

news
@
westhill



Autumn 2023

Message From Mike, WHU Board Chair

Fall greetings to the West Hill community and friends. Much has happened over the summer since our last message was distributed. Our board met on September 12 and most of the committees are up and running.

Rev. gretta participated in many of the summer gatherings and has now taken a sabbatical leave from September 5th through November 30th. This was approved by the Ministry & Personnel Committee (MPC) and the board. gretta has long deserved some sabbatical/reflective time, but had never taken such a break. At her request, she will be working half-time upon her return in December and will focus on pastoral care as well as some presentations of perspectives at the Sunday gatherings. She will not have any administrative or Action Plan official functions. To cover for the board, congregational meetings, and other official roles, Rev. Greg Daly has been assigned to us by the Shining Waters Regional Council of the UCC. Rev. Daly is the minister at Beach Untied Church. We are fortunate to have his leadership and input.

The MPC has been meeting and working closely with gretta to further define her duties when she returns in December. Florence Soknacki has reported for this group and much time has been spent to fulfill the necessary roles carried out by our minister and staff. Kudos to Florence and her team of Ann McKechnie, Randal Holloway, Kathie Richards, and Morlan Rees. The Celebrating Committee, chaired by John McKechnie and assisted by annie, will be organizing the Sunday gatherings. For many of our sessions, a guest presenter will lead us. We are most appreciative of Scott for leading and presenting at many of our summer gatherings. His creativity and imagination continue to give us food for thought, challenges, and spiritual and personal growth.

The Action Planning Team, chaired by Jean Skillman, has also been working hard to organize and implement the nine sections of the plan. A brief update is provided by Jean in this newsletter. We are pleased to welcome Karen Hokom to the team.

As we move into the fall, we are starting to make plans for 2024. The various groups and committees are requested to prepare their budgets and work with the Finance Committee chaired by Walt Shouldice and Treasurer Joe Hatlett. Appeals to render financial support to WHUC are often mild and softly presented. However, we urge you to update and hopefully increase your support to the church either through PAR, CanadaHelps, or direct donations. With COVID and our expanding global connections, we have seen a decline in our givings and are in need of enhanced donations to fulfill our plans and mission.

We look forward to an improved and clarified relationship with the Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough (BGCES), the owners of the building at 62 Orchard Park. There have been some misunderstandings as to our use of the various areas in the church and the terms in our lease agreement setting out exclusive use by WHUC on Sundays and designated time on Saturdays and Thursday nights. Mike and annie are working with the leaders of the BGCES to rectify this situation.

As frequently mentioned, I welcome your comments, observations, and suggestions. You can drop me a line on chat during our gatherings or send an email to me at lawrieclan@rogers.com.

Travelling our journey together, may love abound.
Mike

Action Plan Report ~ September 2023

The Action plan committee, whose mandate is to implement the Action Plan, continued to meet over the summer. Doug Richards was on this committee, and was a valued member. The committee has asked Karen Hokom to join, and she accepted. Annie DiPede will now be a regular member as well.

The next steps are to oversee the remainder of the Identity work and to begin working on Staffing.

The production guide and any needed hardware are progressing, as is the plan to secure additional funding through grant applications to the United Church.

Staffing will be facilitated by Joe Manafo of Listenology. The goal is to dream and create West Hill's ideal leadership, as well as skills and abilities, guided by the Action Plan articulation of a leadership team in the initial work done by West Hill.

The work of the Action Plan Team is coordinated with the work of Ministry & Personnel, Celebrations, and directed by the board.

submitted by Jean Skillman



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beautiful and unique gifts.

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<https://framingdamesgallery.ca/>

Outreach News

The Outreach Committee would like to thank the West Hill United community for its very generous support of the Backpack Campaign. \$800 was donated to Family Residence and the money gave 35 school-aged children living in three family shelters school supplies to help them start their school year.

In December, look for the Holiday Hamper Campaign!

