

KIDSTUFF



The Committee for Children's Ministry, Anglican Diocese of Montreal, 1444 Union Ave., Montreal, QC H3A 2B8

February, 2004

Dear Children's Ministry Reps,

Enclosed you will find your Parish's Bishop's Lenten Project Package for Lent 2004.

This year, Kidstuff, with the full endorsement of Archbishop Andrew, has chosen to focus the BLP on the Settlement Fund for Residential Schools to which our Diocese, along with all others across Canada, has made a commitment.

We, at Kidstuff, felt it was important for our children to feel included in this larger covenant and to understand at their own learning level, something of the history behind the Residential Schools.

Without expecting children to "take the blame" for past wrongs we do see that learning about First Nations culture, respecting our aboriginal brothers and sisters, sympathizing with those who were hurt as children, and finally, working for a better future in which such situations will not arise again, are all constructive ways in which to engage children in this Project.

In this package you will find:

- 1) Maps outlining the location of the Residential Schools and other Background Materials;
- 2) A "Let's Get Involved" sheet to photocopy for each child;
- 3) A pattern and instructions for making a Teepee Collecting Box;
- 4) Four weekly subject outlines to explore with the children either at church or at home;
- 5) Excerpts from poetry and prose that, along with other materials, could be assembled as a display board in your Church, serving as a reminder of both the Settlement Fund and the Bishop's Lenten Project to the whole congregation.

We hope that this package will be a starting point for you, and the children in your church, to explore and share in the history of the First Nations Peoples and our present commitment to work together as one Body in Christ.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Valerie" with a stylized flourish underneath.

In His Service,
Valerie Taylor, chairperson,
Kidstuff

P.S., Please contact me if you need more information or have comments or suggestions:
514-487-2517 (home) or 514-484-1414 (work)

CrossTalk Ministries

From: "Archbishop Andrew Hutchison" <bishops.office@montreal.anglican.ca>
To: <ctm@cam.org>
Sent: November 6, 2003 4:12 PM
Subject: For Valerie Taylor - re: Bishop's Lenten Project

Valerie

Thank you for your email, and for suggesting the Settlement Fund as the Bishop's Lenten Project.

The residential schools were, of course, for children. Too many of them were brought to the schools by the Government against their will, and grew apart from their families as they tried to understand a new language and culture. Some of them suffered abuse at the hands of older students and members of staff.

The Church is now doing its best to help the children of those residential school graduates re-learn their languages and their cultures, and we are learning some important things from them, as they sit with us in our churches and church councils. This project would be a wonderful reaching out from our children to aboriginal children in our churches as brothers and sisters in the love of Christ.

+ Andrew

BLP 2004

Let's Get Involved!

This activity sheet is filled with things to do in Lent. Some of the ideas are for helping you collect money for The Settlement Fund for Residential Schools being supported by this year's **Bishop's Lenten Project**. The other ideas are fun things you can do alone, or with friends or family. We hope you enjoy it!

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THINGS TO DO

Ways To Collect \$\$

FUN STUFF

1	<p>Make a Teepee box for the money you collect. Decorate with markers or crayons, and write your name inside.</p>	<p>If there's snow, shovel your front walk or your neighbour's and ask for a donation.</p>	<p>Plant some grass seed and bulbs in a container to make an Easter garden. A clay flowerpot on its side can be the empty tomb.</p>
2	<p>It's Year C, the year of Luke! Read a chapter of this gospel every day in Lent.</p>	<p>Save part of your allowance and put it in your Lenten box.</p>	<p>Have a special video night at your house. Invite your friends and family. Serve popcorn and hot chocolate.</p>
3	<p>Make a prayer tree: decorate a branch with leaves on which you and your family write prayers. Remember the children who attended the Residential Schools.</p>	<p>Make a snow sculpture exhibition in your churchyard and charge a small admission fee.</p>	<p>Make a grapefruit bird feeder. Take an empty grapefruit half, fill with birdseed, make three holes in the rind and hang.</p>
4	<p>Interview your clergy about the Settlement Fund. Write down any questions you want to ask. Write an article for the parish newsletter about our project.</p>	<p>Hold a bake sale after church (maybe you could meet friends on Saturday to bake).</p>	<p>Have a look at the Kidstuff website. We've added some cool links! www.montreal.anglican.org</p>
5	<p>Enlarge one of our maps. Trace its outline in pencil, then write a prayer (or have an adult do it) all around the outline.</p>	<p>Ask your mother or father to help you find a special chore at home or at church which you could be paid for.</p>	<p>Make some Easter eggs. Try boiling them in onion skins, beets or cranberry juice or dyeing them with food colouring. Decorate with stickers or markers.</p>
6	<p>Please send us a copy of your prayer from last week and photos of your snow sculptures, bake sale or any other special activity you took part in for the BLP!</p>	<p>The commitment of our churches to the Settlement Fund don't end at the end of Lent. Please continue to pray for them and remember them.</p>	<p>Do some special baking for the end of Lent. How about making hot cross buns or pretzels?</p>

 IMPORTANT DATES

Winter 2000



Residential schools chronology

1820

The Rev. John West brings students from as far away as York Factory to the first residential school at Red River.

1872

Shingwauk School established on the initiative of chiefs Augustin Shingwauk and Buhkwujunene at Garden River, Ont. (Relocated to Sault Ste. Marie.)

1885

Miss Kate Brown organizes a school for girls on the Blood Reserve, Alberta, with the support of the Woman's Auxiliary.

1880s

The Indian Department changes from providing only food rations and small grants for capital costs to providing grants based on annual school attendance.

