

BUC COFFEE & CHAT

Welcome friends. This edition of our newsletter will draw inspiration from Indigenous culture and teachings. Pour yourself a cup of coffee and let's chat.

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

As I thought about writing this newsletter, I knew that I wanted to make space to acknowledge both Father's day and National Indigenous Awareness, but I wasn't sure how to approach either in a way that was honoring to both. With the devastating news of the discovery of the remains of 215 children at Kamloops Indian Residential School, my family and I, and the whole of the nation have been scarcely able to think about anything else. Then, just a few days ago, in London, Ontario, we were horrified and shocked once again to hear that a family had been deliberately run down with a vehicle because they were Muslim. We are all in mourning. We are weary from trying to process so much pain and sadness, and we feel a sense of guilt for even entertaining the thought of celebrations which seem trivial in light of our current situation. Yet, I say to you, it is at precisely this moment that our celebration of Father's Day is crucial. We need to take pause and reflect on all the fathers the world over who, in all kinds of situations, are just trying to support their families in the ways they can. We need to celebrate and support communities and organizations who lift up our fathers and teach, support and encourage all people who are trying to be fathers to children; and most of all, we need to celebrate the ultimate Father, who



through all the events of our lives, continues to love and cherish each one of us. God is in the midst of us, parenting, gently scolding when it's needed, encouraging us to do better, reminding us that although we have made mistakes there is room for us in God's gentle, loving arms. As I watched the news this morning, I witnessed hundreds of people participating in "walk our spirits home," a 65-kilometre walk to support those who survived residential school experiences and to bring home those who did not survive. I also watched the public portion of the funeral ceremony for the family in Ontario. I was struck by the empathy, compassion and desire shown by those directly impacted, to forge a new path forward in love, connection and true peace. We would have understood anger and a cry for retribution from these grieving people, yet that is not what was expressed. The Father/Creator is surely at work here.

This Father's Day, I encourage you to celebrate by beginning your own work on the path forward. In this issue, I hope you find some inspiration for the journey. Thanks be to God, we are not alone.

**There are a lot of distressing news stories and world events currently. If you need additional support please call the distress centre at 403.266.HELP (4357) or the kids help phone at 1-800-668-6868.*

Every Person Is a Superhero: Esbikenh's Story

A Mission & Service healing fund success story

“Why not make these videos and we will just have all the superheroes speak in Anishinaabemowin?”

Primary Media

Published On: December 4, 2020

We all have superpowers. Generosity is one of them. But did you know that the power of generosity through Mission & Service supports real-life superheroes?

Esbikenh was once a junior kindergarten teacher. While he grew up knowing his ancestral language, Anishinaabemowin (pronounced *Ah-nish-nah-BEM-win*), sadly the children he taught didn't. “One day I turned on YouTube and saw superhero videos. I thought, ‘Why not make these videos and we will just have all the superheroes speak in Anishinaabemowin?’” says Esbikenh.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action include reclaiming, revitalizing, strengthening, and maintaining Indigenous languages. This is critical for cultural revitalization. It's also important because when people are able to speak their ancestral language, self-understanding and self-esteem grows, health improves, and the sense of connection and relationships with others flourishes.

Knowing how important learning Anishinaabemowin is to the children he once taught, Esbikenh applied for a project grant from the United Church. The Healing Fund, which is nearly entirely funded through Mission & Service, addresses the ongoing impacts of the residential school system.



Credit: The United Church of Canada

With financial support secured, Esbikenh's filming has begun. When the videos are finished, they will be used as an educational resource for teachers, parents, and anyone who wants to learn the Anishinaabemowin language.

“Every single person is a superhero. Every single person has a gift to share with the world. I think the most important thing is realizing the gift you can bring to your community.”

I've been considering the phrase “all my relations” for some time now. It's hugely important. It's our saving grace in the end. It points to the truth that we are all related, that we are all connected, that we all belong to each other. The most important word is “All.” Not just those who look like me, sing like me, dance like me, speak like me, pray like me or behave like me. ALL my relations. That means every person, just as it means every rock, mineral, blade of grass, and creature. We live because everything else does. If we were to choose collectively to live that teaching, the energy of our change of consciousness would heal each of us- and heal the planet.

