

2011 NGM Native Christian Conference

The Native Gospel Ministries of Canada, Inc. (NGM) hosted its 16th annual Native Christian Conference in Ottawa at the Metropolitan Bible Church from July 15–17, 2011. The Conference was very well attended this year and we had a number of people from the various Cree communities. We praise the Lord for answering our prayers. Our keynote speaker, Huron Claus, who is the President of CHIEF, did an excellent job in sharing the Word of God with us. We were glad that Huron's wife Lois was able to accompany him for the weekend of ministry. The people were also blessed to listen to the special music and individual testimonials. For the special music we had The Chief Shepherd Band, Billy and Marianne Katapatuk, Scott Towajj and Abraham Jolly.

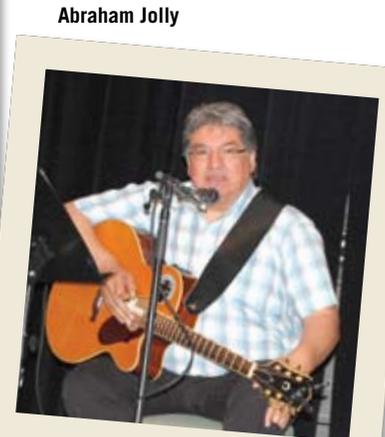
We videotaped all the sessions and we are putting together a DVD set of the Conference. The Conference guests enjoyed the comfortable chairs and the seating arrangement of the 200-seat theatre in the Met's new church building. The air-conditioned theatre has very good acoustics and the spacious stage made it so ideal for the musicians to set up their instruments and equipment.

Once again we went to the New Life Christian Church located on the Mohawk territory of Akwesasne in Northern New York and Canada. Huron preached the Sunday morning message and Billy and Marianne Katapatuk provided the special music. There was a good group representation of the people from

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Billy and Marianne Katapatuk



Abraham Jolly



Huron and Lois Claus



**Drummer Peter Shecapio
of The Chief Shepherd Band.**



**Joseph Shecapio, Thomas Neeposh and Tony Neeposh
of The Chief Shepherd Band.**



Scott Towaj

the Conference who went there. It is always a special blessing to have Christian fellowship with Pastor Willie Jock and his wife Sandi and also their people. The New Life Christian Church provided a fellowship meal for everybody after the service.

There is no charge to attend the Conference because NGM pays all the expenses of the keynote speaker and the music groups that are invited to minister. The Conference guests look after their own personal expenses. To host a Conference in Ottawa is always a major expense and we rely upon the freewill offerings during the Conference. We also try to raise extra money for the Conference through letters and our NGM News Tracker. When the opportunity is right I talk to individual people who may be able to contribute financially towards the Conference.

One of the great blessings for me at the Conference this year was the unexpected generous gift we received from a Native family in Moose Factory. I was hoping to donate a generous gift like I did every year, but it didn't work out as I planned. I wasn't able to get the cheque on time that I was expecting because they had no signatories. I was depending on that cheque to cover a major expense for the Conference so that left me wondering how the Lord would work things out. The first people I greeted at the door before the Conference officially

started was a Native elder and his daughter from Moose Factory, Ontario. As soon as they came inside the church, they handed me an envelope that, to my great surprise, contained a cheque for the amount of \$3,000.00. I have learned over the years that when God works and wants to bless us He does not beat around the bush. God sometimes does things very quickly. This was a wonderful way to start our Conference.

I had to go outside for a brief moment to check something in my van and while I was outside I couldn't hold back my tears in the parking lot. I was so moved in my spirit and was so overwhelmed by their generous gift. I saw this whole thing as the hand of God upon us and I was praising and thanking the Lord. Their generous gift was what we needed to pay off one of the major expenses for the Conference. PTL! With her dad beside her, Juliet told me that her five brothers who own a construction business in Moose Factory held a meeting to discuss how much they would give to the NGM Conference. Their mother was a strong Christian for many years before she died and I know their special gift was in remembrance of her. Their mom and my mother were closely related and the best of friends. They also attended the same church. My spirit was also moved as I thought of our mothers. Both of them believed in giving to the Lord's work. We praise the Lord that we managed to cover all of our expenses again. PTL!



Right: Pastor George Budd from Curve Lake, ON.

Below: 2011 NGM Conference guests.



On the Go with Dr. Joe 2011–12

We thank the Lord that the 2011 NGM Conference went very well and that we had a good attendance this year. Our speaker, Huron Claus, did an excellent job in sharing the Word of God with us and the people were also blessed by the special music of The Chief Shepherd Band, Billy and Marianne Katapatuk, Scott Towaij and Abraham Jolly. The individual testimonials in all the sessions were a great encouragement for everybody.



After I got back from Round Lake on July 25th, I had to leave the next day for Nemaska, Quebec. I was invited by the Youth Grand Chief Stacy Bear to speak at the 22nd Cree Nations Youth Council. I did my best to give the youth a motivational talk on the

Clockwise from top: Harry Jolly from Deseronto, ON. Fellowship meal at the New Life Christian Church in Akwesasne, New York. Christians from Garden Hill Reserve, MB. Rhoda Tait from Weagamow Lake, ON. 2011 NGM Conference guests.



