



DUCC NEWS



Diakonia
of The United
Church of Canada

Sharing news, stories and reflections about
Diaconal Ministers and Diaconal Ministry



“We confused
Western ways and
culture with the
depth and breadth
and length and
height of the gospel
of Christ. “

-1986 UCC Apology

INSIDE

THIS

FALL 2010

ISSUE

Right Relations

Call for Action

Diaconal Profile

Upcoming Meetings

Theological Reflection

TELLING THE TRUTH

By Joan Jarvis

I was privileged to have been a part of the planning for the first Truth and Reconciliation Commission held at The Forks in Winnipeg. The TRC was launched in June, 2008 as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. This truth telling and reconciliation process is an acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by Aboriginal people and part of a wide-ranging response to the Indian Residential School legacy and the need for continued healing. The United Church of Canada, along with the other historic churches, Anglican, Presbyterian and Roman

(Continued on page 2)



Nancy Wilson

Gathering on traditional land at The Forks in Winnipeg, church, community and First Nations people exchanged stories and built relationships through truth telling. Diaconal ministers Joan Jarvis (far right) and Karen Tjaden (centre) in leadership roles.

PLEASE SAVE PAPER

If you are getting DUCC News as a hard copy in the mail and you prefer to get it electronically, let us know, PLEASE. Moving: send address updates so you can stay connected with the community. (membership@ducc.ca)

DUCC NEWS is produced twice yearly by Diakonia of the United Church of Canada, with funding assistance for distribution from Human Resources of The United Church of Canada.

The Editorial Team welcomes responses or ideas for future issues.

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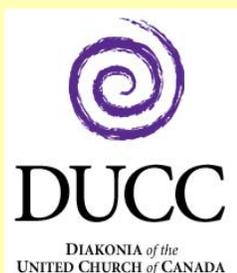
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ducc.ca

Visit the website for other resources and news.



TRC: RIGHT RELATIONS IN ACTION

(Continued from page 1)

Catholic are actively participating in the work of this five year commission.

This four day event offered diverse ways in which people could reflect on the residential school experience from a variety of perspectives. There were opportunities for truth-telling circles, statement gathering, archival research and photographic displays, cultural and artistic expression, interfaith dialogue and programming, mutual support for survivors, children's programs, and concerts. This first TRC event offered opportunities for all Canadians to learn more about this significant chapter in Canadian history.

My role in planning for this event was three-fold; to work with the National TRC Planning Committee, the Interfaith Program Committee as well as a United Church Local Arrangements Committee. This was an opportunity for representatives from All Native Circle Conference, The Conference of Manitoba & North-western Ontario and General Council to work alongside others as we helped to coordinate our responsibilities for this gathering.

As I reflect on this experience, I have come to recognize that even though the planning for this event was significant my key task was to encourage an active presence of United Church folk at the TRC.

Words of apology are important; however, how we live those words in our actions is even more crucial. Healing broken relationships and living out our apology as a church involves the hard work of restoring relationships and re-building trust. I was overwhelmed at how many United Church people responded seriously, with care and compassion, to this challenge of continuing to walk the path of truth telling and reconciliation.

The TRC provided an opportunity for many Survivors to give voice to the pain, humiliation, abuse, anger and deep-seated hurts that they have endured and that continue to affect the generations that follow. The TRC experience challenged all of us to recognize the overwhelming consequences and repercussions of the legacy of Residential Schools and the government policies that led to this; the destructive and long-term impacts of this system on students, their families, communities and culture, and how this lived reality for Aboriginal people continues to impact relationships within Canadian society as a whole. In the midst of all that was shared, I was continually amazed at the grace, laughter and resiliency that was evident.

The sacred task of working toward right relations with God and with one another continues within our faith communities and beyond; offering apology, intentionally building trusting relationships, lobbying

(Continued on page 3)

YOUR INPUT IS WELCOMED

Your feedback on the issue is welcome. Anytime. newseditor@ducc.ca

The Editorial Team

Comments on our last issue:

It was excellent and helped me understand Diaconal ministry in a more comprehensive way.

Community Minister, SK

the issue was circulated in our [General Council] Unit. I am better oriented to Diaconal Ministers ... thanks

Staff MEPS Unit

From DUCC Members

-a really informative issue of the NEWS

-Whole newsletter is excellent

-I appreciate ...all the was that the issue is contributing to the depth of the community

DUCC NEWS needs your input. Please share your news so we can keep the community, and beyond, informed about diaconal ministry in the United Church.

