



# Indigenews



## iEmergence Summer Camps

iEmergence's engagement with camps this year has shown us just how much love can soften the heart, releasing people to see themselves the way that our Creator sees us all.

It was an exciting summer celebrating partnerships with two camps that have had eight years of impact on young lives. This was iEmergence's second year of involvement with **Mish Adventures Camp** in Muskoka Woods and on the Mishkeegogamang First Nation. It was also iEmergence's first year of direct involvement with the **Kids Culture Camp** in Sundre, Alberta.

The impact of the relationships that have grown over these years at the **Mish Adventures** camp is quite evident in the community's support and participation in all

four weeks of camp over the month of July. This summer we focused our time with the youth in both Muskoka Woods and Mishkeegogamang using a curriculum called "The Circle of Courage." Developed over many years of engagement with indigenous communities around the

world by Martin Brokenleg, it emphasizes four areas of positive youth development: Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity. Our young leaders have become a vital part of designing and running the camp program and we are encouraged to see them grow in their leadership of the younger generation.

**Kids Culture Camp** was a great experience of learning and contributing to an already well-established camp. Culture Camp has used also used the "Circle of Courage" for several summers, either as teaching for the campers or as training for the volunteers. The partnership between My People, Intervarsity and the Edmonton Native Healing Centre over the years has developed an incredible group of staff and volunteers that pour their hearts and souls into loving on the campers and creating a safe place for them to listen and learn about our Creator. We at iEmergence are excited to be a part of it's continued growth into the future, re-discovering pathways to engage our youth as they find their role as powerful leaders among their people.

In the coming years we are looking to bring synergy between our camp programs, offering cross-cultural learning experiences for our young leaders in between the two kids camps. This will be a great expansion for us and we believe it will offer the next step in building the capacity of our youth. We thank you for your prayers and support and look forward to walking this pathway with you into the future.

~ Matt LeBlanc



At right: Matt, pouring into young lives at Mish Camp.

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Summer in Ontario means more than black flies and mosquitoes ... it means Day Clubs. Four separate groups of volunteers join us for four weeks of kids' activities on four First Nation communities. The plan is to use the fun of a day club to share truth about Jesus in a culturally affirming fashion. Now, the "plan" can be a fairly fluid concept when associated with groups of kids ages 5 to 15 trying to get the most out of a short summer season of no school and no schedule. There are often moments where you just go with the flow.

Games, crafts and snacks ... stories, skits and songs ... swimming, fishing and ball games: each and all are part of a day club week and while they do not always lend themselves to precise plans, they are enjoyed regardless. What is highly important is that the atmosphere of the week be permeated with compassionate love, sincere interest and genuine care for the kids ... as well as any adults who drop by to check things out.

This year we began a new curriculum based on the 7 Grandfather Teachings with a twofold plan: a) to recognize, honour and affirm the great wisdom and value in these teachings, b) to tell how Creator God has presented these very same teachings through the written medium known as the Bible.

These teachings are for all people regardless of culture, country or language. After all, Creator God did send His Son to **the world** ... to **all people**. In Ojibway tradition the seven teachings are: Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility and Truth. This year the focus was on Respect with daily lessons of respect for creation, others, our self, and Creator God. Some of the kids were not familiar with the Grandfather Teachings and assuredly, none had heard them in association with stories from Creator God's Written Teachings. It was a chance to celebrate history and identity while also presenting a personal, gentle and caring image of Creator God.

There are always adults who attend the clubs and we try to provide an atmosphere where they can also feel a part of what is going on. That usually means coffee, treats and a craft. In the midst of these, conversation takes place ques-

tions are asked and a plan unfolds. It is not our plan, it is the plan and purpose of Creator as He makes Himself known through a personal touch.

Our most powerful memory from this summer was of an evening with an adult, who came to the community feast where he requested prayers for his sick wife. It worked out that we (Tom & Karen) were able to meet with him Friday night after the club week was completed. We were blessed to sit with him for a couple of hours sharing conversation, praying and listening to his story.

His story contained many sad chapters of residential school, the resulting un-natural traumatic childhood and, painful memories of what he had endured. Two themes surfaced repeatedly throughout his story. There was an obvious desire, even yearning, to know and believe in the Jesus we talked about. Connected directly to that point though, was his struggle to reconcile how that Jesus could allow such terrible things to happen to a young child. The deep wounds of 30 years ago are still very sensitive. Yet, in the midst of the pain was that yearning from his heart to know Jesus. His soul, the very core and essence of who he is, craves a personal connection with the Creator of the universe.

So we talked, we listened and we cried; together. As he shared a couple of his dreams Karen suggested that perhaps part of their meaning



was Creator reaching out to him, caring about him and wanting to connect with him. This was obviously a perspective he had not thought of before and it visibly brightened his countenance. Just before we left he honoured us with the gift of an eagle feather. This rich moment seemed to confirm the powerful sense that he had felt the presence and comfort of Creator God during our brief time together.

There is much trauma and loss in the long and too often wronged history of Indigenous people; emotionally, physically and spiritually. It cannot be 'fixed' in a week of day club however, Creator God can heal and bring peace by any means and at any time He chooses. His plan, for kids and adults, is the one that matters. We just try to be a part of what He is doing. All according to plan.

