



Indigenews

My People International

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Reconciliation—the essence of the Good News, the work of a life-time...

At the Washington, DC prayer breakfast this year (Ray and Terry attended by invitation), the morning speaker at the breakfast spoke of the need for reconciliation from his very unique story—a story which moved from “I live my life, I leave others alone to live theirs, all is well,” to “I am called of God to ensure others have opportunity to live as well.”

Here before us at the breakfast was a wealthy entrepreneur challenged to live his life for the poor in such a way as to bring some measure of economic reconciliation.

What follows is one of our colleague's reflections on the keynote speaker at the Washington Breakfast.

It was a kaleidoscope of reconciliation paradoxes...on the one side we heard statements like:

- "World human rights and religious freedom have taken a nose dive in the last 10 years."
- "Intolerance on religious division is rampant ..."
- Reports and stories about serious strife between: tribes, countries, ideologies, political opponents, ethnic groups, economic classes, inner-city gangs, corporations, families, individuals.

On the other hand we heard amazing stories of reconciliation and attempts to reconcile:

- Israel and Palestinian religious leaders meeting... as well as political leaders meeting... hopeful possibilities.

- Northern Ireland: long a hotbed of religious and political strife, with leaders meeting and significant reconciliation progress.
- Emerging leaders sharing personal accounts of bold and brave attempts to bring people of faith together with people of goodwill toward a common good in their countries, businesses, or lives.

What do we need for Reconciliation?

Five points were made clear in all that was said at the Breakfast about reconciliation:

- **Information:** dialogue from each side that clearly describes the thinking of all parties.
- **Understanding:** communication is not always what is said, but what is heard. Therefore, 50 pound ears are needed to really hear.
- **Appreciation:** acceptance that there really are different ways of behaving and thinking, often based on one's experiences and presuppositions
- **Affection:** the opportunity to let feelings catch up with the new information and important insights.
- **Cooperation:** specific discussions and commitments over a scheduled and protracted period of time to do things differently and together until the opposition can catch up.

Of course, all of this is prefaced on relationship through Jesus. And, that's what MPI is all about. Thanks again for making it possible.

- Terry LeBlanc

Check out our new and more functional
Website—Coming Soon...at
www.mypeopleinternational.com

We've come a long way from smoke signals—they never looked so good!!!



A Story of hope...

Frank* ended up with no place to live because of the abuse he had been handing out his family. By law the police would not allow him to go near his children or wife. I would see him on the streets here in Sioux Lookout. He was in such a state that Linda and I did not feel safe bringing him into our home or even the counseling room in our house. Because of his history and the issues with which e had been dealing, I also did not want him close to our daughters. In fact I really did not know where to take him for counseling. Meanwhile he would see me on the street and call me at home desperate for help. I knew there were times he probably lived on the streets at night in the cold and miserable conditions which punctuate many northern nights.

I decided that I could not just ignore him!

There is a shelter in Sioux lookout and, as he began to think more clearly it seemed, he started staying there at nights,. That is, if he was not drunk. Over time I made conscious decisions to at the very least take him out for coffee or a small meal when ever I could. And so, over the weeks, I began to take him for a cup of coffee or a bit of something to eat. It was here, over coffee and meals, that I began to do any mentoring or counseling that I could. Over time I could see little hints of change.

Frank has been a professing follower of Jesus for some time so I encouraged him in his walk as a Jesus follower while simultaneously trying to connect him with his own deeply-rooted issues of abuse. The two are very connected for Frank as they are for many native people in the north.

I was filled with joy when I discovered he had started helping at the shelter for street people—though he is one himself. I could see in this the signs of change as we continued to meet when opportunity allowed. As time went on the management of the shelter recognized Frank’s efforts and decided to offer him a job at the shelter. He now reaches out to people he understands very well and is making a contribution in his community. I believe there has been some real healing in his life even though he has a long way to go. He is now setting better boundaries for himself and teaching the same to other street people. What a story of grace—incomplete but on the road!!

- Rick Martin

* Not his real name. In most of our reports, unless a person specifically approves or desires their name to be used, we do not use real names—and details which may unnecessarily expose a person are altered so as to maintain anonymity. We hope you understand this need but assure you the people and their stories are very real—many, very traumatic.

