

Living Into Right Relations – November 2024

Hello,

We are just days into November, and already it has been a very emotional month. On November 4 we lost the Honourable Murray Sinclair who had been ill for some time. When I think about what awakened me to the need to relearn our history and embark on the journey of living into right relations I trace it directly to him and his work with the TRC. I suspect I'm not alone. He was a gifted leader in our country and left a profound legacy of wisdom and direction in print, video and audio, right up to this year (see Section 6.a.i). I'm sure we will continue to turn to him for years to come. Thank you to Henriette Thompson for her words in his memory of his work with the TRC, in Section 1.

Just a reminder that this week is Treaty Recognition Week. The October newsletter which is attached to this email has a resource and list of events in case you need it. In addition, see the Nov 6 event from the UW Office of Indigenous Relations and in the last section of the newsletter, from Kitchener Public Library and McMaster Indigenous Student Services.

November is also a time of the year when gift giving and donations are on our minds. This month we've focused on giving that supports education for Indigenous students (Section 2). In December we'll offer ways to support Indigenous small businesses through seasonal markets and online options.

I know it's an exceptionally long list of events this month. As the Honourable Murray Sinclair famously said, "Education is what got us into this mess and education is key to getting us out of it." How fortunate are we to have access to so many learning opportunities!

Please keep the Sinclair family in your thoughts and prayers.

May we all walk in good company,

Nancy (nancydykstra@gmail.com). Thank you, as always, Henriëtte and Bev for ongoing editing and other support!

1. We mourn the passing of esteemed Anishinaabe lawyer, judge, senator and lead commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the Honourable Murray Sinclair.

For six years (2009-2015), I/Henriëtte Thompson had the honour and privilege of serving on the TRC National Events Committee as Anglican General Synod staff lead to the TRC. At the seven national reconciliation events, he had both a commanding presence and personable manner. He ensured that the churches had opportunity to apologize for the past and make genuine and concrete commitments toward the future of relationships with Indigenous peoples.

As a wise Elder, he left us with many things to ponder and act on. In an interview with APTN in 2021, he said:

“And so one of the things I make sure non-Indigenous people understand is we don’t need you to help heal us, we need you to fix yourselves. We need you to get those people out there who are perpetrating this process of working against reconciliation under control. We need you to straighten yourselves out, we don’t need you to just step forward and say well here is what we can do for you because my question is always, what are you doing for yourself? What are you doing to get rid of that violent vocal force that is holding us all back, holding us all, holding this country back? Because that is what’s going to stop reconciliation.”

And that is the truth.

We give thanks for his gifted leadership and compelling voice on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. We offer prayers of condolence and solace for his children and grandchildren, and for extended family and friends as they mourn his loss.

Henriëtte Thompson

2. Supporting Indigenous Students’ Education

Giving Tuesday is December 3. Of course there are many ways to use your funds towards Living Into Right Relations. This month we are highlighting Indigenous students’ education. Below are some of the ways to offer financial support on the Haldimand Tract.

- a. [Indspire](#) is an indigenous-led organization that supports Indigenous students in post secondary education.
- b. **Six Nations Schools** Both of these schools are language immersion schools. Think “residential schools” and how crucial language is for cultural identity. Six Nations is working hard to reclaim, relearn and restore their languages. Contact the schools to find out how to donate.
 - [Kawenniiio/Gaweniyo School](#) – K to 12 Mohawk & Cayuga Immersion. They are building a new school after a history of struggles to create a building. Historically students were housed in various portable facilities and currently occupy the top floor of the local sports arena. The donation link on the homepage describes the project.
 - [Everlasting Tree School | Waldorf Education](#) Mohawk language immersion, taught with Waldorf teaching methods.

Thank you for your help, Ellie Joseph.

- c. [Six Nations Polytechnic](#) in Ohsweken and Brantford. Among many other programs they are leaders in [Mohawk and Cayuga language](#) teaching, a vital effort for the path forward. Donation page [here](#).
- d. **Other Post Secondary Institutions** (Click on the Institution name for a link to a donations page; click on the [purple](#) link next to the name to learn more about their Indigenous related initiatives.)

Kitchener - Waterloo - Brantford

- [Conestoga College, Office of Indigenous Initiatives](#)
- [Wilfrid Laurier University, Indigenization](#)
- University of Waterloo:
 - [Office of Indigenous Relations, Office of Indigenous Relations](#)
 - [United College, Waterloo Indigenous Student Centre | Shatitsirótha'](#)

Hamilton

- [Mohawk College, Indigenous Students](#)
- [McMaster University, Indigenous Student Services](#)

3. Land Back: a new course devoted to learning about Land Back

There's a new, free open access online course on [Land Back](#), being offered by [Yellowhead Institute](#), which operates out of Toronto Metropolitan University. I wonder if there might be a group of us who would be interested in following this 7 module course together...?

4. Take action for Clean Water

I think that many of us feel strongly about the lack of access to clean water endured by too many First Nations communities. The Council of Canadians has issued a call to contact our MPs about relevant legislation that is currently being discussed. From the [link to the petition](#): "Members of Parliament on the Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs are debating Bill C-61 (*the First Nations Clean Water Act*), which has the potential to protect Indigenous rights and treaties and the human right to water. But to do so, it needs key amendments." Here's a link to [more information](#). Thank you, Norah Menzies, for bringing this to our attention. Related [news article](#).

