baggage of residential schools, at least not to the same extent," he said. "Being Anabaptist also gives us a connecting link with the many aboriginal groups who emphasize peace and restorative justice. We need to start building on these."

*Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Carman, Manitoba,  
Reprinted with permission from CANADIAN MENNONITE,  
April 17, 2006 issue.*

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## Sweet Medicine's Prophecy

Our great-grandfather spoke thus to me, repeating it four times. He said to me that he made us, but also made others. There are all kinds of people on earth that you will meet someday, toward the sunrise, by a big river. Some are black, but some day you will meet people who are white — good-looking people, with light hair and white skin.

You will know them, for they will have long hair on their faces and will look differently from you. They will wear things different from you. You will talk to them. They will give you shiny things which flash light and show you your own image, and something that looks like sand that will taste sweet. They will wear what I have spoken of, but it will be of all colors, pretty. Perhaps they will not listen to what you say to them, but you will listen to what they say to you. They will be people who do not get tired but who will keep pushing forward. They will try always to give you things, but do not take them.

At last I think that you will take the

things that they offer you, and this will bring sickness to you. These people do not follow the way of the great-grandfather. They will travel everywhere, looking for stone which our great-grandfather put on the earth.

Buffalo and animals were given by our great-grandfather, but these people will come in and will begin killing all these animals. They will use a different thing to kill animals from what we use, something that makes a noise and sends a little round stone to kill.

Something will be given to you, which, if you drink it, will make you crazy.

Another animal will come, but it will not be like the buffalo. It will have long heavy hair on its neck and a long heavy tail which drags on the ground. When these animals come, you will catch them, and you will get on their backs and they will carry you from place to place. You will become great travelers. If you see a place a long way off, you will want to get to it, so at last you will get on these

animals. From that time you will act very foolishly. You will know nothing.

These people will not listen to what you say. What they are going to do they will do. You people will change. In the end of your life in those days you will not get up early in the morning, you will never know when the day comes, you will die in bed, you will have disease and will die suddenly. You will die off.

They will try to teach you their way of living. If you give up to them your children, those that they will take away will never know anything. They will try to change you from your way of living to theirs and they will keep at what they try to do. They will work with their hands. They will tear up the earth, and at last you will do it with them. When you do, you will become crazy, and will forget all that I am now teaching you.

*Sweet Medicine's prophecy is found in The Cheyenne Indians, Vol. II by George Bird Grinnell, University of Nebraska Press.*



# Acts 15: The Council at Jerusalem

Some men came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the brothers: "Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved."

When we look at our history as Aboriginal people, we believe we have a faith that was given to us by a loving Creator. During our time on this land, that we refer to as Turtle Island, we encountered a race of people who were lost and found themselves resting on our shores. We nourished them back to health. We showed them how to survive in this land by teaching them about our clothing, foods, plants, medicines, etc. In doing this we practiced our faith.

Yet we find that, since that first encounter, there has been an insistence on converting us to their ways of living and belief, which we find, for the most part, to be very ungodly and uncivilized. We see their faith being based on materialism, individuality, capitalism, fighting over religion, division among the followers of God, death and destruction of language, culture, and custom to those who refuse to become converted to their methods and ways of practicing the faith.

The passage from Acts 15 speaks against forcing a people to embrace rituals that are not theirs in encountering the faith. Further on in the Acts 15 chapter, the writer even states that God has blessed these people, who are not circumcised, in the same manner that the apostles were blessed with the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

There is another story people know very little about. It is the real story about Cinderella. Not the fairy tale we are often told by the Walt Disney people. In the real story, when the Prince goes about the kingdom looking for the owner of the glass slipper, the wicked stepmother, in her efforts to get her two daughters to fit the glass slipper and gain for themselves a life of living happily ever after in the kingdom as the Prince's wife, has one daughter cut off her toes to try to fit the slipper. The mother then makes the other daughter cut off her heel, all in an effort to fit her feet into the glass slipper. Neither of the daughters is able to fit the glass slipper and as such now have to spend the rest of their life crippled and in agony.