On July 21–25 I went to Weagamow Lake, Ontario for the Weagamow Evangelical Fellowship's annual tent meeting services. It was a special blessing for me to see quite a number of Christians from the Garden Hill Reserve at the campmeeting. They chartered a couple of plane trips for their people to attend the campmeeting. When I was Executive Director for the Native Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, my wife Sheila and I used to make regular visits to the communities of Garden Hill Reserve and Weagamow Lake, so we know a lot of the Christian people and their families. Last summer I spoke in Garden Hill Reserve for the NEF church's campmeeting. These are two of the oldest NEF churches in Canada. The three evening meetings in Weagamow Lake were aired live on the Wawatay Native Communications Society, which made it possible for the services to be heard on the radio all across Canada.



importance of education as it relates to Aboriginal Self-Government. I occasionally have an opportunity talk to a number of youth whenever I go to the Cree communities.

During the first week of August, Sheila and Joseph Seth came with me to Moose Factory. I was invited to do five days of individual counseling for the Mocrebec Health Program. It had been about two years since the last time Sheila went down to Moose Factory, so she was looking forward to being reunited with her family members. While we were there I preached twice at the Cree Gospel Chapel.

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Above: The Clark family provided the special music at the campmeeting.

Left: Pastor Jerry Quequish from Weagamow Lake, ON.

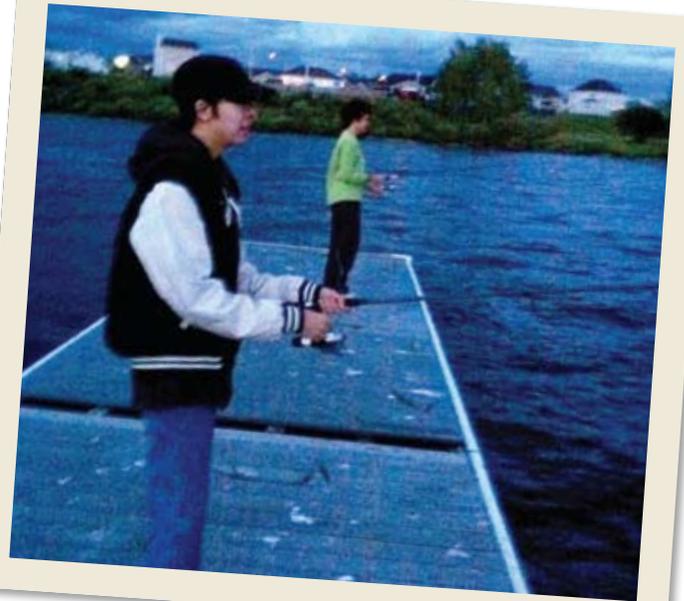
Right: Cree Nation Youth Council.

Below: Sunday morning service at the New life Christian Church in Akwesasne, New York.



On the Go with Dr. Joe 2011–12 *Continued*

On August 14–19 Sheila and Joseph Seth came with me again, this time to Mistissini. Sheila was looking forward to this trip because it has been a while since the last time she went to Mistissini. I was invited by the Social Development of the Cree Nation of Mistissini to do a grief seminar and individual counseling during their annual cultural awareness gathering. We enjoyed staying at the Lodge which is located beside the lake. I have relatives in Mistissini so we make a point to visit them whenever we go there. Little Joe had a great time fishing with his cousin Steven while we were there.



A couple of days after we got back from our trip to Mistissini, Joseph Seth and I drove to Cleveland, Ohio to see a live performance by B.B. King at the House of Blues. Joseph likes listening to the blues and is a big fan of B.B. King. We also went to Canandaigua which is outside of Rochester to see a live performance by Buddy Guy, who is another blues singer that Joseph likes. As a father, I enjoyed spending five wonderful days with my son and doing something that he was very excited about. I know it was a highlight experience for Joseph to get really close to B.B. King while



Top: Joseph and Steven fishing in Mistissini.

Above left: Mistissini Water Taxi taking the people back and forth to the cultural gathering place.

Left: B.B. King at the House of Blues, Cleveland, Ohio.

Above: Joseph playing his Les Paul Custom Gibson guitar.

he was performing. This trip was one of the fun parts of his summer holidays. Joseph enjoys playing his guitar and one of his goals is to make it big time as a musician.

On August 29–September 2, I went to Ouje Bougoumou, Quebec for a Healing Conference. I was invited to do grief workshops and to do individual counseling. After that I went to Nemaska on September 12–16 to do individual counseling for the Wellness Center. I always make myself available to go to the Cree communities wherever I am invited. Since I wrote my book on grief I have been doing a lot of individual counseling with those who are going through grief and losses.

In October I only had one engagement to go to and that was in Mistissini. I went there on October 17–21 to do a grief seminar and individual counseling. I was glad to have five weeks off from engagements during September and October. During this time, I made an effort to spend some quality time with Sheila and Joseph. While I was home I studied and prepared my sermon thoughts for the Mission Conference in November at the Cree Gospel Chapel. I also found time to write a major paper on Aboriginal Self-Government, which I shared in an adult class during the Met’s Mission Conference. I have been gradually working on my third book for the past four years now. It takes a lot of time and hard work to write a book, but it is also very gratifying. I have learned so much about the Native people of

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**Top and above: Healing Conference in Ouje Bougoumou.
Below: Mission Conference at the Cree Gospel Chapel.**



Kingdom Diversity

Sociologists are talking about the “browning” of North America. Eighty percent of the world’s population is already brown. In the United States by the year 2040, half the American population will be people of color. The radically shifting demographics have huge implications politically, socially, economically, and spiritually. As a church it is very important to understand the signs of the times, in particular as it relates to the “browning” of North America and God’s purpose in our countries. In our time-space world of nations, states, and political ideologies, it is sometimes hard to find our way to relate to those who are different from ourselves. But I do not think God has a problem at all, because diversity is a reflection of His nature.

