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Waterloo Lutheran Seminary and Laurier's Office of Aboriginal Initiatives present Circle of Dialogue

WATERLOO – Waterloo Lutheran Seminary and the Wilfrid Laurier University Office of Aboriginal Initiatives present Circle of Dialogue: Sources of Hope for Truth and Reconciliation at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 18.

Generations of Indigenous peoples suffered trauma as a result of Canada's Indian Residential School system, which was designed to assimilate them into European settler culture. In our efforts to provide justice and foster reconciliation between settlers and the Aboriginal Peoples, the seminary and Laurier's Aboriginal initiatives office collaborate to hold dialogue events twice each year.

"Without doubt the most pressing question between host and settler peoples today is: 'How can we best pursue truth and reconciliation in our context?'" says Allen Jorgenson, professor of Systematic Theology at the seminary and one of the event co-ordinators. "I look forward to imbibing the wisdom of these two keepers of Indigenous knowledge as they point us to sources of hope for this important task."

Jean Becker, Laurier's senior adviser on Aboriginal initiatives, says that events such as the Circle of Dialogue are important to ensuring that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's recommendations don't fade into history.

"In the wake of the 94 recommendations of the commission, conversations about reconciliation are a critical part of making sure the recommendations don't end up on a dusty shelf but are actually implemented in the coming months and years," says Becker, co-organizer of the event.

The fall term's Circle of Dialogue speakers will be **Kathy Absolon** and **Virginia "Ginny" Doctor**.

Kathy Absolon is an associate professor and program co-ordinator in the Aboriginal Field of Study in Wilfrid Laurier University's Faculty of Social Work. She is Anishinaabe kwe and comes from Flying Post First Nation. Absolon received her PhD from the University of Toronto in 2008. She has committed her life to truth and reconciliation of herself, her family and communities in the healing and recovery from colonial trauma and the aftermath and impacts of the Indian Residential School system. Her mother attended St. John's Anglican Residential School for 10 years. Absolon's most recent publication is a return to Indigenous ways of coming to know and is titled *Kaandossiwin How We come to Know*.

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The Rev. Canon Virginia "Ginny" Doctor is from the Mohawk Nation, Turtle Clan. She was raised in New York State on the Onondaga Nation but her mother is Mohawk from the Six Nations Reserve in southern Ontario. Doctor served in the Episcopal Church's Diocese of Alaska for 18 years — 14 as a missionary and four as the canon to the ordinary with the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald. In late 2011 Doctor accepted a call to be the co-ordinator for Indigenous ministry for the Anglican Church of Canada. The ministry's emphasis is on Indigenous leadership development, with healing and reconciliation as foundational to developing strong, healthy, effective Indigenous leaders.

Circle of Dialogue: Sources of Hope for Truth and Reconciliation takes place in Waterloo Lutheran Seminary's Keffer Chapel from 7 – 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2015.

The event is free and open to the public. No registration required. For details contact Dorinda Kruger Allen at dkrugerallen@wlu.ca or 519-884-0710 ext. 3241.

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