I believe when we look at the written

gospel, as brought to us by the newcomers, we can take both of these stories and make considerable and applicable comparisons to the method of missionization that has occurred with and to our Aboriginal peoples. We have constantly been asked, and in many cases even forced, to make choices similar to the stepsisters of Cinderella. It has been put forth to us, by those who come as missionaries and proclaimers of Christ, that if we are to have a Godly life here on earth and in the hereafter, we need to subject ourselves to self-mutilation of parts of our body or culture in order to fit our foot into the glass slipper of "Godliness and Righteousness" that the dominant society views as appropriate "Christian" living, in order to gain the "happily ever after". Yet Biblical texts argue against that just as the passage we find in Acts 15 does.

If the message of the gospel is one of helping to make us whole or complete in our understanding of God, it should not cripple us or disfigure us, nor ask us to cut ourselves as in the story of Cinderella. It should instead be a message of hope, love, mutual respect, understanding, and healing.

I think as well of another story in Acts 10, where the apostle Peter came to a man named Cornelius, who was not a Christian but definitely followed the ways of God and was honored by God for doing so. Peter had his belief system totally changed by the experience and encounter with Cornelius. In that encounter Peter found a God willing to

accept people outside of those whom Peter viewed as carrying the "faith" and welcomed them and blessed them with the Holy Spirit in the same manner God had blessed him. Cornelius, in the meantime, through the experience, had his beliefs in God fulfilled. Peter was forced, through dreams from God, to realize his "glass slipper", or in this case his view of his system of beliefs, didn't fit and needed to be changed, before he could communicate with Cornelius. He needed to put on Cornelius' shoes.

As Native American peoples, we have much in common with these stories. We have been given a faith, a belief system that came to us from our Creator. We do not need to cut, mutilate or circumcise ourselves to be members of the family of God. We can come to our Creator for completeness, wholeness, healing and fulfillment of who we are as a member of our respective nations. By our working together with those of the dominant society, the experience can be one where they too realize the "glass slipper" they have used to determine who belongs and who doesn't, who holds the faith and who doesn't, is not a useful piece of footwear for walking in the woods. But, once again, as in the beginning of our relationship with them, we outfit them with the clothing and footwear that is more appropriate for the walk. Those are my thoughts.

*Sakoieta Widrick, Ohsweken, ON*



*Todd Munro of Siksika Blackfoot First Nations, Gleichen, AB, speaks at the MC Canada annual Assembly sessions in Edmonton on July 5, 2006. Todd and his wife Simone are the founders of the "Bridging the Gap" ministry on their home reserve (see the last issue of INTOTEMAK for their story).*

# Historical Efforts to Contextualize the Gospel

*Who We Are: The North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies (NAIITS) is a mission-focused institution seeking to provide for the mentoring and training of aboriginal leaders in the area of contextualized evangelical missions.*

*NAIITS is a partnership-based consortium of people and institutions convened for training, and for dialogue on methods and means of mission in Native North America, and by Native North Americans.*

North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies

NAIITS



The chimes of Asbury Theological Seminary ring out peacefully, allowing students to quietly arouse, to contemplate and meditate on God's purpose for the day. Although being awakened in this fashion, my heart was filling with excitement and anticipation. I had come to attend the 2006 NAIITS (North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies) missiological symposium, being held at the seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, from June 22 - 25, 2006.

Apprehension of doing and being somewhere foreign was also permeating my spirit. Will I be able to learn something from these men and women who have the name doctor before their given name -- these men and women who are the trailblazers on this subject and are talked about as almost a legend of wisdom and knowledge? Will I, Glenda, a Cree from Saskatchewan, a recent empty-nester, comprehend, catch on to, or even perceive as we Natives are supposed to have that innate ability to do? Gratitude fills my heart. Thank you, God, for such an opportunity. All fear descends.

The first presenter was Gavriel Gavin, a young Jewish man from Israel. He spoke on the present brokenness of creation and how to indigenize the message to our people, on how God is calling forth servants from every nation -- yes, even our First Nations people -- and how God is calling us into unity, not uniformity.

Between each speaker was a discussion group. This was great! It was the time to create questions for the speaker and also to meet others who had traveled many miles to gain insight to take back to their communities and to pave the way for a better understanding of contextualizing the Gospel.