The Kingdom of Heaven is the reign of God established through the lordship of Jesus Christ. His disciples misinterpreted the work of Christ and the coming of His kingdom. They thought Jesus was going to overthrow the Roman government to establish the kingdom. But He said, “My kingdom is not of this world.”

In Acts 10 we see God revealing the nature of the kingdom to the church. Until Acts 10 all Christians were Jewish. They had yet to understand that salvation was not only for the Jew, but also for the non-Jew. They were thinking of a kingdom that did not include Gentiles. Peter and all the apostles had been raised with a Jewish attitude reinforced culturally and religiously from the Torah to prejudice them against Gentile people. This attitude about people of color was brought with them into their new found relationship with Jesus Christ. God had to dismantle their old covenant-based thinking about the kingdom and replace it with an understanding based upon the new covenant for all tribes, tongues and nations.

With Peter’s trance in Acts 10, God began to deconstruct their old way of thinking. Peter saw a sheet coming out of heaven filled with all kinds of animals, and God spoke to him, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.” God was beginning to rearrange Peter’s thinking, his attitude towards Gentiles. This happened three times and the sheet was taken back into heaven. Then some Romans arrived because their centurion, Cornelius, had had a visit from an angel. They took Peter back to Cornelius’ house.

Talking with them, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. He said to them: “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.” (Acts 10:27,28) Here Peter got part one of the dismantling of his understanding of the kingdom.

Part two comes in verse 34. Peter said, “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism, but accepts men and people from every nation who fear Him and do what is right.” In verse 44, revival broke out in Cornelius’ house as Peter continued to preach. The Holy Spirit came, and uncircumcised people spoke in tongues and were baptized.

When God looks at planet Earth He does not single out people groups as favorites based upon nation of origin or cultural or ethnic identity. Instead God accepts all people who fear Him and do what is right. That is a kingdom world view in contrast with a cultural or ethnic world view. That is part two.

Then rumors went up to Jerusalem that Peter was hanging out with colored folks. He had broken cultural and societal laws by going into the house of these Gentiles. “The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.” (Acts 11:1) That should have been cause for a huge celebration, recognizing that God was now saving Gentiles, delivering them out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His Son. But because their world view was too small, they could not recognize the new thing God was doing. Their world view had not

been enlarged to see God's heart for the nations. Rather than rejoicing, the circumcised believers criticized Peter and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them." (Acts 11:2-3)

Now these critics were not immature Christians. These were apostles, men and women who had walked with Jesus. They were there when Jesus called Lazarus out of the grave. They were there to see Jesus healing the crippled, and casting out demons. These heard Jesus say, "You have seen me do this.

Now you do the same in My name." And He sent them out two by two. They themselves had experienced the power and anointing of God to heal the sick, to cleanse the lepers and to preach the gospel. They were deeply committed to Christ. No one could question their acquaintance with the power and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Yet because their world view was too small, for all intents and purposes they were anointed, empowered, born-again bigots in the kingdom of heaven. Had God not enlarged their thinking they would have continued erroneously believing salvation is for us, not for them.

Being a Christian does not eliminate the possibility of wrong thinking. Being deeply committed to Christ and filled with the Spirit of God does not exclude us from the possibility of being bigoted or prejudiced in our thinking towards those who are different from ourselves.

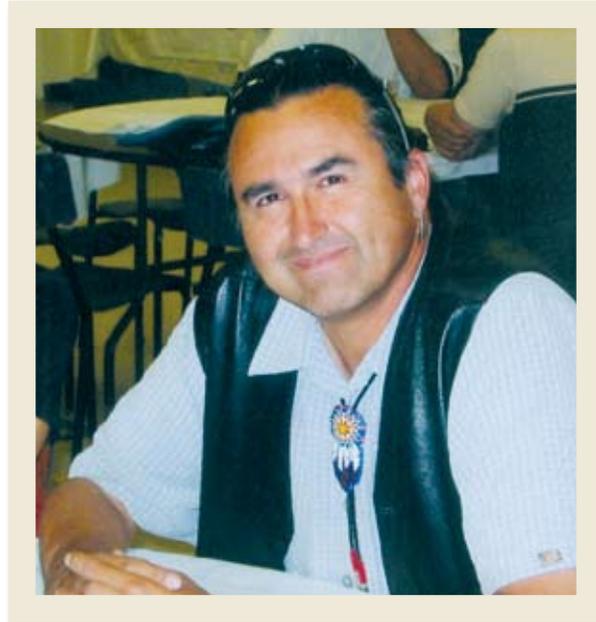
Within a Trinitarian theology you have the oneness of God within the expression of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Before the beginning began, you had radical community in the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So within God himself is diversity, is mutuality, is community, is shalom, is wholeness, is harmony.