MPI in Profile:

MY PEOPLE INTERNATIONAL came into existence to meet the growing need for Native North Americans to experience faith in Jesus in a Native North American way – a way which, while faithful to the historic call to conversion, sought to leave the convert in their own community and culture not make them into someone they were not. It has been a largely ignored aspect of indigenized Christian faith in Native North America.

MY PEOPLE INTERNATIONAL quickly outgrew a simple approach to mission as we realized the need for Native ministry may have remained the same but the context had changed dramatically over the years. Native community life continues to be more “dysfunctional” on average than any ethnic community in North America. Because of this, methods and mission needed an overhaul.

Native North Americans today are spread throughout North America – from the downtown core, the suburbs, towns, villages and rural areas to Canadian reserves and American reservations. This means it is essential to operate beyond historic boundaries like reserves and reservations.

We have developed:

- Partnerships with visionary, like-minded organizations to achieve our goals where each contributes what they are best suited to contribute;
- Theological and missiological understandings not previously available to us which allow us to speak of our faith and our understanding of God’s Word to our people in new ways while simultaneously addressing the social issues they uniquely confront;
- Cross-border dialogue and teaching in ministry, mission and biblical understanding for Native peoples;
- New approaches to such concerns as ethics, lifestyle and family, brought to the fore in authentically Native ways, so that we can stem the tide of cultural and social destruction.



Quotables...

"Thanks again for coming to share with us! I have heard from a number of students how much they appreciated your challenging message (and how they are still digesting it). To help with that process, would you be willing for us to post the text of your messages on the MLK Week web site? Specifically, a couple of professors have asked if they can use the papers for discussion in their classes..."
- Student at Messiah College—Ray Aldred addressed them recently

"I wanted to thank you for coming ... and sharing your time with us. I learned a lot and now have a new perspective regarding "the Maker." My perspective was from the [narrow] White/[Christian] up-bringing I had. It is forever changed."

- Response to Terry's presentation to a National Prayer Breakfast group in Washington, DC

"Through the circle, I was able to open up some of the inner hurts and wounds from my past and deal with them in a constructive manner. The leaders of the circle were a tremendous tool that Creator used to walk me down past trails. This, in turn allowed the Spirit to resurrect some of the dead times of my life so I could properly grieve and put them to their final resting place, at the foot of the Cross. I am aware that healing from abuse is a process but I am convicted my healing journey has begun through this circle. I found safety, but enough pressure to direct me deeper and deeper into my story to discover who I truly am as a human being and a son of the living Creator. I look forward to another circle so that I can take one more step close to who Creator created me to be."
- participant in recent E nen neh moon Circle

Ministry/Staff Highlights

E-nen-neh-moon Circle— *Winnipeg, MB*

The second week of the E nen-neh moon training in sexual abuse issues went ahead from the 18th to the 22nd of February as planned at a retreat just outside Winnipeg. Thirteen participants and our staff of six spent five days in an intensive time dealing with the issues and fallout of sexual abuse—a problem which, as we have reported in the past, is rampant in most reserve communities.

Kids Kamp— *Montana and Alberta*

The first planning meeting for kids camp went a head with Lisa Laird of Intervarsity and Tim from our staff, creating a framework for a more detailed planning meeting scheduled for March 14, 15. This next meeting will include all the staff who will be directly involved in the camp design and development as well as Intervarsity staff who will be partnering with us. The camp is scheduled from August 18-22 at Pioneer camp at Sundre, AB.

In addition, Summer Graham is in the planning stages for a wilderness camp with teens from the Blackfeet reservation at Browning, MT slated for July

this summer. Keep these efforts in your prayers...

VBS Publication—*Edmonton, AB*

Volume three is ready to go to print—at least the new and revised version of it anyway. The revisions have been completed and we are ready to get it to the press and into the hands of those who have pre-ordered this year's materials. Volume 4 is the last volume scheduled for minor revisions and will be reprinted later this year.

