

Toronto Conference Living Into Right Relations Circle
September 18, 2018
Midhurst United Church, 10:00 am - 2:30 pm

Present: Brian McIntosh, Debbie Cauch-McIntosh, Lenore King, James Ravenscroft, Wayne Monague, Delores Charles, Betty Lou McNabb, Bryan Ransom, Robert Hockley, Ren Ito, George Moore, Jody Maltby, Donna Bowman-Woodall, Wendy Brown, Gloria McCavery, Dave Gordon, Maya Brathwaite, Dorothy Sjöholm

Regrets: Linda Parsons, Rodney Smith-Merkley, Sara Stratton

Brian welcomed everyone to the circle and offered prayers for Linda Parsons. Delores offered a smudge after which there was a time of sharing.

The notes of May 15, 2018 were reviewed.

Items/Issues Arising from the Notes:

1. Educational Events Plans for 2018

a) The Wampum Belt Workshop with Brian Charles on June 23rd was well attended and full of learning.

b) Christian Island Workshop: James is in conversation with Neil Monague and Clayton King. They were originally looking at either second last or last weekend of October, but after conversation in the circle it was agreed to look post May 24, 2019 and encourage cottagers to attend. There will be a strong emphasis on history of Christian Island and its rootedness in larger history. James will communicate with Clayton and Neil

c) Jim Dumont Workshop in 2019: Nothing further has happened. Previous notes indicated that Brian and Linda would speak with Wayne. Brian will follow up. Bryan noted that Jim is coming to the Toronto School of Theology as part of a continuing education series. We could promote that opportunity or consider possibility of a spin off.

2. Restoration of Identity Legacy Project Grant

Brian reported that the grant of \$100,000 was approved by the Conference Executive in June. He acknowledged the significance of this grant which has encouraged other faith groups to consider grants as well. Brian is communicating with the other Ontario Conferences as an invitation to participate in this effort. The commemoration will be unveiled in 2020 but the project is being launched Oct 9 – 11 with many people offering education and teachings in many formats in Nathan Phillips Square. Brian will provide details to Jody/Susie/Linda to share asap.

Betty Lou offered grace and the Circle broke for lunch at 12:30 p.m. During this time they watched a few minutes of movie Finding Peter Bryce – a project of Toronto United Church Council.

The Circle re-convened at 1:00 p.m.

3. Two Proposals to General Council

The proposals from Toronto Conference regarding the LIRR national network and requiring non-Indigenous ministry personnel to participate in the Kairos Blanket Exercise were both approved by the 43rd General Council.

James reflected that the process was very different than previous Councils – there was not debate on the floor but rather discussion in small groups. This makes reporting difficult but generally the feeling was good. He also shared that the most discussed proposal was the use of Indigenous Languages in official correspondence.

4. Transition to New Region and LIRR as Priority

The Circle talked about the fact that Right Relations will continue as a priority in Region 10. We are excited by the possibility to build new relationships with communities that have been in our area geographically but in ANCC and form a new circle with more relationships.

Brian, Linda, Bryan and Betty Lou were named as people to be consulted by the Transitional Commission as they think about how these communities will be invited to join the circle and participate in LIRR. Native Fellowship is on Monday and Betty Lou and Robert will facilitate discussion as to how this circle might expand.

5. Kairos Blanket Exercises Past or Planned

Betty Lou reported there will be a Blanket Exercise on Sat October 27th on Georgina Island with leaders from Six Nations. They specifically wanted only First Nations leaders as it is in Indigenous community. They are hoping to build relationship with cottagers and it is open to our circle as well. Betty Lou will provide details to Jody/Linda/Susie to distribute.

6. Conference Right Relations Fund for 2018

Jody reported that a grant has been given to Toronto United Church Council to support their Heart and Vision Concert which is honouring Senator Murray Sinclair and Grafton and Eileen Antone. Funds are also available for Georgina Island United Church for the Blanket Exercise and Christian Island United Church for a community-controlled project in response to TRC Call 62. Toronto Urban Native Ministry has already requested and received this funding for 2018.

7. Caretakers of our Indigenous Circle Report:

The Calls to the Church were received at GC43 and will have far-reaching implementation. They are important because the calls come from the Indigenous Church and reflect how the Indigenous church and communities will relate to and be part of the wider United Church.

8. Toronto United Church Council News:

a) Finding Peter Bryce was screened twice at the Toronto Conference Annual Meeting. TUCC is working on distribution rights that will allow communities of faith to show the film.

b) Heart & Vision Awards & Concert Oct. 15th

In gratitude for the funding support provided by Toronto Conference, TUCC is making available to every member of the Circle and all the witnesses a complimentary ticket to the concert. This is the fourth year in a row that the concert has honoured Indigenous Leaders as part of TUCC's commitment to Living Into Right Relations.

TUCC is eager to continue to be in relationship with the region and to partner on right relations work.

9. The Toronto School of Theology Report of August, 2018 "Implementing the Calls to Action of the TRC" was shared for information.

10. Other Events, Announcements

September 23-24: At the Church of the Redeemer in Toronto, on Sunday there will be music and a presentation by Bill Phipps; on Monday there will be a panel with Bill Phipps, Mark MacDonald and Cheri Di Novo on Creation Matters. Both events will start at 7 p.m.

Tuesday September 25 from 4 – 5:30 at Emmanuel College there is a lecture by Carmen Lansdowne on Intercultural Theology as Dialogue.

October 18/19: Disciples 18 is at Wycliffe College.

October 19/20 – Covenant Chainlink IX – book through Kairos

First contact is a three-part series on APTN. George will share a link where it can be streamed and Dave will share a workshop companion.

APTN has a show called Moose Meat and Marmalade that reflects on different aspects of First Nations cultures with an Indigenous and non-Indigenous chef.

Brian closed the Circle at 2:25 p.m. with a reading of Sweetgrass and Candle by John Oldham.

The next gathering will be on Tuesday, November 6 from 10:00 to 2:30 at Midhurst United Church.