

Canadian Indigenous Ministry Committee Newsletter | Summer 2026

The Canadian Indigenous Ministry Committee (CIMC) cares deeply about the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians. Through education and mobilization, CIMC helps Christian Reformed Church (CRC) members and congregations work toward reconciled, healthy relationships with Indigenous neighbours.



Urban Indigenous Ministries

The CRC supports three **Urban Indigenous Ministries** located in the western provinces, where the percentage of Indigenous people is the highest. The ministries are the **Edmonton Native Healing Centre**, the **Regina Indigenous Christian Fellowship**, and the **Winnipeg Indigenous Family Centre**. Your prayers and financial gifts help sustain these ministries so that they can continue to be places of hope and healing in their communities. They exist because of your generous and continuous support.

While it is well known that these ministries provide cultural learning, spiritual growth, and physical support, they also assist with vital administrative and social needs. For example, Beverly Cardinal, who is the administrative support person at the Edmonton Centre, provides much needed assistance to patrons with complicated government forms. Because many government services require recipients to have a mailing address, the Centre also offers the use of its address to patrons who do not have a home.

For some, the centres even serve as a surrogate family. Harold Roscher, director of the Edmonton Centre, shared the story of "Fred" (not his real name), a man in his fifties living on the street. Despite Fred's struggles with addictions, the Centre established a deep relationship with him. Over time, he was able to grow in the Creator's love that was manifested through the Centre's staff. When Fred suddenly stopped visiting, his mother called the Centre to let staff know he was hospitalized with pneumonia. The staff and patrons were able to support Fred through their weekly prayer circle. Though his struggles continue, Fred knows he has a caring, praying family at the Centre.

Shannon Perez, the director at the Winnipeg Centre, emphasizes the importance of patrons having a safe place to gather. In a city facing a critical drug overdose crisis, the Centre offers a welcoming respite from the streets. Here, community members and their children can temporarily escape the darkness of the city by participating in events like the Seed Blessing ceremony at the Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Center or the 'Brave Roots' children club. The Urban Indigenous Ministries go beyond just providing for the physical needs of their patrons. They also share the Creator's unconditional love with those who often feel unlovable.



Sharing stories during a Seed Blessing ceremony



Hearts Exchanged

Hearts Exchanged is an eight-month learning journey designed to guide CRC members toward better relationships with Canada's Indigenous Peoples. Using up-to-date resources and shared experiences, participants build a deeper mutual understanding of Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations.

This past year, 95 participants representing 30 different churches formed seven cohorts across Canada. One participant shared that the program "was demanding, challenging, and stimulated in ways that moved my heart," while another noted that it "reinforced my conviction that reconciliation is a responsibility for those who follow Jesus."

All Christians are encouraged to join an in-person or online cohort this fall, and we especially invite young adults to bring their unique insights to the conversation. Additionally, Hearts Exchanged alumni can establish "Community of Practice" cohorts to advance their ongoing journey, with support available from program staff. For more information, contact hearts_exchanged@crcna.org.

Grassy Narrows

Grassy Narrows First Nation, an Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) community, located North of Kenora, Ontario, urgently **needs your support**. This Indigenous community is situated in Ontario's boreal forest, alongside the English Wabigoon river system. As long as its people can remember, this pristine location allowed the community to rely on the forests, rivers and lakes for sustenance and cultural prosperity. That changed in 1962, when a paper factory upstream contaminated the water with highly toxic mercury for 13 years. The local fishing economy was devastated, and the toll on human health has been horrific; a 2016 study found that over 90% of Grassy Narrows residents showed symptoms of mercury poisoning.

Although construction has finally begun on a local mercury care home, promised remediation of the river system has not started. Compounding the issue, the Ontario government is attempting to fast-track a gold mine upstream. If approved, this mine will add sulphate into the river, which could worsen the mercury poisoning.

We all have an upcoming opportunity to support the Grassy Narrows community. On September 23, 2026, the community will host River Run 2026: Walk with Grassy Narrows for Mercury Justice in Toronto.

You can join Grassy Narrows members at the conclusion of their 1,700 km journey from their community to demand compensation, healthcare support, and an end to the pollution of their waters. Several CIMC members are attending and encourage other CRC members to join them. Learn more at freegrassy.net or email cimc@crcna.org if you'd like to walk with our group.

**GRASSY NARROWS
RIVER RUN RALLY**

