

Kids Culture Camp comes alive with water and fire

What a great time we had at **Kids Culture Camp** this summer exploring the Gifts of the Circle* with young campers and teens! Each year our community deepens, and we catch new glimpses of Creator and each other.



The Oskapeew Youth Leadership program now includes female helpers! A female helper is called Oskiskew in Cree.

This summer the Nitche Creek hosted some of our best moments together as we celebrated baptism with Kenadee—a Kids Culture Camp first. Wanting to be baptised in her culture and her life with Jesus, she chose KCC as the place for that ceremony. What a beautiful way to begin our week together!

Later in the week, we shared a family BBQ on the banks of the creek. In a moment, wild fun erupted as a slip became a slide down the muddy creek bank and nearly everyone from youngest to eldest took a turn. The goodness just kept coming. Endless games of Nine-Square punctuated days begun in prayer circles, filled with riding, swimming, climbing, learning and ending around the campfire together.

Drumming and drum-making were highlights with



Slippin' and slidin' down at Nitche Creek

our first clan drum song inspired by Peppa Pig. (Go, Bison Clan!) Our elder Nora's dreams came true as we put fires in the tipis for the first time. We cherish the relationships that we have with the families and communities that our campers and staff come from, as

well as the years of partnership with InterVarsity Pioneer Camp Alberta that make Kids Culture Camp possible.

—Lisa Laird

*Editor's Note: For more on gifts of the Circle see: www.giftcircles.com or www.skydreamer.ca/earth-work/gifting-circles/



Nightlife at Kids Culture Camp

Preparing for Christmas and year-end giving this year?

In the spirit of the generous gift of Jesus, we'd like to ask you to extend his love through your

special Christmas or year-end gift to one of the ministries of Indigenous Pathways.

We have some ideas for you on the back page...



Hawk Feathers and Jesus

As the sun dipped in the western sky, I danced with hawk feathers in hand, a Euro-American woman raised in a Midwestern majority culture. I bowed before the Creator, humbled by his forgiveness for my recent acts of colonization and grateful for God's grace.

How did this come about? Let's rewind.



Nine months ago I sat across from a good friend, who was courageous enough to lovingly challenge me. “*You ARE paternalistic,*” she said. These words stung, because that was not what I wanted to be. Yet I had been describing for her all the ways I was trying to *help* a Blackfeet young mom, who had come to live with us. I wanted to *help* this mom understand the Bible, *help* her develop healthy patterns in raising her daughter, and even *help* her understand how to manage her finances.

“*Did she ask for your help?*” my friend asked. This mom had come to us in crisis and really desired a safe place with love and acceptance. That’s what we offered her, but I realize now over time we began to push growth opportunities she wasn’t requesting. We were the ones defining the problem, the resources and the solution.

Still don’t know why I’m dancing? **Read more online at indigenouspathways.com** and find out more about how following Jesus’ way does not require me to replicate my version of relating to Him — rather it compels me to love others in such a way that they want to relate to and follow Him in their own unique way.

—Summer Graham

LISTENING, SHARING, AND JUST BEING TOGETHER

What a fantastic month in Mishkeegogamang First Nation at **Mish Adventures Camp and the Mish Adventures Leadership Training Program**. This year we were privileged to have over a dozen young people join the Mish Leadership Training Program. This included leadership training, deep team building, and the laughter-filled days at two weeks of Kids Camp.

Youth explored their individual talents and discussed their dreams for what their community could do to encourage children and youth to embrace prospects that lie before them and reach their goals. They talked a lot about “having opportunities to play and laugh” as well as “providing spaces for everyone to be themselves”.



Congrats to the team that made it all happen for Mish 2019!

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CELEBRATING-CULTURE FAMILY CAMP



The 3rd Annual Family Camp and Powwow, Pine Lake, AB. Ready to dance are Casey Church, Terry LeBlanc, Susan McMillan (Salvation Army), Shari Russell and NAITTS students Crystal Porter and Damian Azak.)



Jonathan Maracle, from Tyendingaga, ON

For three days in August, people came from across Canada and parts of the U.S. to celebrate Indigenous culture at our third annual **Celebrating-Culture Family Camp and Powwow**. Co-sponsored and hosted by the Salvation Army at their camp in Pine Lake, Alberta this year's theme was "Walking in Truth", explored through a variety of presenters and workshops. Mohawk singer-songwriter Jonathan Maracle served as our lead musician.