The apostle John, standing before the God's throne, says, "After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, every tribe, every people, every language standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9) You have around the throne of God radical community expressed in remarkable diversity, which has always been God's intention for human beings because no

one language could ever adequately express the indescribability of God.

We embrace this diversity and try to be culturally relevant in how we present Christ and the message of the kingdom to various audiences. In the mission of God there is a concern for community that includes social, economic, spiritual, and relational concerns, so that the body of Christ truly becomes one in a caring community. Jesus said that the way people will know you are my disciples is by the

love you have for one another. If Christians do not have the spiritual capacity to love one another, to lay down our lives for one another in the midst of our unique cultural and ethnic differences, how will the world ever say to the church, "We can tell you are disciples of Jesus because we can see the quality of relationships that you have with each other." As we become browner and browner only the church will have the authority to speak the message of the kingdom in the midst of conflict. But we cannot do it if we cannot authentically love one another in the household of God.



Richard Twiss.

Dr. Billy Graham back in the 80s is quoted in Phoenix as having said these words, "The greatest moments of Native North American history may lie ahead of us if a great spiritual renewal and awakening should take place. The Native American has been a sleeping giant. He is awakening. The original North Americans could become the evangelists who will help win North America for Christ. Remember these forgotten people."

God did not put Native people on the Earth to be the mission field for the body of Christ for all time and eternity. Every group in the mission of God has a distinct contribution to make. When God looks at people He has no partiality. He accepts all people equally. We are living in a generation that is witnessing an unprecedented extension of the kingdom of heaven among the nations. Having a kingdom world view, having an understanding of the mission of God that affirms diversity, that welcomes and causes cultures to flourish in Christ, is desperately needed. May God give us a deep affection and a passion for all our brothers and sisters, and especially for those who are lost.



Personal Testimony

by Joseph Jolly

My name is Joseph Jolly and I am a Cree Indian. I was born on October 28, 1951. My birthplace is Rupert's House, Quebec. The name of the Cree village was later changed to Waskaganish. When I was about six years old my parents moved to Moose Factory, Ontario. I still remember travelling with my parents out on the James Bay by canoe with a small outboard motor from Rupert's House to Moose Factory, which is a distance of about 80 miles. The reason why my parents relocated was because there was not much work in Waskaganish and they also had plans to place me and my older brother Allan at the Moose Fort Residential School that was located in Moose Factory. Today I still consider Moose Factory as my home town because that's where I was raised and grew up. Over the years I have made many visits to Waskaganish because I have two sisters and a brother who still live there.

I come from a large family of ten children. My mother Minnie was married twice and she had four children from her first marriage to Mark Blueboy. After her first husband died, she married my father George and together they had six children. Both my parents are deceased now. My mom passed away on August 10, 1995 and my dad on February 14, 1999. My older sister Juliet Gagnon passed away on January 24, 2011. It is a comfort to know that they loved the Lord Jesus Christ and are in heaven today.

My parents lived off the land through my dad's hunting and trapping. They were in the bush most of the time during the winter months and that's why my brothers and sisters went to residential school for ten months of the year. My dad was an orphan and he went to residential school in Moose Factory. I was proud of him when I was growing up because he could read and speak English. He saw the importance for his children to get an education. Although I did not particularly like the residential school system I did profit from it. It helped me to get the education I need today and it also helped me in the area of self-discipline.

I didn't know it back then, but God has always been in control of my life. This was true even before I became a Christian. The Bible says, "You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed." (Psalm 139:16, NLT)

When I look back at my early life, I have come to the conclusion that I grew up too fast. At the age of eleven I was already smoking cigarettes. At thirteen I started to drink. As I grew older these bad habits stayed with me.

When I was sixteen I quit high school for no reason at all and I have always regretted that decision to this day. I was young and foolish at that time and did not take life seriously. I was fortunate to get a job right away as a janitor at the hospital and that helped to justify my reason for quitting school. I am sure my parents did not approve of me quitting school, but that was my own decision. Today I am trying my best to encourage our 16-year-old son, who will be going to grade eleven next year, to keep going and finish high school. I keep reminding him that it's a tough world out there and today you need a good education to provide for your family adequately. He is like me in so many ways when I was 16, but the difference is that he knows the Lord. He has been going to a Christian school ever since he started school.

What I remember in my teenage years is that it was a rare weekend that went by when I was not drinking and partying with my friends and family. I was a very worldly person when I think of it. My ability to play the guitar and sing country and western songs made it easier for me to get invitations to weekend parties. Like many people back home, weekends were for partying and I looked forward for each weekend to come. This is the reason why I try not to be critical or too hard on teenagers who are on drugs and alcohol because I was once there myself. In Moose Factory there were two evangelical churches, and sometimes at work we would talk about the Christians. It was hard for me to figure them out and I often wondered how they could enjoy life if they didn't drink, smoke, play cards and gamble. When I was growing up in Moose Factory, playing bingo was a big event for the adults and it still is today.

I remember there was one time in my life that I said very definitely that I would never become a Christian. What held me back were my beer drinking and the pleasures of this sinful world. I didn't know it then but I was actually an enemy of God. The Bible says very plainly, "You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God." (James 4:4, NLT).