~ Tom and Karen Bursma





# Atikamekw New Testament

It happened, it finally happened: on a cloudy Sunday afternoon in September, at a bush camp near the Atikamekw Cree community of Manawan, 200 miles north of Montreal, Quebec.

People gathered in the huge canvas wall tent went forward to smudge and be prayed for. The dedication of the Atikamekw Cree New Testament was about to begin. A sweet aroma drifted up to the One-who-provides, the Creator of heaven and earth. After over 35 years of painstaking labor on the part of Indigenous translators, checkers, readers, technolinguists, linguists, consultants (including over 50 people from the three Atikamekw communities), the New Testament in this Cree language was printed, dedicated and distributed, complimentary hard-covered copies to the 50+, \$10 a copy to the rest.

Tim and his former wife Bonnie (now deceased) lived and worked among these people, from 1976 to 1989. The work had its starts and stops, and others became involved, until finally it's completion. Thank you Lord! Mikwetch, Kice Manito! We celebrate this event with the Atikamekw community and with our colleagues in ministry. Please pray with us, that as the people read the Word of God in their mother tongue they will understand and experience the full impact of Creator's goodness, love and mercy. It's so evident in God's Son Jesus!

~ Tim Stime



Look in the next Indigenews for our report on the Nestooak Training (Oct.17-18: Edmonton, AB); focused on discussion around the Doctrine of Discovery & how it impacts our Indigenous people and communities today.

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### Upcoming Conferences and Training Events...

- ◇ Oct. 16-19. *Abuse Conference*. Nemeska, QB. (Rick and Linda)
- ◇ Oct. 17-18. *Nestooak: "Doctrine of Discovery."* St. Faith Anglican, Edmonton, AB. (Terry, Tim, Vivien)
- ◇ Oct. 20. *Teaching MA of Intercultural Studies students*. Edmonton, AB. (Terry)
- ◇ Oct. 23-24 (tentative dates). *Follow-up Counseling*. Sandy-Sault Spiritual Centre, Beausejour, Manitoba (Rick and Linda Martin)
- ◇ Oct. 28. *Self Care after Trauma*. Sioux Lookout, ON. (Linda Martin)
- ◇ Nov. 1-2, U of C Chair of *Religious Studies Public Lectures*. (Ray Aldred)
- ◇ Nov. 5-6. *Co-Teaching with Howard & Karen Jolly*. Providence College, Otterburne, MB (Linda)
- ◇ Nov. 7-8. *Justice Conference*. Taylor University Seminar, Edmonton, AB. (Terry – Main Speaker, Tim, Vivien)
- ◇ Nov. 9. *Speaking at Christ Church Anglican*. Edmonton, AB (Terry)
- ◇ Nov. 19-21. *Sudbury First Nations Church-Counseling the Sexually Abused Workshop*. Sudbury, ON. (Linda)
- ◇ Dec. 9-15. *Teaching in the Philippines*. (Terry)
- ◇ Dec. 17. *Asia Theological Seminary Chapel and Faculty Meetings*. (Terry)
- ◇ Jan. 22. *Cross-cultural Witness with Host Peoples*, CLBI Camrose, AB. (Tim)

### Ongoing Events:

- ◇ Tuesday Nights. *Sacred Way Discipleship Training*. Browning, MT. (Wes & Summer)
- ◇ Thursday Nights. *Men's Talking Circle*. Browning, MT (Wes)
- ◇ Ongoing counseling at Sandy-Saulteaux Healing Center, Beausejour, Manitoba. - A continued follow-up from the Trauma and Crisis Training. (Martins)

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The very day that Rick was cleared to start travelling again for work after the six-week restriction following eye injury, we were on the road. This particular Friday morning we were headed to a small community in northwestern Ontario which had year-round road accessibility. It was one of the few communities that had this kind of service, a rare treat. Generally we have to fly into these northern communities.

This small community had lost five of their family members in a tragic vehicle accident a year ago in June 2013. That has a huge impact upon any community this size. There are complicated grief and trauma dynamics that arise from such heartbreaking multiple losses. Various members of the community planned events on this weekend in support of its members as the first anniversary of their tragic loss was approaching.

Rick and I were asked to be part of this commemorative

gathering. There was inspirational music, where Rick sang, and sharing from the Scriptures each evening. As well, there was a prayer time made available to the community where we prayed for individual family members and other people. One of the main events for this weekend was a memorial service Sunday morning which Rick led. The church was packed by the time the service started. It was a very emotional and powerful time for the families and community members, as different people got up to share of their memories of their lost loved ones, sharing their grief journey in the past year. The next day, Monday, a year to the day that they lost their people, the community had a gathering right at the bridge where the accident had happened. At the request of one of the mom's of the

young people who died there, Rick sang the "Candle" song, "Go Light Your World".

We met a lot of people this weekend . . . beautiful people in deep grief . . . beautiful

people choosing to walk in a good way as they grieve. What a healing way to deal with deep community tragedy and trauma. It was evident that God, our Creator, was made central in all these events. We felt we were exactly where God would want us to be: with our people in the midst of their grief, being God's hands.

*"We felt we were exactly where God would want us to be: with our people in the midst of their grief, being God's hands."*

~ Linda Martin