Terry LeBlanc, Richard Twiss and Ray Aldred were our master of ceremonies. Wendy Peterson, a Metis, spoke on pre-historian history. This allowed me to understand that the contextualizing of the Gospel had already been progressing during our forefathers' time. Dr. Randy Woodley and his lovely wife Edith, along with their children, were also present. There was a tour scheduled to their property to visualize a broken dream. The dream was of a North American leadership training and development centre, using a contextual community model. The dream of this model will move to Kansas. God closes a door and opens a window.

I will always be grateful to Bishop Mark McDonald, a young black man who spoke. Although he was the most academic person there, it was a simple adage of his that made my trip --

"Embrace Your Race." Those three words spelled a whole lifetime of fear and uncertainty, a lifetime of living one foot in my heritage and one foot out of it, of being uncomfortable to embrace who God had made me to be. Gratitude once again floods my heart as tears flow.

Adrian Jacobs, a gentle, soft-spoken Mohawk from Six Nations, shed light on the struggle of his people in Caledonia, Ontario, and how his dream of opening a First Nation's Institute in Rapid City, Utah was squashed. This dream was so encouraging, with gifted Native staff committed to the contextual approach, but there were broken promises and Native people suffer once again. Adrian also spoke about embracing. He said, "It is the path that Jesus embraced."

I prayed and asked God to let my heart hear all the words spoken and to have some understanding of them. God is always faithful. I did not come to understand everything said, only what He wanted me to.

We have something valuable to offer, that only we as indigenous people can offer. I have been to many churches, but we seem to fall short of whatever it takes to express the hegemony of our nation and to have Creator-given expression through our traditional and cultural covenants. God has made promises to us, too.

I will leave you with this exchange that took place between a Methodist missionary and a Cree more than 110 years ago. The last to speak was an old man with grizzly hair, and wild, excited movements. His hair was braided and reached to his knees ...

"You say, Notawenan ("our Father"): He is your Father?"

"Yes, he is my father."

"Does it mean he is my Father, too?"

"Yes, O yes, he is your Father, too."

"Yes, that is true."

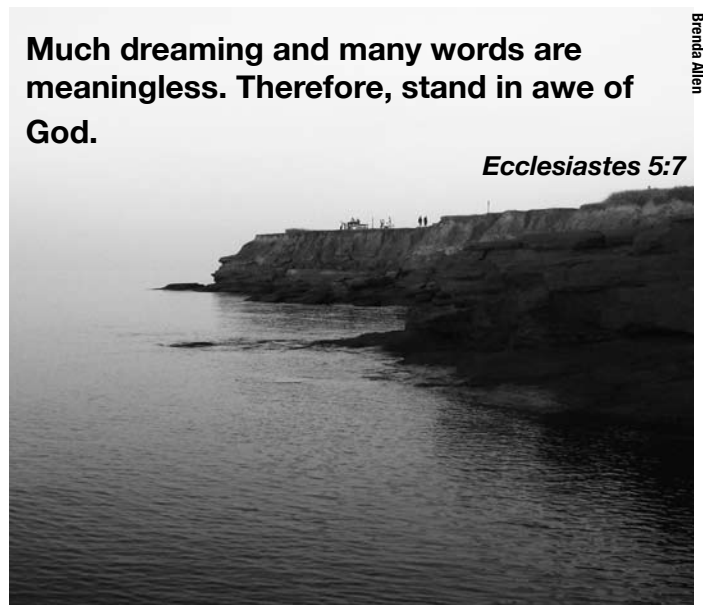
"Then we are brothers?" he almost shouted out.

"Yes, we are brothers," I replied.

Glenda Klassen, Langley, BC

**Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore, stand in awe of God.**

**Ecclesiastes 5:7**



## Weddings



**Sara Moroski and Clayton Monkman** of Arborg, Manitoba, exchanged their wedding vows on July 15, 2006. Neill von Gunten officiated at the afternoon ceremony at the Riverton Gospel Chapel. Dale Moroski of Gimli, MB is the mother of the bride. The groom's parents are David and Marlene Monkman of Princess Harbour, MB.

**Tamara Tina Payjack and Andrew Ronald Mowat** of Winnipeg, Manitoba, were married on August 5, 2006 at Matheson Island, MB. Fred Peters of Winkler officiated at the outdoor ceremony.

