

Report: We Are All Treaty People Event – Sunday, September 19, 2021

The Winnipeg Truth and Reconciliation Cluster of the United Church writes,

On September 19 of this year the We are all Treaty People event (WAATP) was presented as a hybrid, with an in person experience at the Kapapbamayak Achaak Healing Forest in St. John's Park in Winnipeg, and a webinar later that afternoon.

Previous events were held outdoors as family friendly celebrations of treaty with Indigenous, Settler and Newcomers spending time together with music, dance, art and workshops, as well as good food. Since this wasn't possible last year the event turned into a radio broadcast, but as this year was the 150th anniversary of the signing of Treaty 1 and 2, the planning committee felt it was very important to have a component on the land if possible.

After developing some initial ideas, the planning committee sent them to the Elders' Council of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM). We were honoured when the Elders' Council took over the planning for the Welcoming Ceremony at the healing forest.

The Welcoming Ceremony included settlers and newcomers walking from the four directions to be greeted by Indigenous participants. Singing and drumming provided a background to this powerful ceremony. A feast and gift exchange followed.

Fifty people attended this invitation only event. Co-chair of the Prairie to Pine region, Diane Dwarka represented the United Church and Carin Crow represented the local Kairos coordinating committee.



Smudge bowls made by Keith Barber as gifts for participants.



United Church of Canada representatives Diane Dwarka (in orange) and behind her Carin Crow (R) and Mary McNairay (L).

Amongst the gifts given at the gift exchange, each participant received a clay smudge bowl thrown by Quaker potter, Keith Barber. Settler participants, however, were asked to agree to undertake 150

actions towards being good treaty partners within the next year. Upon completion of this they will receive a companion mug to their smudge bowls.

Media coverage of the We Are All Treaty People event: <https://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/treaty-renewal-ceremony-first-of-its-kind-in-150-years-organizers-say-1.5591838>

We Are All Treaty People Celebration Webinar:

Early in the planning process, considering concerns about COVID health restrictions, the planning committee decided again to produce the usual celebration activities online. A subcommittee invited a balance of Indigenous and Settler/Newcomer entertainers. A program was woven together live by MC Jim Compton of the TRCM with assistance from Kerry Saner-Harvey, planning committee member from Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, integrating some coverage of the Welcoming Ceremony, teachings by Elder Bone and other teaching videos prepared by the TRCM Elders. The platform and switching for the program were provided pro bono. The broadcast took place from 3-5 pm on the same day. The creation of the YouTube video from the event has provided a lasting educational tool. This is an ongoing resource for education and worship settings. Link to the webinar: https://youtu.be/VlfCj0x0i_Y

Submitted by Mary McNairnay