



Truth and Reconciliation

Commission of Canada

March 31, 2014

Dear London Conference,

Yesterday the Truth and Reconciliation Commission drew to a close. The sacred teaching at the centre of this event has been wisdom.

For the United Church leaders here, the morning started with an 8:00 a.m. worship at McDougall United Church. The worship incorporated Aboriginal teachings, drumming and dancing along with a communion of bannock and blueberry juice.

The Moderator, Rev. Gary Paterson, preached. He spoke of wisdom as having three dimensions: mind, heart and body. First we acquire knowledge. Both President Newman and myself arrived here with knowledge about residential schools.

As we listened to survivors speak of their experience that knowledge began to break our hearts.

Now, for this to turn to wisdom, we need to take action-to live differently. Reconciliation is only a word without change.

How we will be in partnership with First Nations and work together for change is not yet clear to us. What is clear is that there is no going back. What we have learned-what we have experienced has changed us.

On our way home to Ontario today-with plenty of time in airports and airplanes to ponder this more.

Philip Newman
Cheryl-Ann Stadelbauer-Sampa