1910

The Church Missionary Society (England) announces it will no longer provide for the salaries of Anglican residential schools principals.

1913

The Missionary Society of the Church in Canada (MSCC) had established an Indian Residential Schools Committee to administer residential schools.

1919-1947

Residential schools administered from Winnipeg.

1945

General Synod initiates a National Commission on Indian Work.

- [Residential schools chronology](#)
- [The way forward](#)
- [God in the midst of it](#)
- [Where we have been](#)
- [Steps on a healing path](#)
- [Faces, stories](#)
- ['I am the church'](#)
- ['My hope ...'](#)
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- [New and noteworthy from ABC](#)
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- [Study Resources](#)
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The cover of this edition of MinistryMatters is a painting entitled Kitkatla Spring by Tsimshian artist Roy Henry Vickers. The evocative painting is one of a set of two, the other entitled Kitkatla Winter. These two works, Mr. Vickers has written, "are symbolic of no longer running from the past, but embracing it and being in the here and now. And so it is to move from winter into spring." Mr. Vickers and his family lived in Kitkatla for eight years. Today he resides in Brentwood Bay, B.C. where he has a home and a studio.

1953

Half-day system of education in the schools ends.

1960s

A review of arrangements leads the Anglican Church to withdraw from the schools' administration as of April 1969.

1969

Publication of Beyond Traplines, the Hendry Report.

1991

Creation of Residential Schools Advisory Group and fund for healing and reconciliation.

1993

Primate's apology.

1994

Adoption of the Native Covenant.

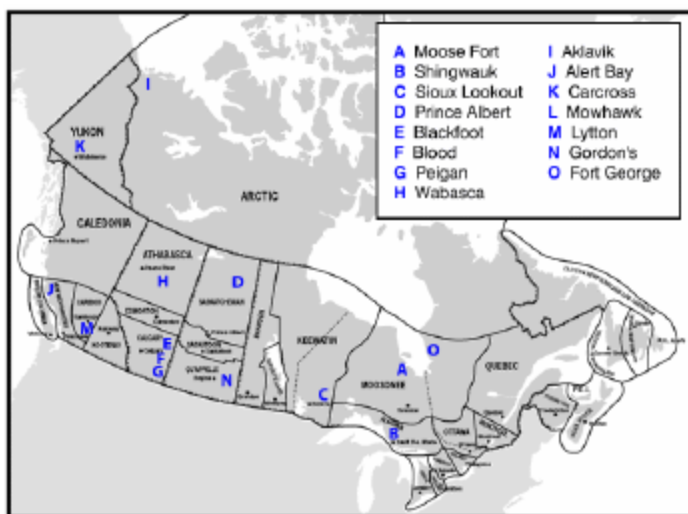
1996

Publication of the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

1999

A BC court finds the church and the government both liable for abuse at St. George's School, Lytton.

Residential schools (1955)