Andy's parents are Martha Hladki of Winnipegosis, MB and Ernie Mowat of Matheson Island.

## Keeping the Fires Burning

A gala celebration and ceremony took place at the Winnipeg Convention Centre on Thursday, June 15, 2006. During this annual event, seven exemplary aboriginal women were honoured for their lifetime achievements with a "Keeping the Fires Burning" award.

Bernice Potoski of Riverton, MB was honored as one of the 2006 recipients. Her profile states: "Over the years Bernice adopted the role as mother and grandmother to over forty foster children ... Bernice was a board member for the Manitoba Metis Federation Interlake Region and a founding member of the Friendship Centre in Riverton ... She continues to be a role model for her five grandchildren. She is proud to be Metis



## Community news

and the impact that she has had in her community has created a life of hope and opportunity for those who needed it the most.

Thelma Meade of Winnipeg was a recipient at the 2005 ceremony in recognition of her work in the education field.

Ka Ni Kanichihk Inc., a community based Aboriginal human services organization (which means "those who lead" in the Cree language), organizes the Keeping the Fires Burning celebration to acknowledge the tremendous contribution that Manitoba's Aboriginal women have made in the preservation and transmission of First Peoples cultures for many generations, and to make sure that the value of these has its place in modern culture and in today's traditions. . Congratulations, Bernice and Thelma!

## Obituaries

**Don Owen**, age 38 years of Pauingassi, Manitoba, passed away suddenly at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg on July 3, 2006. He was irritated for a couple of weeks with what may have been pneumonia, and he was admitted to the hospital for treatment. A few days later he suddenly experienced heart failure and failed to respond to resuscitation. He leaves to mourn his family, parents, siblings and many friends. Henry Neufeld officiated at his funeral and interment was at Brookside Cemetery in Winnipeg.

**Oliver McKay**, age 49 years, originally of Berens River, Manitoba, passed away peacefully at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg after a brief illness on July 11, 2006. He was always cheerful even though he had to deal with prostheses, dialysis and a wheelchair. His #1 passion was to live as a born-again believer. Oliver's whole family was very dear to him, and his family and friends will miss him very much. Interment took place at Berens River with Rev. Oliver Everett officiating.

**Cyril Barker**, age 68 years of Hollow Water, Manitoba, died on July 15, 2006 at St. Boniface Hospital in

Winnipeg. He had been living at the George M. Guimond Personal Care Home in Sagkeeng, MB before his death.

Cyril is survived by four children, seven grandchildren, sisters Rosie Sinclair and Thelma Meade, brother Bill and numerous nieces and nephews.

The funeral service was held on July 20 at Christ Anglican Church in Hollow Water with Revs. Nancy and Richard Bruyere officiating.

Peacefully, at the Pine Falls Hospital, on July 19, 2006, **Dorothy Doreen Meade** (nee Favel) of Manigotagan, Manitoba, went to be with her Lord at the age of 84 years.

Dorothy was born at Black Bear Island on Lake Winnipeg and met her future husband, John Meade, at the Brown and Rutherford mill site at Birch Point, where they were working. The couple moved to his home community of Manigotagan and raised their family there. Dorothy enjoyed serving people in many ways, including the numerous Native Ministry staff and volunteers who lived next door to her over the years. She will be remembered for her baking, sewing and beadwork skills.

Dorothy was predeceased by her husband, four children, her grandchildren and an infant daughter. She leaves to cherish her memory her children Jack (Dorothy), Norman (Thelma), Eileen, Billy (Doreen), Marlene Smith (Richard), Allan (Rhonda), Roland (Doris); sisters, Alice Cameron and Mulvina Thomas of Peguis, MB; as well as numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends whom she dearly loved. Her funeral service was held on July 24 at the Manigotagan Community Hall with Fr. Gerry Sembrano presiding. Interment followed in the Manigotagan Catholic Cemetery. **YOU'RE SPECIAL GRANDMA.** You have a gift of bringing joy to others day by day. You have an understanding heart, a gentle thoughtful way. You have a place within our hearts that no one else can fill. You're the dear and special grandma that we love and always will.

