

Mission Bytes

North Bay Presbytery Mission Committee

1/26/2015

Vol. 2, No. 1

Justice for Aboriginal People

MINUTE FOR RIGHT RELATIONS (M4RR) – January 2015

The intention of the M4RR is to offer a brief, monthly reflection that we hope will find a forum somewhere in your congregational life.

Similar to the M&S Minute for Mission, this might be used in a variety of ways in your context - and could include reading during Sunday worship or as a bulletin insert, at a Board meeting, or with study groups.

This Right Relations piece is a direct excerpt from Richard Wagamese's compelling novel "Indian Horse" This book, a Canada Reads finalist is a graceful and brutal depiction of a young boy's journey through life, including the horrors of residential school, and how he triumphs beyond his past. The excerpt captures a moment in time at residential school and portrays the huge emotional impact and loss of being taken from one's true home.

The January edition of our Minute for Right Relations was emailed out earlier this month. You can also find a copy on the Manitou Conference website.

THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was created in 2009 to offer a vehicle for former residential school students to share their experiences. Folk in North Bay Presbytery, including St. Andrew's Youth Group, are preparing to host Patrick Etherington and other First Nations' walkers who will be passing through our Presbytery from Cochrane en route Ottawa for the release of the final report of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission in late May/early June.

Stay tuned for more information on how we can support this important work!

The Commission's Closing Event will be held in Ottawa, May 31–June 3, 2015.

Mission Priorities

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As set forward by North Bay Presbytery, September 2011 and re-affirmed in 2014

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- To strongly encourage **green action** by individuals and in congregations by providing support, resources and guidance.
- To continue to work in advocating for **justice for Aboriginal peoples**.
- To support **youth** through programming that engages youth in their faith formation, and in their post-secondary lives.

Green Action

“To live with respect in creation.”

Ontario Energy Board Community Consultation Round Two - January 21, 2015

Last Wednesday (Jan. 21) over 200 people gathered in North Bay to engage in another round of discussion with the Ontario Energy Board regarding Trans Canada’s Energy East Pipeline proposal. Local United Churches were well represented by those in attendance. In November 2013 Ontario Minister of Energy Bob Chiarelli asked the OEB to undertake consultations with citizens that would inform the province of Ontario’s input to the regulatory process for EE pipeline approval. Trans Canada plans to ship 1.1 million barrels per day of oil sands crude 4000km from Hardisty Alberta to tidewater in Quebec and New Brunswick. The pipeline crosses the city of North Bay’s Trout Lake watershed, the city’s water source. During the first round of community consultations, North Bay Presbytery through its Mission Committee made a public presentation voicing its opposition to the Energy East proposal based in part on our concerns to the risk posed to the Trout Lake watershed and “the eco-systems that sustain life locally and globally.” We also raised the issue of climate justice noting the increase in greenhouse gas emissions from the expansion of oil extraction enabled by this pipeline. The NEB regulatory process does not allow climate change

to be part of the review. (The NB Presbytery document can be viewed on the OEB website.)

The Energy East pipeline proposal is presently under review by the National Energy Board, the federal regulator for the pipeline industry. We were told by the OEB consultants that the EE 30,000 page application is incomplete with important segments missing. Many people voiced their mistrust of both the EE proposal and the regulatory process for approval.

What comes next? Locally a coalition of concerned citizens continues to voice its opposition to the EE proposal. You can access information about the group at

www.stopenergyeastpipeline.ca. Plans are

underway to hold workshops to guide citizens who wish to apply to engage in the NEB process to voice their concerns about EE.

“The only thing we have to do to be sure we will leave a ruined world for our children and our grandchildren is to do exactly what we are doing now.” James Gustave Speth – Former Dean of Yale Forestry and Environmental studies.

In further conversations the Mission Committee has wrestled with this question: **Does the church have a role in addressing the present climate crises that is threatening our earth life support systems?**

At the **February presbytery meeting** the Mission Committee will begin a conversation about the wisdom of asking the United Church of Canada Foundation and General Council Treasury to divest its financial resources from the fossil fuel

industry. This will be a challenging conversation but one that we believe to be timely and necessary. We have been encouraged by the decisions to divest in fossil fuels by the World Council of Churches, the United Church of Christ in the US and Trinity St. Paul's United Church on Toronto. There will be an opportunity for us to ponder and pray about a proposal the Mission Committee will present along with some background reading at our February Presbytery meeting. We will give a "notice of motion" for the proposal to be voted on at our April meeting.