RIGHT RELATIONS

(Continued from page 2)

government so that truthful history is taught in schools, supporting efforts in settling land claims, teaching traditional languages, continually challenging racism and attitudes of cultural and religious superiority, are some possibilities for action.

I am proud to be a part of The United Church of Canada due in no small part to the many committed people who are willing to engage in difficult conversation and dialogue, are open to risk and willing to change. My hope is that this first TRC event will continue to provide positive momentum as we move forward, knowing that God continually calls us to walk the path toward healing and harmony.

Joan Jarvis is the Minister for Relations and Social Justice for the Conference of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.



Truth and Reconciliation
Commission of Canada



National TRC events will be held in:

Winnipeg, June 2010
Inuvik, June 2011
Atlantic Canada
British Columbia
Quebec
Alberta
Saskatchewan
Ottawa

CALL TO ACTION: NOW

Sisters in Spirit funding cut despite government promises - The Native Women's Association of Canada's (NWAC) Sisters In Spirit initiative 2005-2010 was **denied the renewal of its special project status** (despite the promise of the Harper government that this was a PRIORITY) and are now parceled under one portfolio under Status of Women Canada. Sisters In Spirit began out of a dire concern about the large number of cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women. This change has negatively affected the activities that NWAC can undertake and will hamper their ability to maintain focus on resolving the epidemic of violence that threatens Aboriginal women. How you can help:



Send a letter to the federal government stating your support of NWAC's Sisters In Spirit and urging them to make ongoing funding to this activity a priority

Post support of NWAC's Sisters In Spirit on your websites or other locations you feel would be beneficial

Communicate with your friends to also pledge their support to NWAC's Sisters In Spirit.

For more information The Native Women's Association of Canada 1-800-461-4043 sistersinspirit@nwac.ca www.nwac.ca

WE ARE ALL TREATY PEOPLE

By Karen Tjaden

Since Rt. Rev. Robert Smith spoke the words of the United Church apology to aboriginal people around a sacred fire in Sudbury Ontario in 1986, the church has carried the challenge of living out the words of that apology as the non-aboriginal members of the church build new relationships with aboriginal people.

Now together we are presented with other public opportunities to participate in the work of healing and reconciliation in Canada. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is mandated by the 2007 Indian Residential School (IRS) Settlement

Agreement and our church is one of the parties to that agreement. The first of 7 national gatherings opened with the lighting of a sacred fire at sunrise on June 16 (5:19 am) at the Forks in Winnipeg. That sacred fire continued for 4 days, extinguished at the close of the powwow on June 19.

We are all treaty people and so the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is the concern of every citizen of Canada, and every person of faith. Over the course of the next 5 years the TRC will hold 7 national gatherings across the country as well as many smaller community gatherings at the invitation of local community groups. I hope you will have an opportunity to participate in a community event close to where you live and/or one of the national gatherings. Every one

of us can be involved in the work of seeking and speaking truth and choosing roads to reconciliation.

It was a privilege to work together with TRC staff to create a welcoming space for reflection and dialogue in the Interfaith Tent. As representatives of the four churches who were partners to the IRS Settlement

Agreement which mandated the TRC, General Council staff for Residential Schools, Jamie Scott reminded us that we need to come to this task with deep humility. People generously offered to serve in a variety of capacities – there was plenty to do for events of this magnitude. But even more important than the gift of labour is being present, to be open to opportunities to live beyond apology into deep reconciliation. Even if you cannot attend a gathering yourself, your prayerful thoughts and active prayers are requested as the TRC invites all Canadians to prepare for a new future together.

The gathering at the Forks offered many opportunities for learning about the IRS legacy and moving towards reconciliation through story, song, art, drama, sacred ritual and more. As well as an Interfaith Tent and a Listening Tent, there was Shingwauk's Learning Tent, and special areas set aside for survivors to make statements and receive support.

As a young adult I remember Conference meetings which included delegates from First Nations churches. And I remember the formation of the ANCC. At a right relations event at Dr. Jessie Saulteaux Centre this past spring I met a man about my age who remembered attending one of those same Conferences as a young man, watching the non-aboriginal youth at Conference as he sat with the elders from his community. Some 20 years later we found a place to share our very different experiences of that meeting and our hopes for a different future for our children, our church and our country. As we talked over meals and participated in sharing circles we began to practice being together in a new way; we are living our way into right

(Continued on page 5)



Rob McClement

Karen Tjaden wonders if the right relations between First Nations and non First Nations people will be possible for her children. Katie Tjaden-McClement and Alyssa Bennie, are members of the Carman Cougars PeeWee team that travelled to Fisher River for provincial tournament.