-Richard Wagamese, Embers

Listen

Mark 4:37–41

A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

Reflect

- What kind of “superpowers” did Jesus have, and how did he use them?
- What was the impact of Jesus’ healing, loving, and justice-seeking superpower?
- What spiritual superpower do you have, and how can you use it to make a difference?

Pray

O God,
My thoughts have power.
My words have power.
My actions have power.
My interactions have power.
I have power, O God.
Help me use it wisely.
Amen.



We gather to share in Creator’s gift of
abundant life for all.

We fix ourselves on you, Creator.

Come fill our hearts with your endless
love, and send the wind of your Spirit to
new hope through our lives.

Come light our souls to rise in faith, to
reach out for your kingdom.

Come pour out your Spirit upon us as
we stand together as brothers and sisters.

Lift up our heads, brush away the
shadows, and shine your grace into our
minds.

So, Creator, we rise to worship, we
shake off the shackles of a fallen world
and join our hearts together.

With gratitude we gather as a
community in praise, Creator, to seek
transformation and to celebrate the
power of your Spirit that is always
moving. Amen.



June 20: Happy Fathers' Day

June 20: Indigenous Day of Prayer, the Sunday before National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21), is an opportunity to celebrate First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples' values, customs, languages, and culture.

***June is National Indigenous History Month and Pride Month**



BUC COMMUNITY NEWS

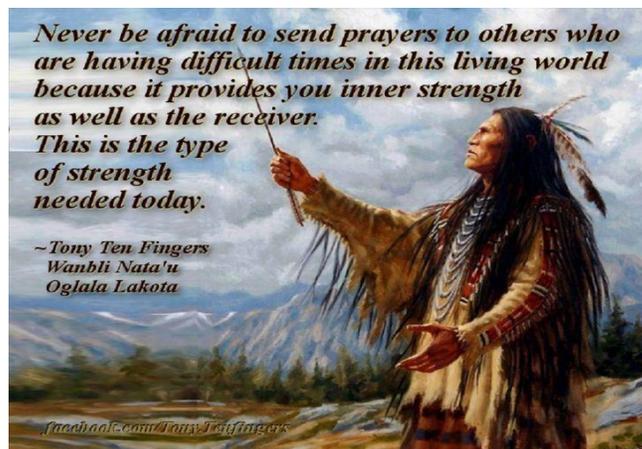


Thank you to everyone for your continued prayers and financial donations.



Congratulations to Emma Ehrenreich & Sam Burford, who are graduating from grade 12. *If you would like to send Emma & Sam well wishes, please email them to Angela at balzacunitedchurch@gmail.com, or via the church mailing address.

If you have news you'd like to share in the next newsletter please email the details to Angela at balzacunitedchurch@gmail.com or call her (587-229-3878)



The Seven Grandfather Teachings



Posted on [February 3, 2021](#)

The Seven Grandfather teachings are a set of Anishinaabe guiding principles passed down from generation to generation to guide the Anishinaabe in living a good life in peace and without conflict.

Guiding principles

Many Indigenous organizations and communities have adopted the Seven Grandfather Teachings as a moral stepping stone and cultural foundation. Communities have adapted the teachings to suit their community values. Despite where the teachings originated, they share the same concepts of abiding by moral respect for all living things.

The Seven Grandfather Teachings are among the most widely shared Anishinaabe principles because they are relatable and encompass the kind of morals that humanity can aspire to live by. They offer ways to enrich one's life while existing in peace and harmony with all of creation.

The story

The Creator gave spirits known as the Seven Grandfathers the responsibility to watch over the Anishinaabe people. The Grandfathers sent a Messenger down to earth to find someone to communicate Anishinaabe values. After searching in all directions, the Messenger found a baby. The Seven Grandfathers instructed the Messenger to take the baby around the Earth for seven years to learn the Anishinaabe way of life. After their return, the Grandfathers gave the baby, now a young boy, seven teachings to share with the Anishinaabe people; love, respect, bravery, truth, honesty, humility, and wisdom.

Below lists each teaching in Anishinaabemowin and the linguistic breakdown of each word.

Debwewin: To speak only to the extent, we have lived or experienced. Commonly referred to as Truth.

Truth is represented by the turtle as the turtle was here during the creation of Earth and carries the teachings of life on his back.

Colossians 3:14 states: *And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. (NIV)*

Dabasendiziwin: To think lower of oneself in relation to all that sustains us. Commonly referred to as Humility.

Humility is represented by the wolf. The wolf lives for his pack and the ultimate shame is to be an outcast.