Through my reckless lifestyle I was destroying my life. I remember a few times when I came close to death because of my drinking. I would drive in the city while intoxicated and would sometimes have a blackout. I would wake up after drinking the night before and not know how I got home. God in his grace and mercy sent someone into my life to help me straighten up a few things in my life. Sheila and I were probably the most mismatched couple when we met. She did not drink or smoke and she didn't like anyone who drank. Her lifestyle was just the opposite to the kind of life I lived. She was like a lamb in her sweet innocence and I was the big bad wolf.

On June 4, 1971, Sheila and I got married and we have been together for 41 years now. She was just eighteen and I was nineteen so we were still teenagers when we got married. A year after we were married we went to Ottawa where I would do upgrading and take a Chef course at Algonquin College. When we lived in the city I started drinking again. My wife's feelings were hurt by my drinking and she told me later that there were a number of times she had made up her mind to leave me. I had very good jobs in the city. Today I am proud to tell my son that I worked at the Chateau Laurier, the National Arts Centre and the Royal Parliamentary Restaurant. I have used my chef skills many times in our ministry.

The Lord was doing something wonderful to my family members in Waskaganish and Moose Factory. They

became Christians in the early 70s and their lives were being changed dramatically. I was glad when my dad also got saved because he used to drink a lot. My family seemed very happy in their new life with Christ and they would share the good news with us every time we went down for a visit. I grew up in a rough neighborhood called "Tent City" in Moose Factory, which was well-known for its weekend parties and drinking. The hand of God's salvation was very evident in Tent City because the majority of the Native families living there became Christians and stopped drinking. Later the people who

used to go there for weekend parties changed its name to "Holy City," which is a great testimony for the new believers at that time. Many of the adult Christians have since gone home to be with the Lord but I have never forgotten them.

My older brother, Allan, was probably the first person to share the gospel with me. He and his wife Lorraine used to come to Ottawa for a summer vacation now and then. One summer when they were visiting he suggested that we go to church since it was Sunday. It sounded like a good idea so we got ready to go. I remember Allan was looking for a gospel preaching church in the yellow pages of the telephone directory.

We couldn't find the church he selected and since it was getting late we went to the nearest one around. We were downtown in Ottawa and we ended up going to the Metropolitan Bible Church, which would later be the place where I would surrender my life to Jesus Christ.

On October 13, 1974, my wife and I accepted the Lord after the evening service at the Metropolitan Bible Church. The night before I accepted the Lord I got drunk and didn't come home after work. I had a hangover all day Sunday. To seek my wife's forgiveness, I agreed to go to church twice that Sunday with her and my two brothers Abraham and Howard, who were living with us at that time. They were going to high

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Dr. Joe, Sheila and Joseph Seth Jolly.

Remembering Dr. Dan



By Dr. Joseph Jolly

One of the things I will always remember about the late Dan Kelly is that he was our genuine friend. Whenever my wife Sheila and I visited the Kellys in their home, we always talked about Native missions and spiritual matters. Dan and Jan both had a good sense of humour and we shared a lot of good laughs together. As a Native Christian I can honestly say that Dan really cared about the Native people of Canada who he was called to serve. I often thought of how good it would be if there were more missionaries like Dan and Jan who really understood missions and had a vision for the National Native Church. This was the Big Picture that Dan often talked about.

My two brothers Allan and Abraham also knew Dan from our days at Briercrest Bible College. In fact, one of the reasons why Dan and Jan specifically moved to Caronport, Saskatchewan was because they heard there were Native students at Briercrest and they wanted to make contact with them. Dan really wanted the Native Christians to grasp the indigenous church principles that he learned from the School of World Missions in Pasadena, California. I believe without a shadow of a doubt that God used Dan and his wife Jan to prepare my wife and I for the ministry among our own people. They worked as a husband and wife team and they helped us to appreciate and study our Native culture. Dan helped me to understand missions and his emphasis on the indigenous

church principles helped me to develop a philosophy of ministry. The teaching I received from them helped me in my past work with the Native Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and also my present work with Native Gospel Ministries of Canada.

When I did my doctoral dissertation, I used the missiological principles that Dr. Dan Kelly taught me. The title of my dissertation was *“Give Christ the Freedom to Build His Native Church.”* When I was with NEFC, I often heard the late Tom Francis, who was my predecessor, say this statement and I thought it would make a catchy title. There is a lot to be said about missions in that statement. My wife and I were very privileged to have both Tom and Dan as our mentors and teachers regarding the

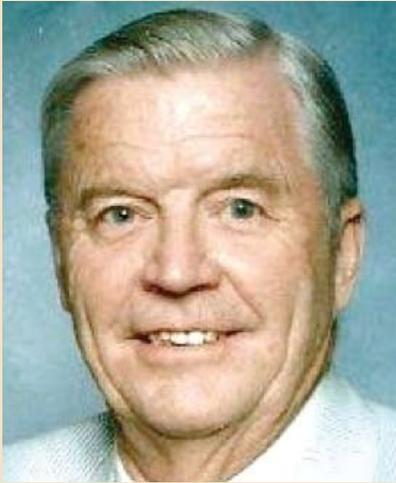
Indigenous Church. Tom taught us the indigenous principles from a Native perspective and Dan taught us these principles from a Whiteman’s perspective. I still teach these principles today when I do leadership and management seminars and workshops in the Native communities.

