



Report From Your Board Chair

Hello West Hill. It seems odd that as I pen this report a week before our Congregational Meeting, I am your Board Chair, but by the time you read it I will be your Past Board Chair. When I volunteered to take my second round as Board Chair nine years ago, we were faced with the challenge of Gretta being off on medical leave, not knowing how her fight with cancer would end. I now reflect on all those years and the many ups and downs that brought us to this point ~

- Gretta wins her fight against cancer and returns;
- We lose in our efforts of support for our sanctuary family;
- We win with our support of our subsequent sanctuary guest;
- Our First Nations study group becomes a major First Nations advocacy group challenging the status quo;
- We take on the UCC regarding the “unsuitability of Gretta;”
- A second medical leave for Gretta;
- Dealing with our numerous building issues of West Hill.

These are all just events, but the real story is about the character and action of our West Hill Community. You have dealt with each of the implications of these events with Compassion, Conviction, Determination and Resolve. During these times, the West Hill congregation found a collective voice and we all walked together in the spirit of our Vision Works as we dealt with these challenges.

During the last nine years I can’t count how many United Church of Canada congregations have amalgamated or closed in our presbytery. What I do know is West Hill is still here and is a relevant congregation serving our expansive community. I ask each of you to continue to have **Compassion, Conviction, Determination and Resolve** for supporting and building this West Hill Community that is so much needed in this world.

I have been honoured to be part of the leadership team during these nine years and I ask that you actively join and support the new leadership team that will take us forward into the future. I know I will.

Randy Bowes

News From First Nations Study Group

Kairos Canada's Revised report card: Provincial and territorial curriculum on Indigenous Peoples

In the words of Justice Murray Sinclair:

"Education is what got us here and education is what will get us out." Education is the cornerstone for change.



Our First Nations Study Group will be meeting again with our local MPP, Vijay Thanigasalam, to emphasize once more our concerns around this change by the present Ontario government to scale back Indigenous studies in our Ontario schools' curriculum and the importance of honouring the treaties.

Again, we will be inviting members of the congregation to join us in this endeavour. Your enormous support at our last visit with him in November meant a lot to each and every one of us. The following is an update from Kairos Canada on where the matter stands at present.

Updated October 9, 2018 Re. Call to Action No. 62

Kairos Canada has created a report card which assesses the progress made by provincial and territorial governments in achieving reconciliation through education in schools across Canada between the Fall of 2017 and Spring of 2018.

Background

In June 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) called on governments in Canada, "in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to make age appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students." (Call to Action 62.i) This is the basis upon which each province and territory has been assessed.

KAIROS acknowledges that significant progress has been made in the majority of territories and provinces and wants to commend the efforts of all those who have worked so hard to bring about these curriculum changes. It has created momentum across the country upon which all of us can build.

Since the release of the TRC's 94 Calls to Action, KAIROS Canada has graded Canadian provinces and territories on their public commitment to and implementation of Call to Action 62.i. This document is called *Winds of Change: Education for Reconciliation A Report Card of Provincial & Territorial School Curriculum* concerning Indigenous Peoples in Canada. In 2018, KAIROS updated the report card to reflect the progress of each province and territory.



Ontario

Ontario has made significant improvements in relation to Call to Action 62.i since the last report card. In November 2017, Ontario's Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Residential School survivors, First Nations, Métis and Inuit partners, revised the Social Studies and History curriculum from grades 1 to 10.

The new mandatory curriculum includes Treaties, Residential School and Indigenous achievements, and is to be fully implemented by September 2018.*

Ontario offers Native Studies in grades 11 and 12, which includes conflicts between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian Government, the Oka Crisis, Alkali Lake, the Jay Treaty of 1794, the Two Row Wampum Belt teaching, Indigenous achievements, and Residential Schools.

The province makes available to teachers culturally appropriate resources including Aboriginal Perspectives – A Guide to the Teacher Tool Kit and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Connections Scope and Sequence of Expectations, which cover K to 12.

(Continued on page 3)



*As of the summer of 2018, Ontario's new government made a public commitment to continue with the updated curriculum. However, efforts to tweak the lesson plan will be scaled back.

Next Steps needed:

- Implement the revised curriculum
- Create culturally relevant guides for teachers to teach culturally and respectfully throughout history and contemporary issues
- Sustain support for the teaching of Indigenous content throughout the education system

To view the report card on any of the provinces or territories go to:

<https://www.kairoscanada.org/what-we-do/indigenous-rights/windsofchange-report-cards>

Our First Nations Study Group will advise you ahead of time as to when our next meeting will take place with Mr. Thanigasalam.

Ontario

Inclusion of Call to Action 62.i in Provincial Curriculum	Previous Report (2016) (average grade across all categories)	Change	Current Report (2018) (average grade across all categories)
Public Commitment	Good	+	Excellent
Implementation	Significant Work Required	+	Good

Call to Action 62.i Subcategories:

Consultation with Aboriginal Peoples
 Mandatory Content from K-12
 Treaties
 Residential Schools
 Historical Contemporary Contributions of Aboriginal Peoples

submitted by Ruth Gill for First Nations Study Group

**Tuesdays March 5th & 19th,
April 16th & 30th,
May 21st, June 4th**

West Hill Matters
**Strength and
Compassion
In Leadership**

At West Hill we have a long history of striving to improve how we work together to achieve our shared goals. Continuing that tradition, beginning on March 5th we will be offering a series of six Leadership Development workshops to members of the Board; and the entire congregation is invited to attend since the topics apply to home situations as much as to how, for example, Boards make decisions.