Please remember to support the Food Banks where you live. The need is great.

Tina is a Coming!

Tina Wasswa has passed her medical exam and is waiting for her Visa and date of travel to Canada! After 3 years of waiting and enduring many personal hardships, Tina will finally be surrounded by West Hill's special love and support.


The Tina Resettlement Committee (Ingrid, Gill, June, Ruth, Vilma, Donna, Eve and Barb) is looking forward to helping Tina settle into Canadian society. The Government of Canada and the United Church of Canada are responsible for providing Tina with a basic budget for her first year, but West Hill United can also raise some funds and provide some of the extras. Tina will be given temporary housing and access to many programs and classes, both online and in-person, to assist her with getting to know Toronto.

The committee will be asking West Hill for donations of household items, such as linens, bedding and kitchen items that Tina will need once she is settled in her new permanent residence.

Tax receipts will be issued for any donations for Tina.

Thank you for your continuing support of Tina!

Gill, Ingrid, June, Donna, Vilma, Ruth, Barb



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First Nations Study Group

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO YEARS IN THE MAKING

1861 - 2023

“The Government of Canada accepts responsibility for this historic injustice and expresses its deepest regret and sincere apology to the people of Williams Lake First Nation for the harms suffered by being unlawfully and wrongfully displaced and separated from the village homelands.”

~ Gary Anandasangaree, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Canada

Rights

Article 26 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples proclaims:

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

It is painful to think of the grievous loss that these people have suffered over the past 162 years due to no fault of their own. At last, some form of reconciliation is being offered by our government as you will see in the APTN article below.

Williams Lake First Nation receives apology, \$135M in compensation over loss of lands

*By Tina House APTN
Sep 11, 2023*

!

On September 10, 2023, the federal government apologized to the people of Williams Lake First Nation for “the harms suffered as a result of the unlawful and wrongful actions that separated the First Nation from their village lands.”

“It was a big moment for us, a very emotional day,” said Kukpi’7 Chief Willie Sellers. “A lot of work and a lot of those Elders aren’t here that helped us win that case. When I start thinking about celebrating and holding up the legacy of those individuals we can’t but get emotional thinking about all the work that they did so we could be here.”

In 1861 the federal government removed Williams Lake Nation from their village.

It forced members to live in the surrounding mountains. It lasted for years – sometimes homeless.

The former village is now the City of Williams Lake and a site in the early 1870s, across the lake, was chosen as a reserve for the nation.

“The Williams Lake First Nation has worked hard to have this terrible wrong corrected,” Sellers said at the event on September 10, “Our ancestors were driven from a village site our people have used for millennia.”

The nation ended up at the Supreme Court of Canada to ensure that Canada “took responsibility” for how poorly people were treated Sellers said.

“Reaching the settlement agreement with Canada and establishing the Williams Lake Community Trust for current and future members of WLFN is a very important achievement for our community and a significant milestone in the path to reconciliation with Canada,” said Sellers.

According to the agreement, Williams Lake First Nation “has the option to acquire and seek to add up to 1400 acres to their reserve,” said the government release. “Land will be acquired based on the willing participation of both the First Nation and the property owner in the property sale. This acquisition may create new opportunities for community economic development that benefit the First Nation and the regional economy for generations to come.”

Reconciliation – 94 Calls to Action

The status as of September 1, 2023, of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action from 2015, as per Indigenous Watchdog: 16% not started; 21% are stalled; 49% in progress; and 13% are completed.

For further information on the calls to action please go to <https://www.indigenouswatchdog.org/calls-to-action>.

Indigenous Watchdog is a federally registered non-profit dedicated to monitoring and reporting on how reconciliation is advancing on the critical issues that are impacting the Indigenous world – including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action. The TRC emphasized education as the foundation for raising awareness on what needs to happen to make true reconciliation a success. Indigenous Watchdog delivers answers to these and other questions that are easy to find, are transparent, comprehensive, and real?



