



THE JESUS WAY IN INDIGENOUS CONTEXT >>>

# indigeneNews

WINTER 2018 EDITION

## SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ME

2017 WAS FULL OF MANY great opportunities for Linda and me to counsel and encourage our First Nations sisters and brothers. We travelled to places like Beaver Lake Camp just outside Dryden, Ontario, Fairbanks, Alaska, Browning, Montana, Vancouver, BC and many others.

But an experience that stands out most to us at this time is about a young First Nations man from Manitoba who attended a conference where we were ministering. Fred (not his real name) had been struggling with many addictions. He just could not seem to gain victory over them--no freedom--just constant struggles. Fred's long-term addictions had even assigned him some jail time. *(To read the rest of this adventure go to [www.mypeopleinternational.com](http://www.mypeopleinternational.com))*

—Rick Martin



Linda Martin at Beaver Lake Camp

## NAIITS Appoints new Dean

THE NAIITS BOARD, Faculty, and Staff are excited to announce the appointment of Gene Green as the new Academic Dean as of July 1, 2018.

After years of teaching in Latin America, Gene came to Wheaton College where he teaches New Testament. His wife Deborah is a nurse midwife, working in women's health. They have two daughters and two grandchildren.



Gene Green

Gene has played an important role in helping Wheaton engage with Indigenous issues over the past 10 years. He has taught seminars and courses, and organized events on Indigenous studies. *(For more on the appointment of Gene Green go to [www.naiits.com/news](http://www.naiits.com/news))*

**TO  
DANCE  
OR  
NOT TO  
DANCE**  
SEE INSIDE





# TO DANCE OR NOT TO DANCE

FOR MANY YEARS, dancing at powwows was not acceptable for some followers of Jesus. This meant that these Native Christians could not participate in many of their community events and ceremonies. For some Indigenous Christians, the only permissible ways to dance were found in other cultures and not in their own. Over the past couple of decades this has begun to change.

This past year we saw changes taking place in our contextual ministry through Wiconi's 14th Annual "Living Waters

Family Camp and 4th Annual Richard L. Twiss Memorial Powwow," in Turner, Oregon. Similar changes happened at our first *Canadian Family Camp and Powwow* hosted in partnership with The Salvation Army at their Pine Lake Camp in Alberta.

*(To read more about these changes, go to [www.wiconi.com/news](http://www.wiconi.com/news))*

*Photos by David Uttley*



**INDIGENOUS PATHWAYS**



**[www.indigenouspathways.com](http://www.indigenouspathways.com)**

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**[www.naiits.com](http://www.naiits.com) [www.wiconi.com](http://www.wiconi.com)**

**[www.iemergence.org](http://www.iemergence.org)**

**[www.mypeopleinternational.com](http://www.mypeopleinternational.com)**

# Recognize, Understand and Connect to Childhood Loss

THE DEVASTATING IMPACT of Residential Schools (Canada) and Boarding Schools (USA), has been front and centre in the public view for many years now. The incredible pain and the effects from this era are still being felt throughout Indigenous communities across North America.

Just prior to Christmas, Rick and Linda Martin (My People staff) and Jim and Jan Uttley (IP Communications) took part in an event that sought to bring healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation to former survivors of Residential Schools as well as Indigenous people presently experiencing childhood sexual abuse. Rick led worship and Linda was a workshop facilitator. As facilitator, Linda shared about the trauma factors affecting survivors—the effects of betrayal, shame, the sense of powerlessness, and traumatic sexual abuse.

“Survivors need to feel safe and be able to trust,” said Linda. “They need to feel that they are somewhat in control. We need to feel that we have value and then we can value others.” She encouraged those who attended to “tell and retell your story over and over again to a safe person.”

Women and men took part in separate sharing circles following three of the main sessions. “As a survivor of childhood abuse, these circles gave me and other survivors a chance to ‘unburden our souls’—some for the very first time,” stated Jim Uttley. “Raw emotion poured out as some Indigenous elders wept when recounting episodes of brutal abuse by school officials or family members.”