1 Peter 5:5 teaches: *Likewise, you who are younger be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." (ESV)*

Manaaji'idiwin: To go easy on one another and all of Creation. Commonly referred to as Respect.

Respect is represented by the buffalo. The buffalo gives every part of his being to sustain the human way of living. The buffalo respects the balance and needs of others.

2 Timothy 1:7 speaks of the spirit: *God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. (ESV)*

Zaagi'idiwin: Unconditional love between one another including all of Creation, humans and non-humans. Commonly referred to as Love.

The eagle represents love because he has the strength to carry all of the teachings.

Ephesians 4:25 says what our ancestors passed down long before Christianity came to our people: *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. (NIV)*

Gwayakwaadiziwin: To live correctly and with virtue. Commonly referred to as Honesty.

Honesty is represented by either the raven or the raven. They both understand who they are and how to walk in their life.

James 3:13 says: *Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. (NIV)*

Zoongide'ewin: To live with a solid, strong heart. Commonly referred to as Bravery or Courage.

Bravery is represented by the bear. The mother bear has the courage and strength to face her fears and challenges while protecting her young. To face life with courage is bravery.

Proverbs 18:12 says: *Before a downfall the heart is haughty, but humility comes before honor. (NIV)*

Nibwaakaawin: To live with vision. Commonly referred to as Wisdom.

The beaver represents wisdom because he uses his natural gift by altering the environment for his family's survival.

1 John 5:20 teaches: *We know also the Son of God has come and given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. (NIV)*



-www.7generations.org

Pray with us for our indigenous friends, family, and neighbors

Gracious God we give thanks and praise for this wondrous world in which we live.

Beauty and diversity surrounds us. All of creation beholds amazing wonder.

You, O God, gave life to all peoples, animals, plants and the earth. We are all so closely related and connected.

Lead us to a deeper understanding of the indigenous people who have shared their wisdom and understanding of this connectedness. Help us to heal the fractured relationships of the past so that honor, reverence and dignity can bind us together.

The indigenous people believe deeply "we are all related," may we strive to believe and live in that spirit.

Amen.

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity and truth, we honour and acknowledge Moh'kinsstis, and the traditional Treaty 7 territory and oral practices of the Blackfoot confederacy: Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Îyâxe Nakoda and Tsuut'ina nations.

We acknowledge that this territory is home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3 within the historical Northwest Métis homeland.

Finally, we acknowledge all Nations – Indigenous and non – who live, work and play on this land, and who honour and celebrate this territory.

Try This Recipe: Three Sisters Soup

From Donna LaChapelle and Patricia Chandler, as posted on www.firstnations.org

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 cup onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 butternut or acorn squash, pre-baked and pureed
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup yellow corn kernels
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- ½ cup hominy, cooked
- 1 cup white beans, cooked
- 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper

Directions

Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic, cook for 3 to 5 minutes or until tender. Stir in spices, cook for 1 minute. Add stock, corn, hominy, and beans, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cook, stirring occasionally, for 15-20 minutes to develop flavors. Stir in pureed squash, cook for 5 minutes or until heated through. Serve warm with chives and plain yogurt as a garnish.

May our footsteps on these ancient lands remind us of creation and connectedness, in our search for truth. May the Gum Tree, from its roots to its branches, remind us to dig deep and reach high, in our action for justice. May the Eagle, who soars in the sky, remind us of the power, in our call for love. May the expanse of the lands and seas, of the sky and stars, remind us of God's timing in our faith in hope. May the Holy Three, Creator Spirit, Lord God, Papa Jesus, remind us of community. So, with grace, mercy, and peace, go in truth, justice, love, and hope.