Dialogue Circle on Indigenous People's Rights and Relationships—International

Terry attended and was asked to speak at the Circle in mid-February. It was attended by indigenous leaders and politicians from across the globe including Nobel prize nominee Hilaria Supa Huaman, a Quechua woman member of the Peruvian Congress.

The Circle focused on relating stories of the ways in which indigenous people are moving forward in pursuing basic rights and healthy community life.

Terry spoke of the need to ensure we do not make the same errors which we have fallen vic-

tim to while we pursue a path of health based in our own worldviews.

National Prayer breakfast— *Washington, DC*

Once again, we had opportunity to present a perspective of life during the breakfast, which is clearly Jesus-centred and clearly indigenous. Ray and Terry attended.

Worldview and the Bible— *Kitchener, ON*

Adrian Jacobs spoke at a Worldview class at Emmanuel Bible College, helping students understand the connection between culture, worldview and the Bible.

Land and Justice—*Six Nations*

Adrian Jacobs hosted the second MCCO Aboriginal Neighbours Six Nations Land Claim informational meeting with 60 people in attendance. The meetings are attempts at helping people understand the issues involved in the tensions surrounding the Six nations land claim—and to do so as neighbours and followers of Jesus.

Prayer Needs

⇒ Tim and Vivien Stime who have been spending their vacation visiting Vivien's family in Malaysia. Please pray for a refreshing time and safe return!

⇒ Continue to pray for the developing partnership with IVCF for this year's first Native youth camp to be held at Sundre, AB. It will involve native kids from Canada and the US.

⇒ For Roger Boyer and his wife Tammy. Roger is an Anishinabe doctoral student under NAIITS' program and Ray Aldred's protégé. The board has given approval for Roger to join the staff on full deputation (raising their own support). Pray for the details and favour as they raise support.

⇒ For Bev and Terry's son Matt who is now working with a friend overseas—and, we believe, moving toward the conquest of his struggles—thanks for the ongoing prayer, it has meant a lot...

⇒ For the upcoming E-nen-neh-moon Circle and Nēs-tooāāk (means capable in Mi'kmaq) training events this year.

⇒ **We are thankful** for the support which has come in to make these possible across the continent (see the schedule on the back page)

“Person-Centered Discipleship — Keeping the Message Real!”

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Check out some of the new
stories and links on our
website!

www.
mypeopleinternational.com

What is our Vision?

Our vision is a simple one
though broadly stated:

*That every Native North
American Person will know
a fulfilled Faith and Life
through Jesus – experi-
enced in a Native North
American Way.*

What is our mission?

*To communicate the good
news of Jesus to Native
North American people in
a culturally relevant way;
affirm Native culture and
context in our discipleship;
encourage culturally-
redemptive worship cen-
tered on Jesus; and facili-
tate a culturally appropri-
ate presence of Native peo-
ple in the wider commu-
nity of those who follow
Jesus.*

Dates and Events ...

Thanks

Thanks to the following for their contributions to MPI *in support of E-nen-neh-moon Circle and* Nēstooāāk—
our training programs.

People’s Church, Toronto

World Vision Canada

Bridgeway Foundation, Cambridge

Upcoming Events

March 6-8	Terry at InterVarsity Canada Board meeting
March 13-15	Terry presents a paper at Duke Divinity School
Apr. 1-3	MPI has been invited to participate in a conference on urban development—Terry will attend
Apr. 24	MPI Dessert Evening - New Brighton, MN – New Brighton Family Services Center
May 14&15	National Prayer Breakfast in Ottawa
August 18-22	Kid’s Camp—Sundre, AB

Training Events—Dates and Places...

February 18-22, 2008—E-nen-neh-moon Circle—Winnipeg, MB
May 8-11, 2008—Nēstooāāk—Truro, NS
October 2-5, 2007— Nēstooāāk—Madison, WI
October 15-19, 2008—E-nen-neh-moon Circle—Edmonton, AB
November 13-16, 2008—Nēstooāāk—Toronto, ON
March 18-22, 2009—E-nen-neh-moon Circle—Eastern Canada (location TBA)
April 16-19, 2009—Nēstooāāk—Billings, MT