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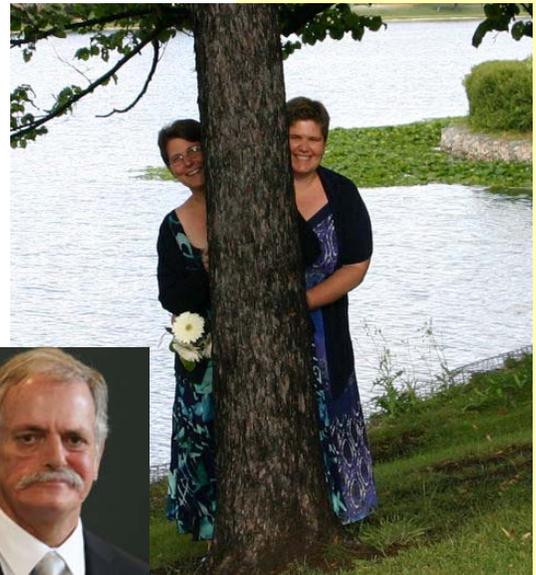
relationship.

About the same time we had the privilege of experiencing the hospitality of Fisher River First Nation as we travelled there with my daughter's hockey team for a provincial tournament. As I watched the children of the community enjoy the games and the fun of running around the rink and spending time with family I was so thankful that these children would not be taken away from their families and communities to attend IRS. Let us hope that the young women who gather in these times will have many more opportunities to play and work and learn and grow together, on and off the ice. We all need to practice living into right relationship.

Karen is currently enjoying the freedom to garden, parent, and take on projects of interest in her rural

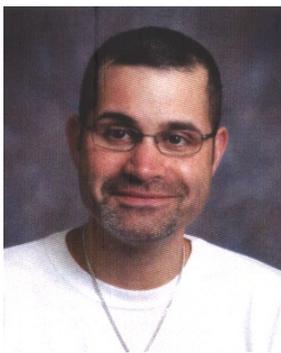
WEDDING DAYS

Friday the 13th of August, 2010 was a day of good fortune for Diaconal Ministers, Beth Kerr and Sarah Bruer. Surrounded by friends and family, they were married at Trinity United Church in Portage la Prairie, MB.



Thanksgiving weekend 2010 friends and family celebrated with Diaconal Minister Susan Butler Jones and Boyd Drake on the occasion of their wedding in Winnipeg.

MTS in Diaconal Ministry



Richard Manley Tannis earned the MTS in Diaconal Ministry from St. Stephen's College this fall. The title of the thesis is Our Addiction To Violence: Conflict And The Johannine Community. It is an examination of the Johannine Community through the filter of contemporary conflict

tools and processes. The intent is to better understand this community of the early church as it wrestled within a matrix of external and external conflict. Richard also has a MA in Classical History where he used an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to examine Greek culture 1200 BCE-300 BCE. Richard is in a team ministry at The United Church in Meadowood in Winnipeg.

BARB ELLIOTT TRUST

For Innovative Ministries

Support for diaconal projects that are innovative and difficult to fund. Grants of up to \$5000 are available each year for funding projects. Donations to the Fund are always welcome. Applications are due February 15. For information on the application process and funding criteria please contact any committee member. Applications can be sent to: Russell Mitchell-Walker Sunset United Church 177 Sunset Drive Regina, SK S4S 6Y7 sunsetunited.russell@sasktel.net

DIACONAL MINISTERS MAKE HISTORY

By Sarah Bruer

Diaconal ministers make history each and every day. The individual and collective offering of our gifts and skills with outreach ministries, global partners, congregations, and secular organizations absolutely makes a difference within the world. Our contributions, however, have rarely been acknowledged and recorded in the official records of church history. We forget, for example, that there were theologically trained women in ministry within the United Church of Canada long before 1936, or that United Church deaconesses played an important role in the Social Gospel Movement as it unfolded in Canada. Yet they were there, as we still are, faithfully seeking to share ourselves with God's world.

What an affirmation it is for all of us then that *The Westminster Handbook to Women in American Religious History* chose to include entries on eight women with deaconess training in the United Church of Canada. These eight women, along with approximately 800 other individuals and organizations acknowledged in this book, are not typically remembered as central in the history of religion within North America. Many of them are known only within their own denominations, religious order, or geographical area. Yet *The Westminster Handbook* explicitly argues that they are worth remembering, while implicitly arguing that our retelling of history is flawed without their inclusion.

