



AUGUST 13, 2009

**MEMORY KEEPERS**

Larry Robertson  
ARCTIC

Arnold Ballantyne  
BRANDON

Matthew Happyjack  
MOOSONEE

**TRADITIONAL TEACHING**

COURAGE (MATT. 18:21-19:1)

**WEATHER**

HOT, SUNNY, AND "NO SNOW!"

## Courage to enter the Promised Land

Malcolm Naea Chun, secretary general of the Anglican Indigenous Network, encouraged members of Sacred Circle to have courage as they look to the "Promised Land."

In his keynote address, Mr. Chun said that the suffering of Indigenous Canadians has led to "endurance, patience, and persistence...[You have understood] the depth of what forgiveness is. That has been the message of Gladys Cook you have shared with us and that is the ministry that now compels the Indigenous church of Canada as a healed healer to a broken world."

At this Sacred Circle, he said, Indigenous Canadians have been brought to "the mountain top to see the Promised Land."

"For some the vision of the Promised Land can be so overwhelming," he continued, "but I believe for the many of you gathered here at Port Elgin God has not given you a spirit of fear and timidity but the power of love and self-discipline that you have revealed on your journey in the wilderness."

Mr. Chun shared a story of a brave Tlingit elder who approached a European boat for the first time. He moved beyond his confusion to take risks and give courage to his people.

Mr. Chun ended by stating that the worldwide Anglican Communion pay close attention to these Sacred Circles. "What you do here affects and inspires our own journeys," he said. "Eventually your discoveries and gifts help us to catch up with you to the gates of the New Jerusalem."

## GBD taking off

Gospel-Based Discipleship (GBD) is working well in the talking circles say the memory keepers. The gospel is read three times, and the group discusses three questions: What words or phrases did you hear? What is Jesus (the Gospel) saying to you? and what is Jesus (the Gospel) calling you to do?

"The elders are really enjoying Gospel-Based Discipleship," said one memory keeper. "It's a good format to bring home." He said that GBD's short, straightforward format may be appealing to youth, perhaps offering a bridge into church involvement.

Another memory keeper said that people in his talking circle took turns leading GBD. He felt he was getting spiritual support from the group and learning a lot from other people's insights on the gospel.

The memory keepers noticed that when talking circles report on the GBD questions in plenary they often share similar gospel insights.



### A refreshing afternoon

On Thursday afternoon school buses shuttled Sacred Circle members into Port Elgin for some shopping and a change of scenery.

Bishop Larry Robertson chauffeured four women from the high arctic out for ice cream and to the shops. "Good thing they don't have stores like this in Fort McPherson," joked one elder, "or I'd be broke all the time!"

"After three and a half days of meetings, it's mind-boggling," said one memory keeper. "It's good to take a break to refresh and refill before the last mile."

### Bishops' hopeful message

The memory keepers were moved by the report from the bishops' talking circle, particularly the next steps they outlined for the Council of the North (ten financially supported dioceses in northern Canada). Here are some key quotes:

"We consider that the issue of non-stipendiary ministry is an issue for the whole church. There is a determination that this will be addressed with a number of stakeholders with a view to gathering the necessary resources to address the need to compensate adequately those who are under pressure to provide ordained ministry beyond what is just and reasonable for those who otherwise receive no compensation.

We share our concern to provide special support for the provision of resources to address the need for suicide prevention programmes and support for families and communities which have been devastated by suicides.

We are concerned to provide focus and affirmation for pastoral care training and support for *communities* as well as individuals.

Discussion took place with regard to how closer communication and partnership could be fostered between the Council of the North bishops and the aboriginal ministry staff at Church House, including the Healing Fund coordinators. We are deeply concerned and absolutely committed to affirm and support the development of a strong, self-determining first nation/aboriginal participation in the full life of the Anglican Church of Canada."

### Words heard

"I have come here to learn and to listen and boy, have I ever learned."

"The format of Sacred Circle is well structured. You know what you're supposed to do and what questions to discuss."

### Odds & Ends

Someone saw the water level in Lake Huron rise dramatically this afternoon as several bishops waded in for a swim.

### Sacred Circle on the web

You can read, comment on, and share these daily reflections online:

<http://notes.anglican.ca/sc2009>

Watch a video of Malcolm Naea Chun's talk:

<http://notes.anglican.ca/sc2009/153>