Drawing by Ed Budd

These sessions gave people a chance to deal with unresolved trauma—an experience that severely jars minds and emotions.

The worship band offered opening and closing concerts. “Music has a way of giving hope,” stated one survivor, “soothing hurting spirits, and encouraging us not to give up hope.”

## STANDING FIRM IN THE BLIZZARD ▶▶▶

AS WINTER SETS IN on the Blackfeet Reservation in northwest Montana I am reminded of the struggle and adversity it can often bring: the damaging winds, deep snow and absolute bitter cold. The reality is that just to live here requires a lot of steadfastness and resiliency. When you combine thirty-five inches of snowfall with negative 20 degrees followed by 50 mph winds to create zero visibility you are forced to look beyond yourself for help. In the midst of these harsh conditions...

*(For the rest of this story of the blizzards of Montana and of life for folks in Blackfeet Territory go to the news at [www.mypeopleinternational.com](http://www.mypeopleinternational.com))*



# Coming Events

- February 13-24** Teaching and Counselling with a Family Focus, Beaver Lake Counselling Centre, Dryden Ontario, Rick and Linda Martin
- March 4-7** Healing at the Wounding Place in association with My People presents a series of events at the Strathcona Baptist Church, Edmonton.
- Blanket Exercise March 4th 2 - 4.30pm
  - Round Table Conversation "Reconciliation That Includes Indigenous Women" March 6th 7pm
  - Cheryl Bear in Concert March 7th 7pm
- Watch for more details at [www.mypeopleinternational.com/events](http://www.mypeopleinternational.com/events) and [www.redclover.ca/upcoming-events/](http://www.redclover.ca/upcoming-events/)
- March 12-16** Teaching and Counselling on Healing, Grief and Trauma, Waskaganish, Quebec
- April 16-20** Ministry in the Midst of Trauma Course, The Pas, Manitoba, Ray Aldred, Rick and Linda Martin
- June 7-9** 15th Annual NAIITS Symposium, Acadia Divinity College, 38 Highland Ave. Wolfville, Nova Scotia. For more details go to [www.naiits.com/symposiums/page-2/2018.html](http://www.naiits.com/symposiums/page-2/2018.html)
- July 7-14** Wiconi Cultural Immersion Experience - Sioux Falls, SD
- July 26-29** Mni Wacipi Living Waters Family Camp, Turner, Oregon. Richard L. Twiss Memorial Powwow - July 28

2ND ANNUAL  
**ELIJAH HARPER**  
*Scholarship Fund Reception*

June 7

For more information go to:  
**www.naiits.com**

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- August 6-10** Kids Culture Camp, with staff orientation on the 4-5th, debrief on the eve of 10th and AM of 11th Pioneer Lodge, Sundre, Alberta. Watch for more details at [iemergence.org/camps/kidsculturecamp.html](http://iemergence.org/camps/kidsculturecamp.html)

## FROM THE DIRECTOR ▶▶▶

Most of you reading this issue of Indigenews will be from a generation that is not millennial. This means that your formative experiences, values, and the way you think about many day-to-day issues will be different than the millennial generation—for that matter, the generations before them. In significant part, this will be true because you will have grown during a time when social change occurred at a much slower pace. For millennials, today's news is already old; yesterday's issues already compounded by tomorrow's changes. Never before have so many changes taken place in such a short space of time.

2017 witnessed perhaps the most challenging year of change for humanity since the Cold War days of the 1950s. Not since then has the Doomsday Clock been set at two minutes to midnight. We live in challenging times. And many—as with a growing number of Millennials—are trying to make sense of it without faith.

For Indigenous youth and young adults, the challenges to faith, to walking in the Jesus Way, are compounded by the chequered history of the Christian church—one still unfolding as each day passes. And this history can and does make for a very complex landscape for Indigenous ministry.

As 2018 unfolds, please pray that we will rise to these challenges well—whether iEmergence with the youth and young adult ministry, Wiconi and our celebrations of faith, My People in communities across North America, or NAIITS' students and faculty as they explore faith together in their study.

Thanks for journeying with us!

—Terry LeBlanc

