

## Synod of Alberta and the Northwest KAIROS Report: October 2016

I would thank the Synod for the opportunity of having served as Synod KAIROS representative for the past four years. As my service comes to an end the work of KAIROS in the Synod as well as throughout the Prairies North Region continues to face challenges.

I believe that the proposed change to Standing Orders that will place responsibility for KAIROS in the mandate of the Director of Regional Ministries offers the best hope for the future. My experience has been that the most effective promotion of KAIROS within the Synod has been carried out by Dianne Ollerenshaw, our current Director of Regional Ministries.

### **SYNOD LEVEL**

We need to acknowledge that, while we may not be aware of it, there is a lot of good KAIROS ministry happening within Synod congregations. As an example of what happens at the congregational level I can report that at Knox, Calgary some work has been done re advocacy around TRC Call to Action #62. Members and Adherents were given the opportunity to sign the petition and their signatures will be included with those of all other Albertans when it is presented to the Provincial Government this Fall. Additionally, beginning in September, each Sunday's service bulletin includes an acknowledgement that Knox Church is situated on the territory of the Blackfoot people. The congregation has also been involved in interfaith work around the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

### **KAIROS Calgary's Housing Project Receives Award:**

The Arthur R. Smith Awards were created in the name of the founder of the Calgary Homeless Foundation to recognize and honour front-line staff and volunteers who provide housing and support to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Calgary. KAIROS Calgary is the recipient of the 2016 Volunteer Award for its significant role in paying off the \$1.5 million mortgage for Acadia Place and for spending thousands of hours working alongside CUPS staff to help set up households as families and individuals moved in.

### **KAIROS PRAIRIES NORTH REGION**

This year it was not possible to hold the Regional Gathering and Annual Meeting. A small subgroup of supporters met in Calgary to cover some very necessary work. It is hoped that there will be a similar meeting held in Saskatchewan. Don Dale of Calgary has resigned as Regional Representative. Wendy Kalkan of Lethbridge has agreed to take on the duties of Regional Representative. The Subgroup noted above supported Ms. Kalkan's appointment and that support will be forwarded to KAIROS National. It is hoped that similar action can be taken by the Saskatchewan subgroup if and when it meets.

### **KAIROS NATIONAL**

#### **Winds of Change (Indigenous Rights): Advocacy action with Provincial/Territorial Governments with regard to TRC Call to Action #62 re School Curriculum:**

<http://www.kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/indigenous-rights/windsofchange-overview>

Through D. Ollerenshaw, Director of Regional Ministries, the petitions were given to all congregations in the Synod. The British Columbia congregations in the Peace River Presbytery were given the petition for their legislature.

The Ontario Petition was presented last Spring and was well received.

The Alberta Petition will be presented this Fall. The deadline for submitting names was October 15th. It is encouraging to note that the Alberta Petition has the second largest number of signatures of the Provincial/Territorial Petitions.

**National Focus for Fall 2017: Newcomers to Canada: TRC Calls to Action: 93 and 94**

**93.** We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the national Aboriginal organizations, to revise the information kit for newcomers to Canada and its citizenship test to reflect a more inclusive history of the diverse Aboriginal peoples of Canada, including call upon the officials and host countries of information about the Treaties and the history of residential schools.

**94.** We call upon the Government of Canada to replace the Oath of Citizenship with the following:

I swear (or affirm) that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors, and that I will faithfully observe the laws of Canada including Treaties with Indigenous Peoples, and fulfill my duties as a Canadian citizen.

**UPDATE RE THE BLANKET EXERCISE**

The Blanket Exercise continues to be an effective education tool within the Church and beyond the Church. Mount Royal University has been using it with their faculty and staff for some time now. There has also been communication with the city of Calgary re their intention to use it with their employees.

**Blanket Exercise Worship Service: Enfolded in the Creator**

There is now a new worship resource which allows congregation to participate in an adapted form of the Blanket Exercise.

<http://www.kairoscanada.org/product/blanket-exercise-worship-service>

For further information on the Blanket Exercise and/or the new worship resource you may contact D. Ollerenshaw, Director of Regional Ministries.

D. Ollerenshaw, with my assistance, will be doing the Blanket Exercise with the Executive of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at their Calgary Office on October 19, 2016.

KAIROS has reached agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding with the Alberta Teachers' Association that includes, among other things, a commitment by the ATA to make the KAIROS Blanket Exercise available to all teachers in Alberta by the end of 2017. KAIROS is also working with school districts in the province to train teachers to facilitate the exercise in their classrooms.

**UPDATE RE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE (UNDRIP)**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada continues to study the implications for our Church and our ministries with regard to UNDRIP. See Acts & Proceedings of the 142nd General Assembly (2016); pages 223-225.

-Respectfully Submitted by Murdo Marple: Synod KAIROS Representative