Craft times were outstanding, providing an

opportunity to participants, some for the first time, to paint on canvas, or make a traditional pounded copper bowl. Other workshops included setting up a Plains-style tipi as well as building and participating in a sweat lodge.

On Saturday we hosted the third annual traditional powwow. Each year our attendance has increased, attracting dancers and spectators from the surrounding area and far beyond. We say "Hiy, Hiy" to Creator and His Son Jesus! (Plains Cree for "Thanks")

LISTENING, SHARING, AND JUST BEING TOGETHER Continued from page 2

Within the first few days, wrote first time staff member Abigail Moriah, I saw the strength of relationships—being present to listen, share stories and just being in relationship.

We were thrilled that 32 Mish youth joined our staff team and together we were able to encourage and inspire



Three of the guys prepared for action

147 kids in Kids Camp. Together with staff, a total of 184 participated in Mish Adventures Camp this summer.

In conversation with community leaders, we have identified some future directions and goals for youth leadership training in Mishkeegogamang First Nation, stated Deanna Zantingh, camp co-director. We look forward to continuing in collaborative community partnerships as we move ahead to provide learning opportunities that strengthen community as a whole.

Editor's note:

This summer's teachings focused on Humility as seen in the character of the Wolf. Next summer, continuing the character development theme, the focus will be on the Buffalo, as he teaches respect for ourselves, others, creation and our Creator. For more insights on this teaching resource see: <http://empoweringthespirit.ca/cultures-of-belonging/seven-grandfathers-teachings/>

Suggestions for your Christmas or year-end giving

- Sponsor a kid at camp: \$175/child
- Sponsor a healing workshop: \$50/person basic or \$225/person full cost
- Connect churches with First Peoples in the journey of reconciliation: \$ 250
- Partner with an Indigenous follower of Jesus in graduate theological education: \$500

SPECIAL NOTE: In the aftermath of the devastating series of earthquakes in the Philippines these past weeks, iEmergence has been working diligently with our partner communities to support the challenging task of rebuilding homes and lives. In addition to your prayers and regular year-end giving, please consider supporting the iEmergence staff in these efforts. We estimate \$21,000 would support 6 months of work with four communities. Would you help?

We're thankful for your faithful financial and prayer support through the years. Your



Christmas or year-end gift will mean Darla and Paul will finish their theological education; Roddy, Michelle, Kenny, and Sharla will go to camp; you and I, and other followers of Jesus will live in healthier and better relationship with one another.

For all your giving, please go to the IP website www.indigenouspathways.com and donate online. Or, if you prefer, send your gift by mail to our office.

FROM THE DIRECTOR ▶▶▶▶▶

Whichever of Indigenous Pathways programs we reflect on over the last number of months, it seems clear that we have had an increasing impact in the lives of Indigenous men and women in Canada, the USA, Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand. Whether it was the highest ever number of students graduating from our theological studies programs, the best symposium in the past twenty years, or the fact that we have been appointed to candidacy for full accreditation; whether it was the Muskoka Leadership Camp, Mish Adventures, Kids Culture Camp, the family camps and powwows, or the variety of community programs of iEmergence. As you will see in this edition of *Indigenews*, regardless of what it was that our hands found to do, reports were of the “best year ever.” And, there were a few “firsts.”

This year, for example, we were thrilled—I was thrilled—to baptize the very first young person at our Kids Culture Camp. Kenadee, who'd attended for the past few years, had asked me some months in advance if it would be possible for me to baptize her when we were at camp. Her mom, Diane, is the newest of our iEmergence staff. Of course, I said yes, but then proceeded to ask her why she wanted to be baptized? Her response was clear

and unequivocal: She wanted to confirm her decision to be a follower of Jesus, and this was the way it was to be done!



While baptisms are not a regular part of camp, or our formal learning programs, they are a capstone on a year's activities when they occur. Please pray for Kenadee as she continues to grow and expand her faith as she grows into a fully Indigenous follower of the Jesus Way.

NOTE For Your Prayer: As this letter is being prepared for print, we have learned that yet another earthquake has struck the southern Philippine island of Mindanao just west of Davao City. Davao City is where Matt LeBlanc and the iEmergence Philippines staff are located, and it is from there that its programs are administered. While all are currently reported safe and sound, and while only minimal damage has occurred to Matt's home and the facilities that iEmergence Philippines uses, there are expectations of more quakes to come. Please pray for safety and the ability to continue to navigate the changing landscape that such travesties create.