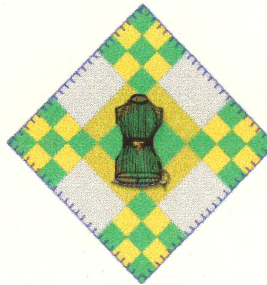
We have, at no cost, secured an experienced nonprofit Board Member and Executive Director to deliver six lively, fun and interactive workshops on topics that include The Role of the Board, Proposal Writing, and Decision-Making.

Board members are invited to attend all six so that the Board can be even more effective than before. Congregants can attend any, all or none of the sessions.

The fine details will be posted soon, but if you are considering joining us, we'd appreciate your RSVP so we can plan and prep for our time together.

We look forward to seeing you there.

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**THINK EQUAL
BUILD SMART
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FOR CHANGE**

Mission & Service

Dr. Reinerio Arce Celebrates Decades of Solidarity

Our gifts for Mission & Service offer long-term support and solidarity around the world. This story is about decades of solidarity with Cuba. In May 2016 United Theological College in Montreal, Quebec, presented Dr. Reinerio Arce with an honorary doctorate. Dr. Arce took the opportunity to thank The United Church of Canada for its decades of solidarity. "We will not forget your friendship," he said. "Even as it becomes easier to relate directly with the U.S. churches, we need you to be with us." He recalled shipments of food in the late 1990s through 2001 organized by the United Church through its membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank during a time of drought in eastern Cuba. As Cuba renews its relationship with the United States, Cuban church leaders are saying thanks to Canadian churches that have accompanied them through nearly six decades of a U.S. embargo. Reinerio Arce is a past president of the Cuban Council of Churches and former rector of the Evangelical Seminary of Theology in Matanzas, both Mission & Service partners.

Food Insecurity in the West Bank

Our gifts for Mission & Service offer self-sufficiency and hope. Life is a constant struggle for Palestinian Muslims and Christians living in the West Bank. Separated from family living in Israel, Gaza or further abroad, many face land confiscation or are unable to reach their land to work it because of Israeli restrictions on travel. Those who want to build new agriculture-related structures rarely receive permits from the Israeli authority, and if they build anyway they are subject to demolitions.

In the West Bank, the Near East Council of Churches has developed a food security program focused on families who have lost land and property due to the Israeli occupation and illegal settlements. Through this intervention, a family receives three main components: First is material for a shed for livestock. As part of the project, the family must contribute by building the shed, often with the help of the community; Second, they receive five fruit trees that are about four years old; Third, they receive 12 chickens, two pregnant sheep, and enough feed for 100 days. Training and support are also provided. These supplies give those struggling to feed their families the ability to become self-sufficient, providing milk, eggs, fruit, dairy products, and meat for their own needs while also having enough left over to trade or sell at markets.

submitted by Dorothy Hirlehey

Upcoming Special Events

Sunday, March 3	Women ROCK! (Service) ~ An opportunity to pay tribute to the women who have made a difference; who have rocked the world.
Tuesday, March 5	Annual Soup and Bread Lunch ~ For every \$10 raised, we'll help Second Harvest provide 20 meals for the hungry. Hosted by our Outreach Committee.
Friday, March 8	Pancake Supper ~ We need griddles, cooks, and help with set-up/clean up. Volunteers please call or sign up in the lobby. \$7 a plate. Arrive anytime 5:30 - 7 p.m. Vegan options available!
Wednesdays March 20, April 3, April 17.....	Leadership Meeting ~ Please see write-up on page 4.
Sundays April 14 and 21	Movie Night ~ \$10 for popcorn, a treat, a drink and a movie (Life as a House). This is a fundraising event for WHU and our refugee family.
Saturday, April 27	Women Rock Performers ~ Getting ready to sing with the band (Trainwreck) on pub night. This program, led by Stephanie Baptist, includes Introduction, Music Direction, and Choreography elements. Fee \$50. Please call the office to sign up.
Saturday, May 25	Dream Away Series (Services) ~ Easter Re-Imagined; a deep exploration of present-day hardship and hope.
Monday, June 10	Trainwreck & Women Rock / Pub Night ~ Help is needed for planning and set-up!
	Spring Marketplace ~ Please see notice on page 7.
	Wayne Crossley Memorial Golf Tournament ~ Dinner to follow.

Regular Services, Meetings and Events

Every Sunday	Sunday Service	10:30 AM
First Sunday of every month	Visitors' and Travellers' Lunch	12:00 PM
Every other Monday (continues March 4 thru June)	Men's Spirituality Group	7:00 PM
Last Monday of every month	First Nations Study Group Meeting	1:00 PM
Every Tuesday	Labyrinth Walk	10:30 AM
.....	Holiday Crafting	1:00 PM
Second Tuesday of every month	Board Meeting	7:00 PM
Every Thursday	Choir Practice	7:30 PM
Every other Friday (continues March 1)	Book Study - <i>The Power of Kindness</i>	7:30 PM
Last Friday of every month	Dinner with Friends	5:30 PM

West Hill United

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