**Barbara Jean Owen** passed away at the St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg, Manitoba on July 21, 2006. She grew up in Little Grand Rapids, lived in



Pauingassi after her marriage and spent the last while in Winnipeg struggling with cancer, which finally took her life at the age of 45 years. She clearly stated that she was ready to meet her Savior. Barbara was predeceased by her father, and will be missed by her family and friends. Albert Eaglestick officiated at the funeral service and burial was at Little Grand Rapids.

**Alex Keeper**, originally of Little Grand Rapids, Manitoba, passed away on July 22, 2006 in Winnipeg at the age of 83 years. He became blind during childhood due to a head injury, but he fared well on the foot paths of years ago. His sister took care of him in Winnipeg for a number of years, but he spent his last years in Central Park Lodge. He leaves to mourn his siblings, nieces, nephews and many friends. Interment took place at Little Grand Rapids with Fr. Rheal Forest officiating.

**Harry Ernest Cook Sr.**, age 80 years of Bloodvein River, Manitoba, passed away on July 28, 2006 after a short illness. His wish to die in his home was granted him. Harry served his community as a Band Councilor for 8 years, Chief for 17 years, and as a respected Elder who believed in the Lord. He was predeceased by his wife Ruby, five children and one grandchild, and he leaves 11 children and many family members and friends to mourn his passing. Interment took place at Bloodvein River with Henry Neufeld and David Russell officiating.

#### To Grandpa Harry Cook Sr.

As I grew up I have many memories of you and I  
And still to this day it's hard to say goodbye

You were a Man who cared for his family & community  
Wanted everyone to be one unity  
That worked together to achieve the best  
That's what he wanted for the rest

He was a Man of great wisdom, honor, and pride  
For everyone he opened his arms wide  
He will always be a hero in my eyes



## Resources

But my pain I will never be able to disguise

Grandfather I cannot let you go  
In my life I still need you so  
Deep down in my heart you'll be  
As far as the eye could see

I know you are with your lovely wife  
The one you were with most of your life  
I remember how you two used to tease  
And together your souls are now at ease

You always taught us not to fight and stay  
You said just to walk away  
„You always wanted me to succeed

I wish instead I was there in your time of need  
How hopelessly lost I feel without you  
And so dreadfully alone too  
I can't eat I can't sleep  
The only thing I could do is weep

I knew this day would come  
That left my heart so numb  
I didn't expect it to happen so fast  
Now you're at peace at last  
I cannot help but cry  
And still ask God why

A lovely kind spirit you possess  
And still I need to confess  
I will love you till the very end  
My life and pain will not mend  
Until we're all together  
FOREVER

Love: *Audrey Cook*

#### Ray Aldred DVD

Cree theologian, Ray Aldred, spoke to the Manitoba Partnership Circle meeting at the Home Street Mennonite Church on March 17 – 18, 2006. A DVD has been made of his two talks and is available from the Native Ministry office. The suggested donation is \$ 7.00, including shipping. The DVD is also available for loan from the MC Canada Resource Centre.

*Living in Color: Embracing God's Passion for Ethnic Diversity*  
Randy Woodley  
Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2001.

We would never give Picasso a paintbrush and only one color of paint, and expect a masterpiece," writes Randy Woodley. "We would not give Beethoven a single piano key and say, 'Play us a concerto.' Yet we limit our Creator in just these ways." Woodley, a Keetoowah Cherokee, casts a biblical, multiethnic vision for people of every nation, tribe and tongue. He carefully unpacks how Christians should think about racial and cultural identity, demonstrating that ethnically diverse communities have always been God's intent for his people. Woodley gives practical insights for how we can relate to one another with sensitivity, contextualize the gospel, combat the subtleties of racism and honor one another's unique contributions to church and society. Along the way, he reckons with difficult challenges from our racially painful history and offers hope for healing and restoration. (Taken from the back cover)  
A study guide is located at the back of the book.

## Events Calendar

### October 5 - 7, 2006

Native Mennonite Ministry meetings, hosted by the Lakota Gospel Church of Porcupine, South Dakota.

### November 5, 2006

Riverton Country Gospel Jamboree takes place at the Riverton Community Recreational Centre.

### November 17 - 18, 2006

Manitoba Partnership Circle meetings, Riverton, MB.

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



Witness