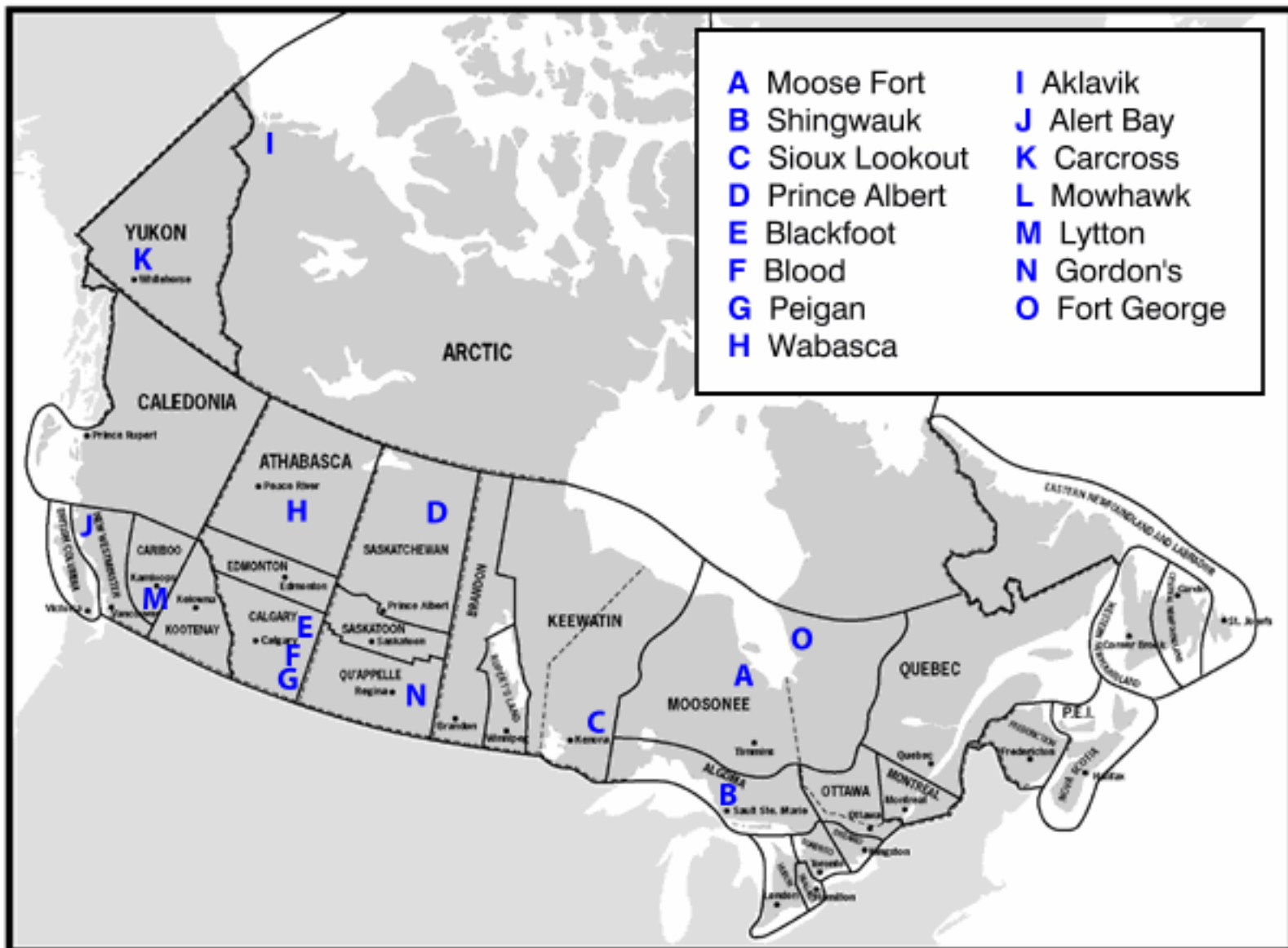


generalsynod.anglican.ca/ministries/departments/mm/2000/legacy/mm02.html

Last updated on January 18, 2000 at 04:19.

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Residential schools (1955)



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Residential Schools Background pg. 1...

Long before Europeans came to North America, aboriginal people had a highly developed system of education. If you think of how difficult it must have been for aboriginal people to survive by earning a living from the land, you may realize that there was a great deal for aboriginal children to learn before they could survive on their own. Aboriginal elders and parents passed on not only survival skills to their children, but their history, artistic ability, music, language, moral and religious values.

When European missionaries began to live amongst aboriginal people, they concluded that the sooner they could separate children from their parents, the sooner they could prepare aboriginal people to live a civilized (i.e. European) lifestyle. Residential schools were established for two reasons: separation of the children from the family and the belief that aboriginal culture was not worth preserving. Most people concluded that aboriginal culture was useless and dying and all human beings would eventually develop and change to be like the 'advanced' European civilization.

Early residential schools were similar to religious missions. Later, the mission-run schools were administered jointly by Canadian churches and the federal government, and for a number of years, residential schools became official Canadian policy for the education of Indian children. Speaking no English, having never ridden in a car or truck, having never eaten anything other than meat, fish, bannock and perhaps the occasional sweet treat, aboriginal children as young as six left the world of their families and were sent into the unfamiliar world of the white man.

Children were usually rounded up in August and transported by train, plane or bus to the residential schools. They were separated from their brothers, sisters and friends and herded together according to age level. They were issued clothes and assigned a bed number. Even though many of the children could not speak any English, the supervisors spoke only English to them. The children were, in fact, punished for speaking their native languages. For as long as a year, and occasionally for several years, children were unable to express to anyone in authority what their basic needs were. Loneliness, sickness, confusion and abuse all had to be borne in lonely silence.

Many things combined to make the experience difficult for young aboriginal children. They included the suffocating heat of the buildings; the painful need for someone to talk to; the pain of separation from their families; the bad tasting, indigestible food; the size and unfamiliarity of the buildings; the frightening crowds of people; the concentration-camp style discipline; mental and physical abuse; and the continual loss of personal freedoms and individual control. All of this must have been a staggering shock to the new "student" .

Residential Schools Backgroundpg. 2

The white man's school contradicted everything these aboriginal children had learned at home. Aboriginal society placed a large measure of responsibility on children's shoulders. They were expected to help with jobs such as tending the nets, feeding the dogs, cutting and hauling wood, cutting up meat and fish for drying. The school demanded very little in comparison. A child had no responsibility for the well-being of others. At residential school, the aboriginal child became no one's keeper, not even his own.

Some children were able to return home for two short summer months. Parents found that they had changed. Children were no longer interested in helping the family with tasks such as carrying water and other chores. They had to be told everything, and they often refused to "listen." Instead they "talked back" and in general tended to spend time with children their own age who also attended residential school. Parents noted that frequent, violent arguments (very foreign to most aboriginal cultures) arose and that children seemed as unconcerned about hurting others as they were unwilling to obey elders.

Even more difficult for parents was the children's loss of ability to speak their own language. After several years away at school, children often found it difficult to speak their mother tongue. Parents felt left out when the children spoke English and wondered if their sons and daughters were talking about things they didn't want their parents to understand. Children used English when they were angry and so English became associated with bad feelings and strong language.

The most damaging part of residential schools, from an aboriginal perspective, was that children were taught that their culture was not worth preserving. Students learned that aboriginal traditional values were wrong and primitive, and that white Canadians came from a more "advanced" form of social organization. Students came to see their homes as "dirty" and "cold," their parents as dressing "funny" and as smelling "bad." Students began to believe that the ceremonies and rituals which harmonized the spiritual and social life of the community and gave its members a sense of personal significance and group identity, were "heathen" and "the work of the Devil." The organization of the schools and the content of the curriculum conveyed to aboriginal children that the human values, the political institutions, the spiritual practices and the economic strategies of other Canadians were infinitely superior to the "primitive" ways of their traditional lifestyles.

It was disorienting for aboriginal children to spend the first (formative) years of life living in a traditional aboriginal way, and then to be thrust into a foreign, concentration-camp style school. Residential school disrupted the smooth transmission of beliefs, skills, and knowledge from one generation to the next, and deliberately divorced the aboriginal child from her background by discrediting her culture, punishing her for speaking her language and preaching the superiority of European attitudes. The experience often caused severe, and in many cases, unalterable damage to the child, to the family and to the community to which she would eventually return.