The eight women included are Stella Annie Burry, Katharine Harriet Christie, Barbara Joan Elliott, Shelley Davis Finson, Katherine Boehner Hockin, Marion Pardy, Olive Dora Sparling, and Alberta Ruth Tillman. These are but a sampling of the countless women whose stories might have been recorded in such a publication. An exhaustive list would have required entries on every deaconess and diaconal minister throughout our denomination's history. So lest we get caught up in lamenting who was or wasn't included, let us celebrate those who were by taking a moment to remember three



Shelley Finson on the staff at CCS in the 1980s was a pioneer in the Christian Feminist movement.

of the eight women.

After a childhood disrupted by World War II, **Shelley Davis Finson** came to Canada alone at the age of twenty. The bowling alley in Toronto's Queen Street United Church sparked her involvement in the church, later evolving into a call to pursue deaconess training. Her work with troubled youth led to her subsequent pursuit of a Masters Degree in Social Work. A spiritual awakening later led to her work in the Movement for Christian



Stella Burry worked tirelessly for services for the poor in her native Newfoundland.

Feminism and her pursuit of a Doctorate Degree in Ministry. It is notable that "at a time when many feminists left the church, Finson recognized its transformative potential and worked for change from within." One way in which she did so was through her teaching at the Centre for Christian Studies and at the Atlantic School of Theology.

Stella Annie Burry dreamed of growing up to become a deaconess in the Methodist Church. At a time when marriage and deaconess duties were deemed incompatible, it was a marriage proposal that confirmed Burry's call. She soon left her home in Newfoundland to pursue deaconess training in Toronto. While there she served at Woodbine Heights United Church and Carlton Street United Church, before returning to found the United Church Community Service Centre (now Stella Burry Community Services) in

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Newfoundland. Burry invested the rest of her life in efforts to eradicate poverty, and it has been said that her ministry permeated every nook and cranny of Newfoundland.

Olive Dora Sparling managed to save enough money during the Depression era of the 1930s to pay for tuition at The United Church Training School in Toronto. That training led to her work in Montreal's Church of All Nations, which in turn led Sparling to pursue two degrees in Religious Education. She worked for the United Church of Canada's Board of Christian Education, where she was given responsibility for curriculum development. Sparling's belief that informed leadership is the key to an effective Sunday School inspired a leadership training program called Observation Practice Schools, which inspired thousands of Canadian Sunday School teachers in the 1960s.

Such stories beg the question: where would the church be today without the contributions of such women? And where would the church be today without our contributions? We may not usually pause to think of our work as history, but it is. In our own individual endeavors and collectively as Diaconal Ministers within the United Church of Canada, we are following in the footsteps of such remarkable women to make sure that history continues to be made each and every day.

¹ Bruer, Sarah. "Finson, Shelley Davis," in *The Westminster Handbook to Women in American Religious History*, ed. Susan Hill Lindley and Eleanor J. Stebner (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 77.

Sarah Bruer is currently in Portage la Prairie, MB, doing God's work in various volunteer capacities while continuing to seek a call within the church.

DUCC COORDINATING CLUSTER

The Coordinating Cluster continues to meet regularly. Our last meeting was November 24. The bulk of this meeting was spent working on an overall budget for the 2011 National Gathering, being held at the University of Winnipeg from June 21-24, 2011.

We also heard from Kathy Toivanen and Linda Clark about the DUCC Conference Call that was held on November 4th with all or most of the parties involved in planning the National gathering. Plans are well underway by each of the clusters responsible for the various components of the gathering. At this stage, the working theme of the gathering is "Courageous Engagement: Forging New Relationships".

In addition to this work, we engaged in discussion about:

DUCC Meeting with MEPS: Three members of the Coordinating Cluster met with MEPS to begin a conversation to discern a way forward in our relationship with the national church. Our cluster saw this as a way to address what DUCC has been missing since the disbandment of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry. We have also entered in a conversation with Affirm United, investigating their relationship with the national church as a possible model for DUCC.

2011 Budget: We began initial discussions about the DUCC budget for 2011 and will do a final review of it at our next meeting in January.

DUCC Pin: We had a brief discussion about the options for the DUCC pin that have been circulated by Sharilynn Upsdell. Thanks to her for her work!

Our next meeting will take place during our annual overnight retreat at Crieff Hills, January 27-28, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Clark, Secretary

DUCC Coordinating Cluster



Deb Kigar, Kathy Toivanen and Margaret Collard, members of the Coordinating Cte walking at 2010 Cluster Retreat.

HAVE YOU PURCHASED YOUR MEMBERSHIP? The Membership form is on the DUCC website (ducc.ca). Each membership price constitutes a full membership with the top benchmark being \$150.00 and anything over 150.00 is considered a donation.

