



SACRED CIRCLE DAILY REPORT



DAY 3: August 19, 2015

MEMORY KEEPERS

SHARON PASULA,
EDMONTON

LORRAINE NETRO,
YUKON

WEATHER

HOT AND HUMID,
WITH A SLIGHT BREEZE

Morning Service

The third day of Sacred Circle started with music and prayer led by The Rev. Norm Wesley in Cree.

The memory keepers were inspired. "The prayers and hymns in different languages are so powerful and touches all our hearts."

Gospel Based Discipleship

Every morning the talking circles meet for gospel based discipleship. A memory keeper reported, "The readings and gathering are helping me. I have had a lot of emotion and a lot of crying, because I am seeing my truth, why I am here, and how I need to be a leader in my community."

The TRC 94 Recommendations

Henriette Thompson, Director of Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice highlighted the Call to Action, the report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

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Nancy Hurn, Archivist for General Synod talked about work that has been undertaken to keep accurate records on residential schools, a topic addressed in the report. This includes items such as the physical location of schools and records on children that died during their time in residential schools.

The 94 recommendations made by the Commission cover a broad range of issues. These recommendations were broken down to 22 topics. The talking circles were asked to rank topics as high, medium or low priority. Ms. Thompson explained that while all recommendations are important, the guidance of Sacred Circle members will help the national church prioritize the numerous issues that are identified in the report.

Memory keepers had a number of comments about the exercise.

“I knew everyone would make choices through their own lenses, but it was a good exercise.”

“Time limits on discussions of such important issues is very difficult.”

“The information from the archivist was important to have going into that session. It is good that the Church is contributing to the center in Winnipeg and it will be good for families that had relatives in the residential schools.”

“The ceremony to lay people to rest is really important and to lose that is

painful. This affects not only the missing children from the residential schools, but also the murdered and missing Indigenous women.”

Time Off

This afternoon, Sacred Circle members took a break from their demanding work. A bus was arranged for members to go shopping in Port Elgin. This was especially appreciated by members from remote communities. Others visited the Saugeen First Nation, the beach or just took some well-deserved time to relax.

A memory keeper noticed some wild sage while she was in Port Elgin and harvested it. “I am currently drying it and will give it to the fire keeper,” she reported.

Keynote Address

Kaisa Huuva, Sami from the Church of Sweden gave the keynote address tonight.

The Sami people are indigenous to the Scandinavian countries as well as part of Russia. Ms. Huuva spoke about the history of the people, their struggles around land rights and their experience with residential schools.

The address was well received and inspired a number of comments from the memory keepers.

“After dealing with our own traumas around government and church, it made me feel for the Sami...that there

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are others on the same path. The Sami people can learn from our own painful history and it will help others in the world on their journey.”

“The government wanted to keep them as reindeer people, segregated them and refused to let them grow as people.”

When recalling Ms. Huuva’s hope that someday the Sami people would have a Sacred Circle, both memory keepers responded, “...and someday they WILL have a Sacred Circle!”

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