Copied from <http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/issues/schools-e.html>

Residential Schools Background ...pg. 3

There were some positive aspects to residential schools. Without them, most of the students would never have learned to read and write, or learn about other ways of life than their own. It was not education in itself that was bad. It was that the manner in which the residential schools were organized were simply not sensitive to the needs or lifestyle of the aboriginal students.

By the 1950s, the Canadian government began to realize the residential school policy was a failure. The last residential school in Canada was closed some 30 years later.

Today, aboriginal people want recognition of what was done to their communities as a result of the residential schools. Aboriginal people have demanded, and received, official apologies from the Anglican, United and Roman Catholic churches which operated residential schools. As more and more former students of residential schools come forth with stories about the sexual and physical abuse they experienced, several religious authorities who administered the schools are being charged criminally.

The residential school experience continues to plague First Nations education. Many people who attended residential schools, now parents and grandparents, have biases against education for their children because of what they experienced. Furthermore, while the closure of residential schools meant that more and more aboriginal children began to attend regular provincial schools, provincial education curriculums did not change to reflect the educational needs of aboriginal children. Today, the cross-Canada average of the percentage of aboriginal children that complete Grade 12 is about 20%, and even lower in northern regions. Aboriginal children continue to have difficulties fitting in to the existing schools, which are still designed around a culture alien to their own.

Many First Nations are taking over the running of their schools from the government. By designing their own curriculums and running their own schools, aboriginal people intend to reclaim the education of their children and put the residential school experience in the past.

Copied from <http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginal/issues/schools-e.html>

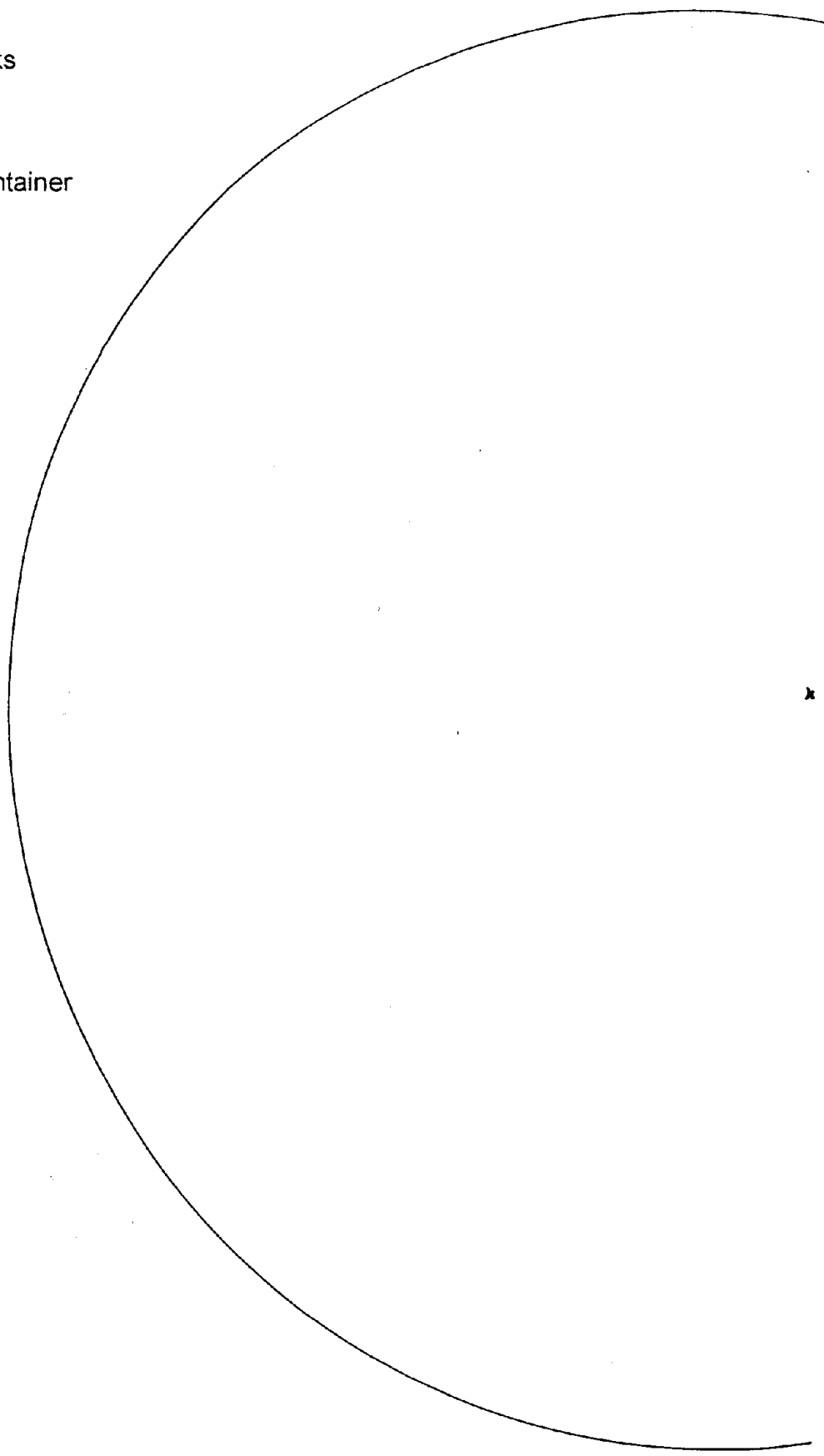
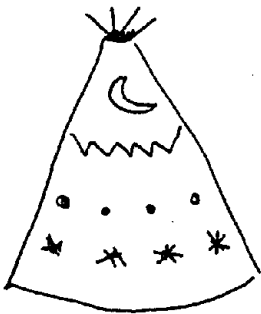
TEEPEE COLLECTION BOX FOR THE BLP 2004