2010 Membership fee: \$10; \$25; \$75; \$125; \$150. It is now possible to pay your membership monthly through PAR. DUCC Treasurer Margaret Collard, 90 Heatherside Drive Toronto, ON M1W 1T8 (w) 416-431-5054 matthew132@sympatico.ca

DUCCS THEOLOGIZE ON MEMBERSHIP THRU PAR

FORGET LUTHER, I'm
EARNING my way to
heaven! I not only
GOT my DUCC mem-
bership I went on PAR
for 2011! Get your
right hand ready God.
Move over Jesus!



"Is PAR Theology relevant
for a Post Modern world?
What is an ecclesiology of
membership anyway?"
My strategy: keep them
thinking while I check to
see if my membership is
up to date. Where is that
cheque book?



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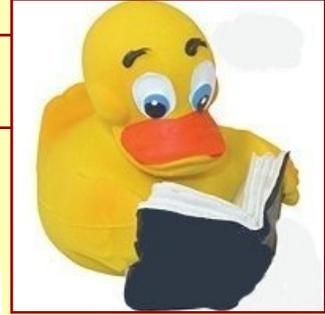
My VOID PAR cheque will
get to the Treasurer and I
will never have to worry
about being a delinquent
DUCC member. "Faith is be-
ing sure of what we hope for
and certain of what we do
not see."*

*Hebrews 11:1



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your membership monthly through PAR.
Contact DUCC Treasurer Margaret Col-
lard, 90 Heatherside Drive Toronto, ON
M1W 1T8 (w) 416-431-5054 [mat-
thew132@sympatico.ca](mailto:matthew132@sympatico.ca)

DUCC RESOURCE REVIEWS



Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett (1989) and
have a little faith: a true story by Mitch Albom (2009).

Review by Sally Meyer

This past summer I decided my hot weather project would be to read at least two of the books from my “not yet read” piles... but which ones? Here’s my less-than-scientific selection process:

First, I set aside two books about heaven. These were given to me soon after my arrival in my settlement (2004) by a lovely woman who wanted me to know of her glimpse into the realm of what’s next. So as not to discount her near-death experience, I will keep them on my shelf but I have to admit that keeping up with this life keeps me pretty busy. But who knows? ... Maybe next summer!

Next, I made another pile of books that are indeed important for me to read but require more brain power and engagement than what I have available come June, July and August. (ex: Borg, Vosper, Yunus, etc)

Then “Sally” says I, “take the biggest and the smallest off that shelf” and voila! My summer reading list Follett & Albom. How’s that for diversity!

What I didn’t know is that both of these would remind me of one of my core beliefs, firmly reinforced during my studies at the Centre for Christian Studies: The power of community and its ability to make dreams and miracles come true.

read *Pillars of the Earth* first since I had resisted it for years; mainly because history is not one of my strong points but also because of its size: 973 pages and according to my bathroom scale, 3.1 pounds! Life continues to surprise me! *Pillars of the Earth* is easily among my personal top 10 “most enjoyable lifetime reads”.

Follett is a provocative author who eloquently surprises his readers with his love of cathedrals through a plot that keeps you wanting to know more. We are welcomed into the life of Tom the builder and his journey to fulfilling his lifetime dream of building a cathedral. Set in 12th century England, the author takes us through many twists and turns, like only Follett can, with his ability to create characters that you love as well as those you love to hate. Eventually Tom’s dream comes true... to a point... but the story does not end there.

have a little faith: a true story is a comfort to hold (weighing in at only five ounces) and a joy to read (all of its 242 pages). Albom weaves his experience of getting to know his rabbi better so as to prepare and offer his eulogy while at the same time, connecting with a once down-and-out, drug-abusing Christian guy now street minister. While originally setting out to help both the rabbi and the minister, Albom discovers that his life is profoundly enriched.

Both books are stories of faith, relationship, and of “profound comfort of believing in something bigger than yourself” (Albom 2009). Both writings witness to the power of community to make dreams and miracles come true. The rest is yours to discover.

Serving with Hemmingford and Lacolle-Clarenceville Pastoral Charges in south-western Quebec.



DIACONAL COMMUNITY GATHERINGS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

2011 National DUCC Gathering

*Courageous Engagement:
Forging New Relationships*

June 21-24, 2011

University of Winnipeg



CHAIRS - at the feet of God

2011 DOTAC Conference

July 10 to 14, 2011

at Canyon Camp just outside Oklahoma City

Check it out: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0wLUcrrXw)

[v= e0wLUcrrXw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0wLUcrrXw)