



SACRED CIRCLE 2012 WALKING THE DREAM

Daily Report: August 7

MEMORY KEEPERS:

OLIVE ELM,
HURON

ROSALYN ELM,
HURON

WILLARD MARTIN,
CALEDONIA

LYRICS STUCK IN OUR HEADS:

"I LOOKED AT MY HANDS.
THEY LOOKED NEW. I
LOOKED AT MY FEET, AND
THEY DID TOO!"

WEATHER:

WARM IN THE SUN, COOL
IN THE SHADE

Questions to build

Today the talking circles got into some big questions: "What makes an effective church?", "What does an educational model that works for Indigenous ministry look like? How are we equipping our people for ministry?"

One memory keeper observed that these were important questions that showed how Indigenous Peoples are evolving beyond just organizing themselves. Now people are focusing on building up communities.

The second question inspired more conversation among the memory keepers. They compared notes from their own experiences of theological education—from a Masters of Divinity that integrated Indigenous

spirituality to another Masters of Divinity that was disconnected from Indigenous experiences.

"But Sacred Circle is the real deal," said a memory keeper. "You come here and you meet real people with real issues. Sacred Circle is like getting a Native Studies education."

Residential school wounds still with us

Many were touched by the keynote from Ted Qewezance of the National Residential School Survivors Society. He shared how the residential schools affected five generations of his family and what they were doing to rebuild.

Earlier today, in several talking circles people felt led to talk about their experiences in residential schools.

For some Sacred Circle members, this sharing was a surprise because they thought that people had moved on from these experiences.

For others, it brought up personal memories of feeling humiliated by their heritage, for example, if they were punished for speaking their language in school.

“It was difficult for me to hear others’ stories even though I’ve been doing a lot of work on myself,” said one memory keeper.

“It was difficult to feel the pain that these ladies were feeling. I didn’t know what to do, but they asked us come and pray for them, and we just prayed.”

How healed are we?

One memory keeper noticed that healing has been an important theme, especially after Bishop Andrew Atagotaaluk’s comment yesterday—that leaders need to be healed before they move on to mission.

This statement inspired lots of questions in the talking circles:

- How do we deal with leaders who are half-healed or not healed at all?
- Clergy often bear a lot of grief, emotion, and stress—especially in isolated communities. How are we supporting them?

- What role does the Truth and Reconciliation Commission play in our healing? What can we realistically expect?

Words heard

“The church took away our culture and now they’re encouraging us to bring it back into the church.”

“I sometimes don’t know what my northern relatives are going through. The southern churches have had different experiences. But we have to connect through that.”

“I love hearing Bishop Mark’s music in the morning. I always enjoy the rock-and-roll bishop!”

Q: “Where is the fountain of youth?”

A: “Ask Arthur Anderson, our oldest young person.”