The next book I am planning to write will focus on Native issues and it will bring out the indigenous principles that I learned from Dan and Tom. Over the years I have studied missions myself and I have discovered that what Dan and Tom said is true because the indigenous methods are being taught all over the world. I often heard Tom say that the indigenous principles are really New Testament principles and I agree with him. I also believe

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Kelly and Dr. Tom Francis

Dr. Dan Kelly



Dan Kelly (1929–2012)

Surviving Dan is his wife of 61 years, Janet Elizabeth Kelly (nee McLay), daughter Janet (Tim) Pearson of Prince George, son Daniel Kelly Jr. of Prince George, daughter Aileen Kelly of Nanaimo, daughter Jaclyn (Don) Riemer of Prince George, 12 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

Husband, father, grandfather, army officer, professor, counsellor, missionary, author, carpenter, sculptor, gardener, boxer, hunter, fisherman, man of justice, servant of God.

Daniel Kelly had a heart for wanting to provide equal opportunity for all.

We are celebrating the life of Dr. Daniel Paul Robert Vincent Patrick Kelly. He has now left us but God reassures that we will see him again. Born, educated and married in Toronto, Ontario, Dan led an exceptional life of servitude. He was an officer of the Canadian Armed Forces and veteran of the Korean War. After 12 years of service, Dan resigned and accepted a position with Aboriginal Affairs in the federal government. Some years later, he moved his family to Penticton, BC to operate an orchard. However, it wasn't long before he went back to his calling with Aboriginal Affairs and was promoted to a position in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. While in Whitehorse, Dan made the decision to follow Christ. Influenced by his professional career, this decision led to a 30-year dedication to teaching the Word of God within First Nations Communities. In the years following, he received his Bachelors and then Masters in Theology, as well as a second Masters and a Doctorate in Missions. A man of intellect, he has made significant contributions to the literary and academic world as President of the Okanagan Bible College, professor at Ontario Theological Seminary as well as Trinity Western University, and director of Chemanis Native College. Dan lived in Prince George, BC during his latter years with many adoring friends and family. Sadly, he was stricken with Alzheimer's in his late 70s and ended his days at Gateway Lodge care home. He has now received his final promotion to heaven.

"The Lord will say, well done thou good and faithful servant..." Matthew 25:21

"Absent from the body is present with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8

A Vision for Native Churches



Tommy Francis (1924–2004)

Thomas (Tommy) Francis, a member of the Kahkewistahaw First Nation, was born at Broadview (SK). He attended residential school at Round Lake (SK) and then joined the Canadian Air Force. Upon returning home from WW II duties, he became a conservation officer. It was at Cumberland House (SK) that he met his wife Helen.

While working at La Loche (SK), Tommy and Helen were saved as the result of the ministry of NCEM missionaries, Art and Dorothy Wellwood. Sensing God's call to full-time Christian service, they attended Mokahum Bible Institute in Cass Lake, Minnesota.

Tommy and Helen served with NCEM from 1956 to 1967, most of those years in itinerant evangelism and field administration based at The Pas (MB) and at Prince Albert (SK).

Though Tommy's evangelistic ministry saw unprecedented numbers of Native northerners make decisions for Christ, he would become better known for his role in founding and leading the Native Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Tommy taught and promoted the idea of the indigenous church and carried the vision for a national association of Native churches, officially organized in 1970 and now based in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Tommy served full-time in the administration of NEFC until his retirement in the early 1980s, and then continued preaching. He also taught Cree language classes and, with Helen, served as an Elder Advisor for his Band. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Briercrest Schools.

Tommy passed away on January 31, 2004 at age 79. He is survived by Helen, his wife of 53 years, their four children and their families.

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Right: Joseph Seth, Sheila
and Dr. Joe Jolly.

that the indigenous principles will play a major role in helping the Native people achieve Self-Government.

I have heard some missionaries say that Dan was ahead of his time, and because of this he had his share of critics regarding the indigenous methods. The indigenous principles were a new concept in Native missions back in the early 80s and many missionaries disagreed with Dan's teaching, which was mostly due to a lack of knowledge and training in this area. Many of the non-Native missionaries did not have the missiological training that Dan had from his studies at the School of World Missions.

Dan taught me so well that at one time a missionary told me that I was referred to as being Dan Kelly's puppet. Today I consider that a compliment in remembrance of my friend. One time Dan told me that he didn't care what other people said about him and his philosophy of ministry because he knew he was right. However, he was human and had feelings just like everybody else and I am sure that he got discouraged now and then when people misunderstood him. He was trained to be a soldier and he stood firm in what he believed. Today, many non-Native missionaries and Native Christian leaders understand these vital mission principles and are applying them in their ministries. Dr. Dan Kelly's name will not be forgotten by the Native Christians because he was one of the few missionaries who did a lot to promote the indigenous church.



Personal Testimony Continued

school in Ottawa and they both became Christians when they were home for the summer. I went home from that service feeling clean because my sins were forgiven and even my hangover was gone. So the Lord did a miracle in my life when I got saved. The first person I told about me becoming a Christian was my late mom, and she was rejoicing over the phone as we talked. I was the last one in our family to become a Christian.

