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Pro D for NAIM

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TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

After watching the videos and reading the required pages, my first question to NAIM is have we as a faith organization, in accordance with the 48th call to reconciliation, issued a statement as to how we will implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples? Due date was March 31, 2016. Maybe that is why we are discussing this at staff conference?

As per the 58-61 call to action points, I see a philosophical conflict as to how we approach the spiritual needs of indigenous people. Even though we believe that Jesus is the only way to heaven, we cannot and must not force Native peoples to believe as we do. As ones who believe wholeheartedly in a contextual approach to ministry, we are committed to sharing in a way that is as comfortable as possible to FN people w/o compromising Creator's Sacred Book, the Bible, and presenting them the option of choosing to be a follower of Jesus, hopefully living a life that is so attractive that they want what we have.

I see a strong need for continued education in this area. I believe that Temera covers residential school issues in MDP. Since I have not been in her classes, I don't know how comprehensive it is, but I trust that she will cover the topic in detail or make it a requirement to read pertinent info.

I like the idea of having a day to recognize survivors of residential school. Has a T & R Day been established in Canada? I would really like to have one of our Tacoma Intertribal Gatherings focus on honoring survivors to promote understanding among the younger people. I want to act nobly now in light of the past, so it doesn't happen again. We all need to hear first-hand stories. I remember the first time I heard someone share openly from their heart what had happened to them at the hands of "church people" in the residential school. My heart was broken. I cried more that day than I had in years.

I watched the "Finding Heart" documentary and was impressed with Dr. Bryce for standing up for what was right. He worked for the BIA and was dismissed for documenting the bad medical conditions in the residential school. Today he is remembered as a person of compassion and justice. May I be the same kind of person.

One of the most powerful statements I heard during the final closing event in Ottawa was, "Forgiveness is not for the weak – when you forgive, you live!" May we be faithful witnesses, valuing our relationships with our FN friends and neighbors, honoring them and believing in them so they can forgive us and live!

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