You will need:

- 4 wooden Kebab sticks
- string, elastic or tape
- markers, crayons for decorating
- small jar or plastic container

Instructions:

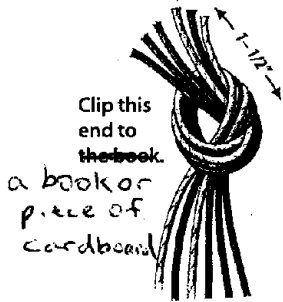
- 1) Cut out half circle pattern piece on this sheet.
- 2) Take 4 wooden Kebab sticks and tie or tape together approx 5 cm from the pointed end.
- 3) Decorate teepee cover with markers or crayons, and write your name on the inside.
- 4) Roll pattern into a cone shape, leaving a small opening at the top. Tape side edge closed.
- 5) Slip cone over the sticks to form a teepee.
- 6) Stand finished teepee over a small jar or plastic container for collecting coins.



S W I R L & B R A I D S

Getting started:

Tie a knot about 1-1/2 inches from the end.



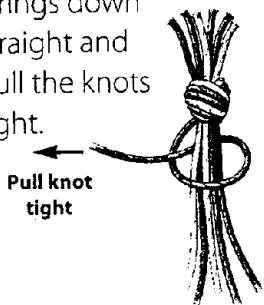
1

Gather all the strings together, leaving one out.



2

Tie the single string around all the rest. Do it ten times going left to right. Hold the strings down straight and pull the knots tight.

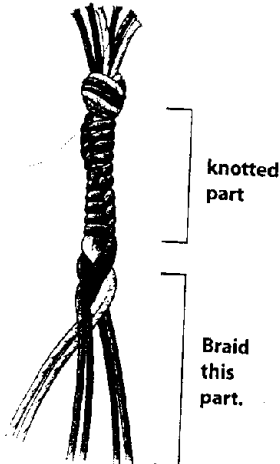


Hold these down straight



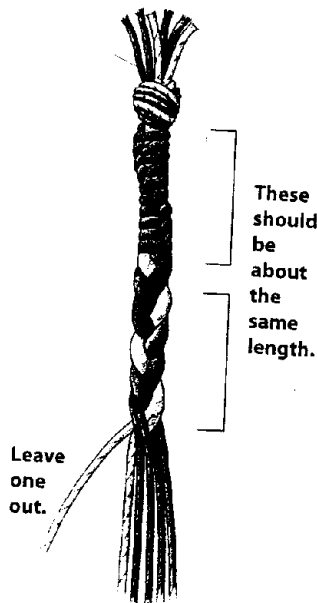
4

Braid the bundles until the braided part is as long as the knotted part.



5

Gather all the strings together again, but this time leave out a different colored string.



6

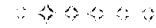
Repeat steps 2 through 5 until the bracelet is as long as you would like. Tie a knot with all the strings together at the end to secure. Trim the ends to about 1-1/2 inches.



This is a fun, quick bracelet to make. Once you get the hang of it, try making a thicker one using more strands.

What you'll need:

Six strings,
three colors,
21 inches long each.



3

Bundle the same color strings together in pairs, so you have three bundles with two strings each.



I am a native of North America.

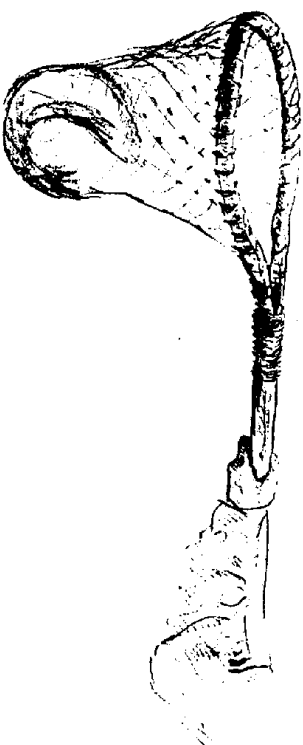
In the course of my lifetime I have lived in two distinct cultures. I was born into a culture that lived in communal houses. My grandfather's house was eighty feet long. It was called a smoke house, and it stood down by the beach along the inlet. All my grandfather's sons and their families lived in this large dwelling. Their sleeping apartments were separated by blankets made of bull rush reeds, but one open fire in the middle served the cooking needs of all. In houses like these, throughout the tribe, people learned to live with one another; learned to serve one another; learned to respect



the rights of one another. And children shared the thoughts of the adult world and found themselves surrounded by aunts and uncles and cousins who loved them and did not threaten them. My father was born in such a house and learned from infancy how to love people and be at home with them.

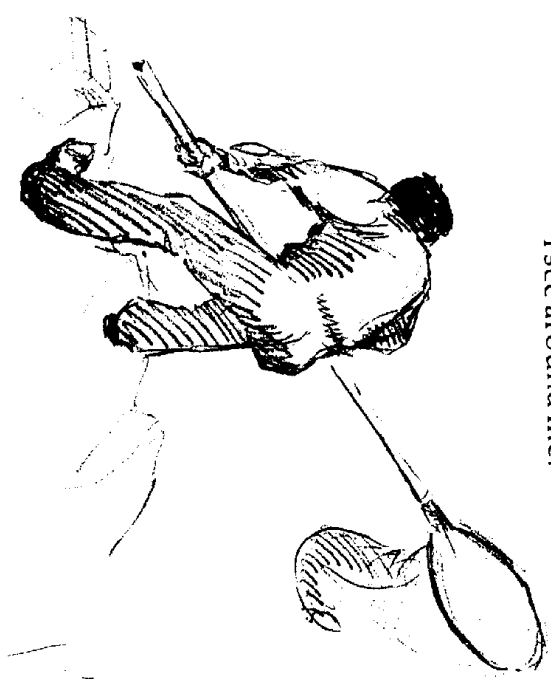
And beyond this acceptance of one another there was a deep respect for everything in nature that surrounded them. My father loved the earth and all its creatures. The earth was his second mother. The earth and everything it contained was a gift from See-see-am . . . and the way to thank this great spirit was to use his gifts with respect.