Two years after I became a Christian, God called me into the ministry to preach the gospel. God must have a good sense of humour because it always amuses me to think that I never wanted to become a Christian and the last thing on my list was to be a minister. After I became a Christian my attitude changed and I responded with my whole heart when God called me to serve him full-time. My wife and I enrolled at Briercrest Bible Institute in Caronport, Saskatchewan, and four years later I graduated with a Bachelor of Religious Education, majoring in Pastoral Studies. After graduation we worked for the Native Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, where I served as Executive Director for 13 years. In my ministry over the years, I have pastored Native churches in Moosnee, Regina and Prince Albert. Since 1995 I have been the General Director of Native Gospel Ministries of Canada, with its head office in Ottawa. I praise God that my wife and I have seen many of our Native people come to Christ in our 34 years of ministry. While continuing these ministries, I earned M.A. and M.Div. degrees from Briercrest Biblical Seminary, majoring in administration, leadership and education. In April 2000 I earned the degree Doctor of Ministry from Providence Theological Seminary in Otterburne, Manitoba.

If you have never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, may I remind you not to put off your decision too long because someday it might be too late. I accepted the Lord when I was 21 years old and I have never regretted my decision. My only regret is that I didn't do it sooner. Here is the sinner's prayer I prayed after the service when I committed my life to God: *"Thank you heavenly Father for your Son the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins and rose again from the dead according to the Scriptures. I know that I am a sinner and I have sinned against thee. I ask you now to forgive my sins and to give me a new life in the Lord Jesus Christ. I invite Jesus to come into my heart and I receive Him as my Personal Saviour. In Jesus' Name amen!"*

On the Go with Dr. Joe 2011–12 *Continued*

Canada from my research work. Pray for me to complete writing this next book within the next couple of years.

I went to Moose Factory on November 11th and was there until the 21st. I was invited by the Cree Gospel Chapel to speak at their annual Missions Conference. Altogether I spoke 10 separate times, so that was a busy week for me. The services at the Chapel are taped and then they are broadcast on the community TV channel. While I was there I also spoke twice on the radio. I noticed they kept replaying the messages and the special music of the Conference on the community TV channel, so the Word of God reached a lot of people in the two communities of Moosonee and Moose Factory.

My stay in Moose Factory was extended because George Small, Jr. from Mocreebec's Health Program invited me to be available for counseling during the National Aboriginal Addictions Awareness Week. I went to the hospital to visit the patients and did home visitation during the day. They told me to make myself visible in the community so I had a chance to socialize with many people. I also participated in the Gospel Night Singing. During one of my home visits I prayed with an elder to receive Christ. This man is the father of George Small, Jr., who is on the NGM Board of Directors. George and his family members were very happy when they heard the news because their dad is now in his late eighties.

After my trip to Moose Factory I went to Nemaska for six days. While I was there I did some individual counseling and preached on Sunday morning at the community worship service. A woman gave birth to a stillborn child and the family requested that I do the committal service. I enjoy going to the Cree communities because I know a lot of the people and I feel blessed to help them in any way I can, especially in regards to spiritual matters.



Above: Christmas banquet supper in Sudbury.

Below: Pastoral leadership of the Sudbury First Nations Church.



November was probably the busiest month for me this year because I had several speaking engagements. Sermon preparation also took a lot of my time. I was invited by the Sudbury First Nations Church to speak at their annual Christmas banquet on Friday, December 2. They also asked me to stay over the weekend so I could preach in their Sunday morning worship service. They also wanted me to minister in song.

It was nice to see Mervin Cheechoo and his wife Carol Ann and a number of Native people from Moose Factory that

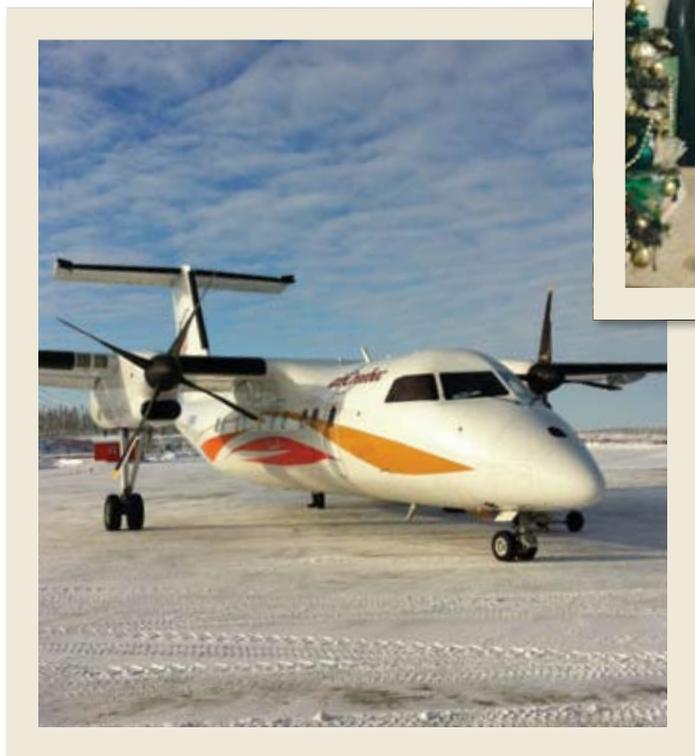
go to their church. My son Joseph was excited to come with me on this trip because he wanted to visit and spend time with his cousin Derland. On Saturday afternoon they went by themselves to watch a movie at a theatre near the hotel where we stayed. Joseph is 16 years old now and I let him have his space, but first I always make sure he will be okay. Both meetings were well attended and I had a good opportunity to preach two Christmas messages that had a clear presentation of the gospel. The people want me to come back again, so that is always a good sign.

