

of the Onyota'a:ka Nation which means "People of the Standing Stone."

The annual Native Day of Prayer began at midnight the first day. Some participants chose to fast for 24 hours. Throughout the next day, Scripture was read, teachings shared and prayers offered by the sacred fire.

Rev. Gerry Hutchinson, known in Alberta for his work at Rundle's Mission and historical church research, addressed delegates Monday. His particular passion is bringing to light the history of the Native Christian (Methodist) Church and the leadership provided by people such as Rev. Henry Bird Steinhauer, the first Christian Cree pastor in Alberta. Hutchinson was invited to share his knowledge at the sacred fire. "It is a great pleasure," he said, "to be able to hand over this information. It rightly belongs to you."

Throughout the week, the Elder and Youth Councils and the Councils on Healing and Respect, Sharing, and Learning met. A recurring theme was that priority must be given to helping the United Church and Canadians generally understand the true history of this country from the perspective of First Nation peoples.

Moderator Rt. Rev. Stan McKay also addressed the issue Friday. "Racism can only be confronted by telling the true history of this land. My suggestion is that all children need to be exposed to the real story. What they learn now fills their hearts with great hatred. They see cartoons and old John Wayne movies, and they despise us."

The Grand Council ordained Arlene Granbois of File Hills, Sask., who will serve Regina Native Ministries and Judy Moneybird of Green Lake, Sask., who will work for Saskatoon Moosewoods Native Ministries.

"They've come through a lot of struggle and pain . . . balancing the United Church with our way," said Peggy Monague of Winnipeg. "It was an honor for me to present them for ordination."

Added Janet Sigurdson of Plains Presbytery: "It was good to see the Elders play a major part. It's an affirmation that the United Church is accepting the indigenous spiritual way of life. In this service, you could see the Apology at work."

Carolyn Pogue