I remember, as a little boy, fishing with him up Indian River and I can still see him as the sun rose above the mountain top in the early morning . . . I can see him standing by the water's edge with his arms raised above his head while he softly moaned . . . "Thank you, thank you". It left a deep impression on my young mind.



And I shall never forget his disappointment when once he caught me gaffing for fish "just for the fun of it". "My Son" he said, "The Great Spirit gave you those fish to be your brothers, to feed you when you are hungry. You must respect them. You must not kill them just for the fun of it."

This then was the culture I was born into and for some years the only one I really knew or tasted. This is why I find it hard to accept many of the things I see around me.

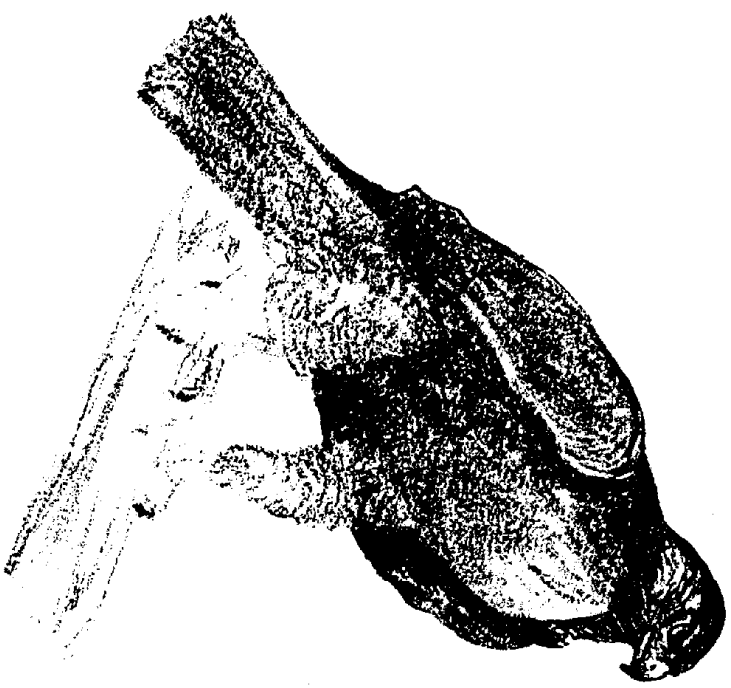


I see people living in smoke houses hundreds of times bigger than the one I knew. But the people in one apartment do not even know the people in the next and care less about them.

It is also difficult for me to understand the deep hate that exists among people. It is hard to understand a culture that justifies the killing of millions in past wars, and is at this very moment preparing bombs to kill even greater numbers. It is hard for me to understand a culture that spends more on wars and weapons to kill, than it does on education and welfare to help and develop.

It is hard for me to understand a culture that not only hates and fights his brothers but even attacks nature and abuses her. I see my white brothers going about blotting out nature from his cities. I see him strip the hills bare, leaving ugly wounds

on the face of mountains. I see him tearing things from the bosom of mother earth as though she were a monster, who refused to share her treasures with him. I see him throw poison in the waters, indifferent to the life he kills there; and he chokes the air with deadly fumes.



My white brother does many things well for he is more clever than my people but I wonder if he knows how to love well. I wonder if he has ever really learned to love at all. Perhaps he only loves the things that are his own but never learned to love the things that are outside and beyond him. And this is, of course, not love at all, for man must love all creation or he will love none of it. Man must

love fully or he will become the lowest of the animals. It is the power to love that makes him the greatest of them all... for he alone of all animals is capable of love.

Love is something you and I must have. We must have it because our spirit feeds upon it. We must have it because without it we become weak and faint. Without love our self-esteem weakens. Without it our courage fails. Without love we can no longer look out confidently at the world. Instead we turn inwardly and begin to feed upon our own personalities and little by little we destroy ourselves.

You and I need the strength and joy that comes from knowing that we are loved. With it we are creative. With it we march tirelessly. With it, and with it alone, we are able to sacrifice for others.

There have been times when we all wanted so desperately to feel a re-assuring hand upon us... there have been lonely times when we so wanted a strong arm around us... I cannot tell you how deeply I miss my wife's presence when I return from a trip. Her love was my greatest joy, my strength, my greatest blessing.

I am afraid my culture has little to offer yours. But my culture did prize friendship and companionship. It did not look on privacy as a thing to be clung to, for privacy builds up walls and walls promote distrust. My culture lived in big family communities, and from infancy people learned to live with others.

My culture did not price the hoarding of private possessions, in fact, to hoard was a shameful thing to do among my people. The Indian looked on all

things in nature as belonging to him and he expected to share them with others and to take only what he needed.

Everyone likes to give as well as receive. No one wishes only to receive all the time. We have taken much from your culture... I wish you had taken something from our culture... for there were some beautiful and good things in it.