Few will argue that humankind is at a crossroads...how then shall we live? In our

presentation to the OEB last April we concluded our remarks with the following quote that is a powerful reminder that doing nothing is not an option:

"The only thing we have to do to be sure we will leave a ruined world for our children and our grandchildren is to do exactly what we are doing now." *James Gustave Speth – Former Dean of Yale Forestry and Environmental studies.*

In faith and hope as the days lengthen...
Elizabeth Frazer
on behalf of
North Bay Presbytery Mission Committee

Youth and Young Adults

Youth in North Bay Presbytery continue to be active in our communities. We are pleased to report that Carrie Graham has been selected to attend the National Youth Forum Winter Gathering at Five Oaks in February. Youth will have an opportunity to learn about the policies and structure of the United Church of Canada and reflect deeply on their vision for the future of the Church. The 5 delegates from Manitou Conference will select one among them to be a Commissioner to General Council in Cornerbrook Newfoundland this summer.

The North Bay Presbytery Youth Program will be holding an event in February open to all youth in grade 7 and up. Most events are held in the southern portion of the Presbytery. The NBP Youth also participates in larger events such as the Camp Lorrain Down and Dirty weekend, Worshiplude in Ottawa, Nature Retreats at Spirit Point and an all night vigil in North Bay. To find out more about the program and stay in touch with upcoming events ask to join the North Bay Presbytery Youth Group page on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/northbaypresbyteryouth/>

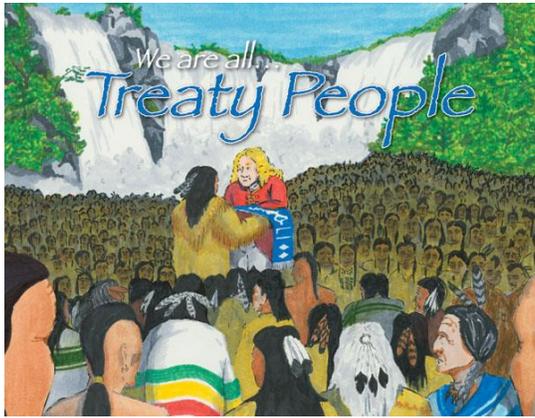


Camp Lorrain is Alive and Well!

Please note that Camp Lorrain will be offering two children's camps in 2015, a Junior Camp (ages 7 -10) from July 5-11 and an Intermediate Camp (ages 11-14) from July 12-18 as well as a CIT program beginning on July 1 to July 18. These important camp programs for our children still need whatever financial and

promotional support our congregations and presbyteries can provide. The rest of July and August is available for Camp Rentals. These rentals will provide other services to our communities as well as much needed revenue for our Manitou Conference Camp Programs.

WE ARE ALL TREATY PEOPLE - a book review submitted by Teresa Jones



We are all Treaty People is a slim 34-page book written by Maurice Switzer and illustrated by Charley Hebert. Designed as an 'easy read' for youth and adults, it is essentially "the Coles notes version" of how and why treaties between First Peoples and the Government were made, and how they affect current-day Ontario. Many of us did not receive any information about First Peoples in school, far less a history lesson on treaties from an Aboriginal perspective. Here is your chance! This book acquaints the reader with landmark events such as the *Royal Proclamation* of 1763 and the Treaty of Niagara, that provide essential background for understanding current treaty rights and land claim discussions. As the history lesson unfolds in this book, it becomes clear that indeed all people of this country are treaty people. Through the treaties negotiated by our Government with First Peoples, everyone shares in the benefits and obligations made through those promissory agreements or covenants. Copies of this book have been placed in each Public Library in North Bay Presbytery, by the Mission Committee. It's a small book but with huge implications for the present and future!

Other Events in our Presbytery

- **Technology Workshop** – February 21st at Emmanuel United Church, North Bay.
How can you use technology to enhance your church's ministry? Learn about appropriate and user friendly technology to strengthen worship, meetings and accounting. A variety of workshops and presentations include Adobe Connect, Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Social Media, Church worship media software and more. Bring your questions and get individual coaching, tutorials and troubleshooting. *More details to follow – save the date!*
- **Earth our Home Series:** Honoring the United Nations Earth Charter with our Lives. February 6 at 1:30 to 3:30. Downtown crisis worker Tracy Davis (Designated Lay Minister at St. Andrew's) will share her experience concerning poverty in our city. St Joseph's Motherhouse, 2025 Main St West North Bay in collaboration with Transition Town North Bay.
- **North Bay Presbytery Meeting** – Wednesday February 11th , 9:30 am at Emmanuel United Church

If you have announcements or items that you would like to submit to the Mission Bytes Newsletter please forward them to:

Lisa Blais at blais.trinity@gmail.com

Deadline: February 20, 2015