On December 12–16 I went to Nemaska to do counseling services for the Wellness Centre. It was nice to be in the community at this time of the year and to see how the people there celebrate Christmas. While I was there I went to a couple of Christmas banquets, which is always a good way to socialize with the people.

For the last two years now we have stayed home in Ottawa to celebrate Christmas,

which is becoming more like a family tradition. Sheila works so hard during the year to tend to our needs at home, so I decided to give her a break and I cooked our Christmas meal again. It's always nice to see Joseph Seth pile up his plate with turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, salad and gravy. Another thing I appreciate about our Christmas at home is to watch Joseph opening his presents. He managed to get everything that was on his Christmas list, so he was very happy about that. It was nice to hear him say that this was the best Christmas, even though I thought last year was pretty good too.

I went to Mistissini on January 16–20 for counseling services. While I was there I counseled a lot of *Continued on next page*



Clockwise from top: Christmas banquet in Nemaska. Community meal in Mistissini. Joseph Seth with his prized Christmas present. AirCreebec has chartered flights to all the Cree communities in James Bay. Sheila enjoying our Christmas dinner.

people. Many of them have a Christian background and so we have liberty to talk about spiritual matters during our sessions. I didn't go anywhere after that until February 8–12, when the Waskaganish First Nation asked me to go to Amos, Quebec and do grief counseling for some of the family members of the late Gordon Richard Blackned, Jr. I used to counsel Gordon in Waskaganish and I was saddened to hear of his tragic death.

The report I read said that Gordon was involved in a car crash on the James Bay Highway. He was driving with his family when Gordon lost control on the icy roads. The vehicle hit a transport truck head-on and Gordon died instantly. The five passengers were all treated for minor injuries and shock. The community of Waskaganish was in shock after Gordon's death.

At the hospital in Amos I had a chance to visit with Gordon's daughters Leona, Jennica and Vanessa for a couple of hours on Wednesday, February 8. I arrived in Amos by taxi at noon. For our first meeting I just wanted to introduce myself to them. Later on in my visit I had an opportunity to share with them briefly about the grief process. I chose to make it brief. Leona was quite open to talk while Jennica and Vanessa did not say much. From what I observed, I thought the girls were doing very well in their grief work, but I am sure it was very difficult for them in the early stages after the tragic accident.

I went back to the hospital the next day, which was on Thursday, February 9. This time the girls were expecting me because we set a time when it would be good for me to come. Once again I went over the grief process with them. They were very attentive to what I shared. They all had dreams about their dad and they felt free to share them with me. Leona said that Vanessa cried a lot after the accident and longed to be with her dad. They said Derek Jonah prayed for her and she felt better afterwards. While Derek was praying she said she felt the presence of someone touching her leg. She also had a dream that helped in her time of intense sorrow. I spent a couple of hours with them. Before I left I gave them some literature to read and had a word of prayer with them.



Above: Home visit with Kathleen Blackned in Waskaganish. Her husband worked at the hospital in Moose Factory and they lived in Tent City. Right: Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship.

I went to Nemaska on February 13–17 to do counseling services for the Wellness Centre. While I was there, I spoke at the Community Church service on Valentine's Day. The theme for my message was love. After my visit in Nemaska I went to Mistissini on February 20–24. I noticed that I was very busy during the months of February and March.

On March 2–8, I went to Waskaganish and was hoping to do follow-up counseling on the immediate family and relatives of the late Gordon Blackned, Jr. This kind of grief falls under the category of complicated grief, which means it is more difficult to cope with. This was not the best time for me to go because most of the family members had to attend a funeral service of a close relative in Wemindji. While I was there in Waskaganish I counseled a few people and spoke at the Waskaganish Cree Gospel Fellowship.

Right after I got back to Ottawa I had to leave the next morning for Sioux Lookout. The Native Christians planned special gospel meetings in town and I was one of the keynote speakers. The services were broadcast live on Wawatay radio so the gospel meetings reached a large Native audience, especially in the northern communities of Manitoba and Ontario. It was good to see so many Native Christians at the meetings from Weagamow Lake, Ontario.

After the meetings in Sioux Lookout I went to Nemaska again on March 19–23. I usually go there every second month and I always enjoy



Clockwise from left: Sioux Lookout gospel meetings. Fellowship meal in Ottawa. Day of Pentecost Gospel Band—Sioux Lookout meeting. John and Darlene Shecapio.



going there. I have relatives there and I know a lot of people in the community. The next time I went to Nemaska was on May 22–June 1st. There was a drowning death in the community during the goose break and the Band asked if I could stay another week. So altogether I was in Nemaska for 11 days. While I was there I preached on Sunday morning at the Community Church. I was also asked to do a child dedication.



courses. He will be in grade eleven next year. It was a lot of work for Sheila to cook his meals and drive him to school during the year when I was gone on my trips. She was glad that I was home for most of May and June so she could have a break from driving Joseph back and forth to his school. We are always glad when the school year is over.

I was home for the whole month of June, which was kind of nice. I had an opportunity to spend a lot of time with Joseph and made sure he finished and handed in all his school assignments. I kept reminding him to study for his final exams so that he would pass his courses. He finished writing his final exams on June 14th, and he was very encouraged to know that he passed all his