Soon it will be too late to know my culture, for integration is upon us and soon we will have no values but yours. Already many of our young people have forgotten the old ways. And many have been shamed of their Indian ways by scorn and ridicule. My culture is like a wounded deer that has crawled away into the forest to bleed and die alone.

The only thing that can truly help us is genuine love. You must truly love us, be patient with us and share with us. And we must love you — with a genuine love that forgives and forgets... a love that forgives the terrible sufferings your culture brought ours when it swept over us like a wave crashing along a beach... with a love that forgets and lifts up its heads and sees in your eyes an answering love of trust and acceptance.

This is brotherhood... anything less is not worthy of the name.

I have spoken.

Healing Prayers

Gathering Prayer

Creator, we give you thanks for all you are and all you bring to us for our visit within your creation. In Jesus, you place the Gospel in the center of this sacred circle through which all of creation is related. You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life. Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we grow in your spirit, for you are God, now and forever. Amen.
(Gospel Based Discipleship)

Covenant Collect

Creator God, from you every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. You have rooted and grounded us in your covenant love, and empowered us to your Spirit to speak the truth in love, and to walk in your way towards justice and wholeness. Mercifully grant that your people journeying together in partnership, may be strengthened and guided to help one another to grow into the full stature of Christ, who is our light and our life. Amen.

Prayer for Healing

God of the broken and dispossessed, defender of the helpless, you grieve with all who weep because the child in them is no more; may we also refuse to be comforted until the violence of the strong has been confounded, and the broken victims have been set free in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

We are here for those whose bodies, feelings, thoughts and spirits have been abused. We love and affirm all those who have been hurt.

Although they have been hurt they have not been destroyed.

Although they have been humiliated, they have not lost their integrity.

Although love for them was violated, they have not lost their capacity to love.

We affirm their wholeness, their goodness, their truthfulness, their integrity, their ability to love.

We dispel the forces of destruction, and the abuse of power and trust which seek to make them victims. Amen.

Prayer for Reconciliation

O God, as these your children, go down into the depths of their being: show them the hidden things, the creatures of their dreams, the storehouse of forgotten memories, hurts, strengths. Take them to the springs of their lives and tell them that their natures have their names. Give them freedom to grow so they may become the people whose seed was planted at their making.

Out of the depths do we cry to you, O God.

Our loving God asks them:

Listen to the language of your wounds. Turn from your wounds, but live from the depths of them, making the extent of your desolation the extent of your realm. The wounded, frightened child within you needs your adult, caring strength, so that the gift you are protecting may be yours.

May our only wounds be these:

the wound that we cannot avoid because we belong to each other, and feel and hear the murmur of the world's pain; the wound of a sense of compassion for others; the wound of a sense of longing for God, the source of life and love, deep within us and far beyond us. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer...

Prayers from Dancing Sun Resource:

Creator God, your mercy calls us to reconciliation and healing. May we look up to see we are standing at your gates; and at your gates everyone is welcome.

May we seek all good. Be with us, each one, as we go to our work this week. Help us to grow in our hearts and in our minds. Sharing the gift of love you have brought in your son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. (Vol. I)

Creator, help us to remember: that we belong to you. That you call us to respect all faiths, all nations. That you are with us even when we have problems. That when we put our gifts to use, we are giving them back to you. That you speak to different people in different ways...and we are to respect the gifts of others.

(Vol. III)

Creator, we long for wholeness in our church. For honest, open communication, to say what we need to say, in safety and without fear.

Hear our Prayer, O God, and in your love, answer.

Creator, help us to stay close. To never let go of one another, in joy as well as in pain. To embrace. To feel the physical presence of one another. And be truly present, one to another.

Hear our Prayer, O God, and in your love, answer.

Creator, we need to feel connected to our families, and to the church family. To learn and to grow. To be part of a web of relationships. To pass on values, love and a sense of closeness. To be part of an inner circle of safety. To spiral out to an open circle that welcomes others in.

Hear our Prayer, O God, and in your love, answer.

Creator, we long for a gentler time of warmth and wholeness. For time and energy to nourish relationships. For honest sharing out of genuine love for all members of the church community.

Hear our Prayer, O God, and in your love, answer.

Creator, we long to dance. To move into the center of the circle. To touch and grow together in community, into completeness.

Hear our Prayer, O God, and in your love, answer. (Vol. IV)

Our Creator,

We give thanks for the dreams we have for our families, for our communities, and for our church.

(here people may wish to name some of their dreams)

Guide us in all we do, may we bring healing to ourselves, our families and our communities. (Vol. IV)

Creator,

We thank you that there are different paths to wholeness.

We see your wonder in creation all around us. In the singing birds and the flowing water.

We give thanks for the opportunity to share, and for everything the Creator has given us.

We give thanks for connectedness to one another. For interconnectedness with the whole created world. The entire cosmos.

We give thanks that Jesus Christ has been in our past, is in our present, and will be with us in our future.

We give thanks for laughter, for humour for the many different ways we are able to be together – and in community.

We give thanks as well for the differences between us. And for the respect we have for the different paths that people take.

We give thanks for the elders. For the opportunities to be respected no matter what our views are. and to celebrate the different views we have.

We give thanks for different approaches to grief. And the opportunities to laugh and share and to care. And that we are each different and yet together.

We give thanks for new understandings. For bridges we are able to build between people.

Help us to be open to new life and to vision. To bring new life to our homes. To heal and to be healers in our families, in our communities and in our church.

(Vol. IV)

'My hope is that we will journey together'

By Gordon Beardy



I would like to begin by telling you about my personal history.