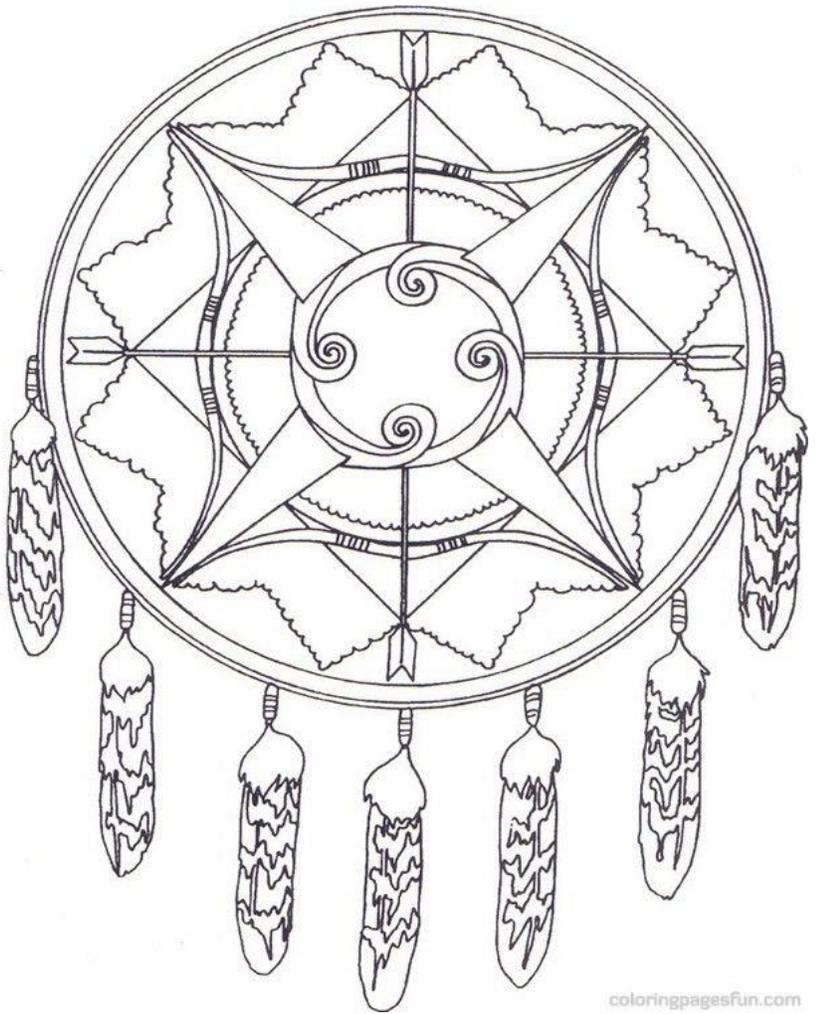
Dream Catcher Legend

“Long ago when the word was sound, an old Lakota spiritual leader was on a high mountain and had a vision. In his vision, Iktomi, the great trickster and searcher of wisdom, appeared in the form of a spider. Iktomi spoke to him in a sacred language. As he spoke, Iktomi the spider picked up the elder’s willow hoop which had feathers, horsehair, beads and offerings on it, and began to spin a web. He spoke to the elder about the cycles of life, how we begin our lives as infants, move on through childhood and on to adulthood. Finally we go to old age where we must be taken care of as infants, completing the cycle.

But, Iktomi said as he continued to spin his web, in each time of life there are many forces, some good and some bad. If you listen to the good forces, they will steer you in the right direction. But, if you listen to the bad forces, they’ll steer you in the wrong direction and may hurt you. So these forces can help, or can interfere with the harmony of Nature. While the spider spoke, he continued to weave his web.

When Iktomi finished speaking, he gave the elder the web and said, ‘The web is a perfect circle with a hole in the center. Use the web to help your people reach their goals, making good use of their ideas, dreams and visions. If you believe in the great spirit, the web will catch your good ideas and the bad ones will go through the hole.’

‘The elder passed on his vision onto the people and now many Indian people have a dream catcher above their bed to sift their dreams and visions. The good is captured in the web of life and carried with the people, but the evil in their dreams drops through the hole in the web and are no longer a part of their lives. It is said the dream catcher holds the destiny of the future.’”



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His Everlasting Dream

The Creator is Love. He is “I AM”. He is the 3-in-1. He is the Trinity: Our Father, His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

He is Always-Has-Been and He is Always-Will-Be. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is the Dream Maker.

His dream of all tongues and all tribes worshipping together at His footstool

is Always-Has-Been and Always-Will-Be.

It is a good dream!

We are the ‘net’ in the center of His will.

We are knit together by His sacrifice and His promise.

We are bound to one another through prayer, fellowship and unity.

As we remain in Him and with one another, The People will not fall through into darkness, but they will find the steadfast love of the Creator that never ceases, the hope that never dies and the good dream that comes true!

Thank you, Creator, for giving us ears to hear, eyes to see and a desire to catch Your everlasting dream in our hearts! Amen.