Gary Anandasangaree, MP, Scarborough Rouge Park
Federal Minister of Crown & Indigenous Relations



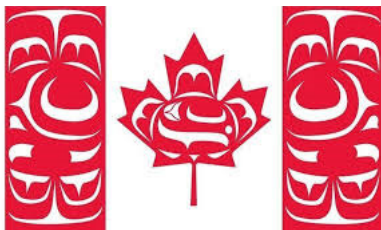
Kukpi’7 Chief Willie Sellers, Williams Lake First Nation



submitted by Ruth Gill on behalf of First Nations Study Group

Editor’s Note:

Try out the [hyperlinks](#) throughout the digital news@westhill. They are now functional, including those in our sponsors’ ads, so you can click and go directly to the web sites!



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An evening with friends in support of Ukrainian Relief



In Concert

Accomplished musician

Tetiana Cherneta

accompanied by her sons Denys and Anton

November 25th, 7:30 p.m.

Hosted by West Hill United
62 Orchard Park Drive (on Kingston Road)

Pay what you are able.

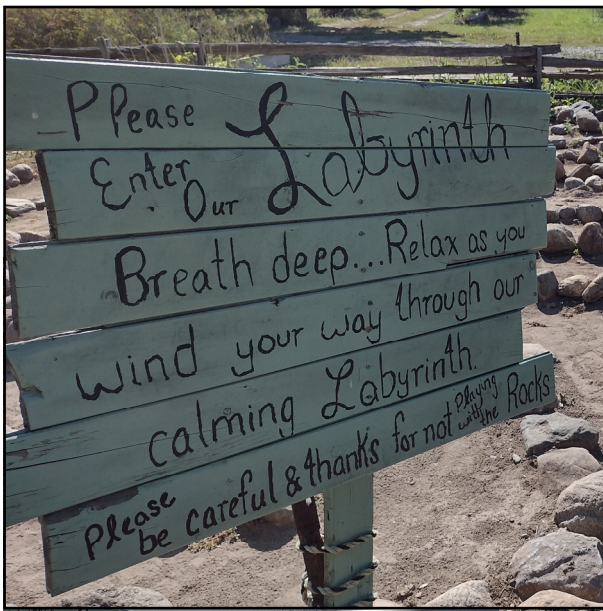
Donations gratefully accepted at the door.

Let us know you're coming!
westhillunited@gmail.com

Last minute attendees always welcome!

The Campbell's Orchard & Country Market
Bay of Quinte, Prince Edward County

Photos: K. Blakey



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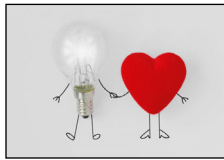
Please Join Us For Our Weekly Service and Other Special Gatherings

Sunday Morning Gathering/Perspective(s) ~ 10:30 AM (in-person & Zoom)



Tuesday Morning Labyrinth Walk ~ 10:30 AM followed by refreshments in the church.

Tuesday Afternoon Crafty Crew ~ Tuesdays from 1 to 3 PM in the church



**Wednesday Afternoon or Evening Colloquy Sessions
~ 2 PM & 7 PM on Zoom
October 11 & 25, November 8 & 22**

Thursday Morning Coffee ~ 10 to 11 AM (on Zoom)



West Hill United Board of 2023
Board Chair: Mike Lawrie
Ministry and Personnel Chair: Vacant
Communications and Marketing Chair: Vacant
Education and Growth: Donna Hall
Friendship and Hospitality: Barb Russell
Community Care: Babette Oliviera
Celebrating the Spirit: John McKechnie
Finance Chair: Walter Shouldice
Secretary: Vacant

Members at Large: Jean Skillman, Florence Soknacki
Regional Representatives: Annemarie Leepel and Louise Lawrie
Trustees: Glenn Cockwell (Chair), Jim Hyland, Frank Kilroy, gretta vosper
Minister: gretta vosper

West Hill United
A warm place to find yourself

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