I was raised in the small northwestern Ontario community of Bearskin Lake. This OjiCree community is approximately 240 miles north of Sioux Lookout. My parents spoke only their native language. It is here that my dad carried out his traditional livelihood of hunting, trapping and fishing, and the only race of people I was exposed to were native people, the OjiCree people. My early childhood was spent playing with friends, running with them, laughing, hunting and talking about life, as we knew it and what we could envision it would be at that age.

My father and mother told me about my grandfather who had signed a treaty with the white people, the government, which was an agreement about the use of the land we lived on, and that its intentions were to share the land and its resources and live in peace with other people. They also told me about my grandfather's dream, that one of his grandchildren would become a leader for the community.

Their Christian and traditional teachings and values were passed on to me. To respect myself, others of different colour or race, language, and the Creator's creation. I also heard about other children being taken from the community to attend school somewhere, even though we had a day school in the community during the summer months.

When I was 5 years old I had a dream about angels coming to me and they took me to a church. My mother also had a dream, at the time I was born, that someday I would become a leader in the church.

When I was about 10, I too was sent away to school in Kenora, Ont., where I attended the Celia Jeffrey Residential School. I remember vividly looking back toward home mile after mile, not knowing where I was going.

Of my time at Celia Jeffrey School I clearly remember many nights I went to bed crying - lonely, afraid, and feeling no sense of security anymore because my parents, my friends were not there.

I also remember one day turning the water tap on and as it was running I poked my finger up into the faucet and wondered where all the water comes from. I was called into the office and told that I was not to do that. When I was caught speaking my language I was again called into the office and taught that my language was forbidden there. In my young mind I could not comprehend the rationale behind this. Why could I not be me, the person my parents had taught me to be? Why was being an Indian not important?

I remember a lot of shameful things that happened there to my friends. I became angry and my resentment built up to a point where I vowed that every white person would pay for this.

My self-esteem (spirit) became weak to a point of brokenness and I had to get away. I rebelled and ran away from that school with three other friends. We walked for two nights to Redditt without food. I remember walking by night and hiding by day, being very hungry and the lack of sleep overcame me. I remember falling down asleep and losing my friends.

When I awoke I felt I had no other alternative and went to the train station and hid in the dark. I sat there waiting, not caring where I would go or if I would die. This was the lowest point in my life. Imagine a boy of 11 wanting to die.

As I sat at the station in the dark a little dog came barking up to me and a white lady came upon me and said, "Can I help you?" I gave her a look that said, "Leave me alone." She pointed out to me where she lived and said I was welcome to come to her house. Later, my hunger got the best of me and I knocked on her door. She invited me in.

I entered her home reluctantly, ate a sandwich and went to bed. For two days I stayed with her, watching her knit and waiting for her son to come home from school to play. I couldn't figure out why she hadn't called the cops to take me back to the school. Finally, I asked her if she knew that I had run away from the Celia Jeffrey School. She said she knew that, but wanted to know why I had run away from the school.

Her "why" was the key word that has stayed with me to this day. It meant that another person (a white person) cared enough about me to ask. I said, "Your people are all mean" and she said, "No, not all of them." She said she would accompany me back to the school. And she did, she intervened for me and she spoke with the principal. I wasn't punished for running away.

She had instilled in me some sense of trust. From that day I tried to please within the system and hung in there to the end of the school year.

I returned home that summer and I asked: "Please Dad, don't send me back." My older brother, who had been to residential school, knew why I didn't want to go back and he spoke up for me and I was able to stay home and not return.

To this day I have not returned to school. I have always felt a lack of trust in these institutions. That year I returned to the land with my dad and lived my traditional way of life. I didn't speak English again until I was 25 years old. I became a leader in the community as a Councillor and as Chief. I have always strived to help young people, and to instill good values for a better life.

My calling to enter into the ministry came when I was 38 years old and it was at mother's urging, because of her dream. I studied and was ordained three years later, believing in my heart that I would be serving my native people.

My bishop came one day and asked me to speak in the churches in the southern part of the diocese. It was then that I discovered that I still carried resentment in my heart toward white people. I then had a dream and I heard, "God loves your people and he loves the others just as much."

I realized that I needed to deal with my anger and my resentment. I had to purge the seeds of anger that were planted in me at the residential school. I remember grieving, asking God to set aside my thoughts of revenge, to lead me, to guide me, to be the Lord of my life.

Two things that came to mind:

First, the woman in Redditt who cared for me and who had planted a good seed in my life, who showed me there is hope despite abuses and that we can respond to victims of residential schools with a compassionate and kind heart:

And secondly, the understanding that God loves each of us and that he wants us to come together to address past mistakes, right the wrongs. We cannot repeat these attitudes, and that it is a lesson to guide us to a brighter future.

I have had very mixed emotions coming here. One side of me was telling me to run. This is the first time I have met the people who ran the residential school of Celia Jeffrey School.

The other side of me said, it is time to come to meet you, to speak about hope, walking together, grieving and healing together, and journeying together toward wholeness.

I have come to say yes ... forgiveness leads us to peace within ourselves.

Forgiveness also teaches us to become peaceful. Forgiveness instills in us new hope a new sense of direction, a new sense of journeying together.

I have come, though it is hard, and often difficult. I want to forgive and continue to work with you in ways that will bring healing for both our nations.

I extend my hand to those who meant well and grieve today. Both of our people need healing. I extend my hand to you who are here so that we might journey together.

My hope is that we will journey together. Sometimes we struggle. By the grace of God and his son, we will overcome.

Adapted from an address by Bishop Gordon Beardy of Keewatin to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church Copyright © Ministry Matters, Winter 2000, available at generalsynod.anglican.ca/ministries/departments/mm/2000/legacy/mm10.html