5. Learning at home and connecting in person

- a. [Crow Shield Lodge](#) in Waterloo Region has a range of events related to education, healing, land stewardship and reconciliation, including a monthly women's full moon ceremony (Nov 15) and more. Events listing [here](#).
- b. **Currently at [Woodland Cultural Centre: 1924](#)**, an exhibit marking 100 years since the first election of a Band Council in Six Nations in 1924, highlighting the existence of two governance systems that represent Six Nations of the Grand River.
- c. **Thurs, Nov 6, 1-2 p.m** [Treaties as Foundations: The Legacy of the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation](#) Daniel Secord, Guest speaker for [Treaties Recognition Week](#). Office of Indigenous Relations, University of Waterloo.
- d. **Fri, Nov. 8, 1-2:30 p.m.** [National Indigenous Veterans Day: Ceremony & Fireside Chat](#) Office of Indigenous Relations, University of Waterloo.
- e. **Fri, Nov. 8, 7-8:30 p.m.** [Re-telling our stories: Mennonite and Indigenous perspectives in conversation](#). Clarence Cachagee (Crow Shield Lodge) and Leah Reesor-Keller (KAIROS) in conversation, with host Bob Nally. Erb St Mennonite Church, 131 Erb St. W., Waterloo. Register through the link.

- f. **Sat & Sun, Nov. 9 & 10, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.** [We Remember: Beaded Poppy Workshop with Naomi Smith](#) A 2-day workshop in the Coach House at McCrae House, 108 Water St Guelph.
- g. **Indigenous Sharing Circles with Kelly Welch**
- i. [Mon, Nov 11, 7 p.m.](#) at Forest Heights Library
 - ii. [Tues. Nov 19, 7 p.m.](#) at Central Library
- h. **Tues, Nov. 12, 6-9 p.m.** [Indigenous Poets Open Mic at Grove Cafe](#) featuring Kelly Welch. 295 Lancaster Street West #Unit B Kitchener.
- i. **Tues, Nov. 12, 7 p.m.** Part of the United Church's [40 Days of Engagement on AntiRacism](#), Continuing Our Stories: Indigenous Identities in the Christian Church with leaders from the Anglican Church of Canada and The United Church of Canada. Register through the link.
- j. [Six Nations Polytechnic](#) Lunch & Learn topic: Six Nations Public Library.
Wed, Nov. 13, 12-1 p.m. Six Nations Campus, 2160 4th Line Rd., Ohsweken.
Wed, Nov. 15, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Brantford Campus, 411 Elgin St., Brantford.
- k. **Thurs, Nov. 14, 7-9 p.m.** [Walking Through the Fire - Visual Album](#) free screening at Zion United Church, 215 Peel Street, New Hamburg. Followed by a Q&A with collaborators on the project Shannon Thunderbird, local Wilmot engineer and co-producer John "Beetle" Bailey and Sultans of String bandleader Chris McKhool. Donations at the door appreciated. Organized by Wilmot Ecumenical Working Group on Indigenous/Settler Relationships.
- l. **Sat, Nov. 16, 1-5 p.m.** [2024 Voices for Peace Conference](#) Keynote speaker Adrian Jacobs, hosted by Church of the Redeemer Anglican Church in Toronto. Organized by multiple faith groups. Free, online and in person. Register through the link.
- m. **Sat. & Sun, Nov. 16 & 17**, "We Celebrate the Harvested Food" Festival at Woodland Cultural Centre, 184 Mohawk St. Brantford. Includes
- i. [Bawaadan Collective Film Series Screening at Dwade'nyota' ne: Gayetwa:gweh](#) on **Sun, Nov. 17, 1-4 p.m.** Click [here](#) for more info.
- n. **Wed, Nov. 20, 6 p.m.** Mohawk Institute Virtual tour. Click [here](#) for a link to tickets.
- o. **Mon, Nov. 25, 1:30-3:30** [Nations Uniting](#) Sharing Circle - To join this event and be part of their mailing list contact Rhonda Johns at nations.uniting@gmail.com.
- a. **Wed, Nov. 27, 12-2** Grandmothers' Tea at Norwich United Church, 80 Main St. Norwich. Potluck lunch and sharing time. Contact Joan (519-754-8786) or Shirley (519-753-5789) for more information.
- p. **Thurs, Nov. 28 6-7:30 p.m. with follow up Feb. 12.** North Wind Man - Indigenous Book Circle with author Clarence Cachagee. Tickets and information [here](#). Organized by Angie Hallmand of New Hamburg.
- q. **Sat, Nov. 30, 8 a.m.** [Grand River Water Ceremony](#), at [Schneider Park](#), Kitchener, parking off King St, across from Freeport Hospital.
- r. **Mon, Dec. 2, 2-3:30 and 7-8:30 p.m.** The Concerned Lay Catholics' Indigenous Teachings Book study. [Medicine Walk](#) by Richard Wagamese. Online, facilitated by Donna McGreal. Contact concernedlaycatholics@gmail.com.

6. Good Reads, News and Views

a. Reads

- i. [WhoWe Are - Four Questions for a Life and a Nation](#) by the Hon. Murray Sinclair.
- ii. [We Are All Treaty People](#) by Maurice Switzer. A brief look at the history of treaties from the Anishinabek perspective for students and educators (Gr 6 - 10). For other books related to Treaty Recognition Week see this list [recommended by Good Minds Bookstore](#).
- iii. [Treaties Recognition Week - Blogs](#) Kitchener Public Library, identifying films, booklists, events and other resources to learn more about treaties.
- i. [Brown Tom's School Days](#) by Enos Montour of Six Nations. Thanks, Gerald Regehr.

b. News

- i. [First Nations leaders call for overhaul of negotiation process for child welfare reform deal](#) CBC. Related : [Reforming First Nation Child and Family Services: A Critical Review of the Final Agreement - Yellowhead Institute](#)
- ii. [First Nations. Inuit and Metis leaders say work lies ahead on road to reconciliation](#) CTV.

c. Views

- i. From McMaster Indigenous Student Services a quick visual [set of slides and resources](#) about treaty education. Note this is a Facebook page. To see the slides hit the '>' icon.