

Toronto Conference Living Into Right Relations Circle Notes  
September 16, 2016  
Knox United Church, Sutton, ON

Present: Debbie Cauch-McIntosh, Jody Maltby (staff), Brian McIntosh, Elizabeth McLean, Katherine Gunn

Regrets: David Allen, Lynn Lawrence, Linda Parsons, Bryan Ransom, Dave Gordon, Meiske Hockley, Robert Hockley, Gloria McCavery, Betty-Lou McNabb

At 10:15 am Brian acknowledged the low attendance, as the meeting started with only three present, and it was agreed that the entire agenda would not be covered and few decisions would be made but reports of an important nature would be shared. Brian also acknowledged the significant deaths and ongoing health issues that have been a reality since the May meeting, particularly the passing of Peggy Monague and the continuing health challenges of Delores Charles, Linda Parsons, Betty Lou McNabb's husband (Nigel), as well as others. Brian circulated the hymn "Sweetgrass and Candle" by John Oldham as a means of centering.

The notes of May 13<sup>th</sup> were reviewed, but agreement about their accurate content was delayed until more of the Circle are present.

Items we did discuss include:

1. The Toronto Conference Annual Meeting of May, considered a success with mostly positive feedback.
2. The upcoming Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> educational event on Indigenous Justice and Right Relations with the Moderator, The Rt. Rev. Jordan Cantwell. Promotion has gone out to witnesses and Presbyteries, etc. and good attendance is anticipated for a great event.

The makeup of the Education planning group was discussed, and Brian and Jody will endeavour to approach at least one more person well suited to the role, in order to plan for 2017 educational opportunities. One meeting between Jody and Susie took place, and Jody has already started to implement some plans, including meeting with Sara Stratton about an event to help congregations acknowledge their traditional territories appropriately, but an additional person on the planning group would be helpful. Education about the Apology was also mentioned in previous notes as a possible topic of attention.

3. The 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Apology event in Sudbury in August, which Brian and Debbie reported on. David Allen and Bryan Ransom were both there, as were others from Toronto Conference, and it was a moving set of speeches and observances, both in a room and at the cairn at Laurentian University.

4. The Right Relations Consultation Proposal, which Jody talked about, has been delayed until the fall of 2017 at which time we will know the votes on the remits around structure. Planning will begin for the consultation in February 2017. The Circle, the Conference Executive and the four presbyteries are all invited to be involved. The Circle will have more conversation on this later.

5. The relationship to the Toronto Urban Native Ministry (TUNM) was discussed, with Jody reporting that Brian, Susie and Beth Baskin will represent the Circle, South West and Toronto Southeast Presbyteries, respectively, at the meeting on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>. This is to help determine what specific work of this All Native Circle Conference ministry, also supported financially by Toronto Conference through Toronto Southeast Presbytery with Mission Support monies, might enable the granting of \$7,500 from the Conference Right Relations Fund. A report will be shared following the meeting.

6. Brian reported that David had arranged, with Linda Gray's help, an Ontario Conferences conference call about collaborating on Ontario-based Indigenous right relations efforts, particularly in light of the Ontario government's Apology issued on May 30<sup>th</sup>, to take place on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>. All seven Conferences will be represented on the conference call, and it was a welcome initiative on our part.

7. Brian reported that the Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) is interested in expanding their support for Indigenous work, particularly through the creation of a yet to be determined scholarship, and the Circle may be consulted sometime in the future about collaborating and/or offering suggestions about how TUCC might do this.

8. The large number of Kairos Blanket Exercises taking place in schools, churches, and other venues was celebrated. Brian shared news about the creation by Kairos of a hybrid resource for use in worship, entitled "Enfolded in the Creator" and available for download from the Kairos Canada website.

9. Katherine, a Unitarian and friend of Elizabeth, reported on work in Ottawa, as an ecumenical right relations network has been formed and information sharing about events, workshops, etc., mostly having to do with implementing the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), has occurred in a cooperative and mutually supportive way.

10. The timing of Circle meetings was discussed, and in order to include those with conflicting schedules it was suggested to alternate between a Friday and another day of the week. This will be discussed as a possibility with the Circle at its next gathering, likely to take place in November, and likely to be held on a day other than Friday.

Other agenda items were delayed, and at about 12:15 Brian closed with prayer, offering intercessory words for the Monague family and Peggy's many friends upon her loss, as well as for the others we know facing health challenges.

The next meeting will take place at the call of the Co-Convenor, at a date and time to be determined.

Brian McIntosh, note taker