

Hopelines



A quarterly publication presenting news and stories of Living Hope Native Ministries, a partnership dedicated to serving the First Nations of Ontario.

Highlights From LHNM's Hope Night



Mario Singing at Mapleview



Clarence Sharing



Rodney Sharing

Our Vision

That in every First Nations context the local church would reach its full potential—worshiping in full devotion, attracting the seekers, mobilizing believers, restoring families, changing communities, affecting the world.



Volume 23

June 2025

Issue 2

What We Value

About a year ago, some of the LHNM Board, the Executive Council, and I got together and spent time seeking God and putting core language around what we value as a ministry. I was so encouraged by the process and am excited to share our core values with you at this time. It isn't a radical departure or shift from what we've been doing, but the exercise of putting language to our values really helps anyone connected to LHNM know what we're about, and helps the leadership determine where we want to go next. At one point in the exercise we had over 100 words written down on separate 3"x5" cards and sticky notes. After getting all of our values written down we discussed the words, grouped like ones together, and then grouped similar terms that were distinct into four categories.

Our core values aim to provide our staff, volunteers, and board with a common language that we can use to help make decisions and to ensure what we are doing lines up with who we intend to be. Our values help guide us to be able to accomplish our mission well. With a rich and diverse ministry history we realize that in order to be effective in acting out and working with these values they should be acted out with a spirit of humility, attempting to be relevant to our context, driven by our mission, and be done with, by and for First Nations believers.

1. Living by Faith

Our life in ministry must be one that is reliant on and driven by our relationship with God. We value being a community of believers that are striving to live by faith in

Jesus. One main component of this value in action is how much time we are dedicating as a team to praying for our ministry.

2. Relationships

Our ministry is with people and it is highly relational. Relationships take time and effort to develop and nurture them. We are committed to long-term involvement in people and communities for the sake of the Gospel.

3. Integrity

We lose our witness to others when we are not living with the utmost integrity. That's not to say that we do everything perfectly all the time. We recognize we aren't perfect (far

from it, actually) but when we do fail we need to own up to our mistakes, learn from them, ask forgiveness and move on, striving to be the best we can be each day through the power Christ gives us.

4. Development

We want to be helping people reach their full potential, whether it's

staff learning new skills, or people we come into contact with moving towards God. God's kingdom is expanding here on earth and we want to be good stewards of what he has entrusted us to do. We are excited to see First Nations believers growing in their faith and leadership skills.

I'm so encouraged to be part of an organization that strives to champion these values. I'm excited to see where God will be leading us in the future. May he be glorified more and more in our lives every day!

-Andrew Lang



Staff



Colleen Estes teaches Christian Education to hundreds of children, supports grieving community members, leads worship, and nurtures young adults like a spiritual mother.

Colleen@lhn.org



Nicholas Backlund serves in Pikangikum by humbly walking alongside the youth, embodying the love of Jesus through presence and compassion rather than leadership or answers.

Nick@lhn.org



Rodney & Betsy Martin: Rodney serves as the Public Relations Director of LHN. He preaches, teaches and shares across Ontario and is actively engaged in discipleship.

Rodney@lhn.org



Andrew & Kristin Lang: Andrew serves as the Executive Director of LHN. They live in Thunder Bay and are actively involved in discipleship and ministry work with youth and in the local church.

Andrew@lhn.org



Kevin & Norma Moore minister in Sudbury and nearby First Nations communities by fostering deep relationships, discipleship, and spiritual growth through small groups and personal mentorship. - Kmoore@lhn.org



Wendell & Lila Graber provide leadership at The Lighthouse First Nations Church in Sault Ste. Marie, engaging in Bible study, mentoring, and building relationships within the community.

Wjgraber@lhn.org, Lila@lhn.org



Stuart & Delores Swartzentruber provide staff care to both LHN staff and associates. They are often engaged in reconciliation and community ministry as well.

Stuart@lhn.org, Delores@lhn.org



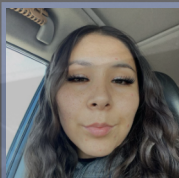
Rhonda Slaubaugh supports LHN from the Thunder Bay office in a vital administrative role, embracing her varied tasks as part of the mission's greater work.

Rhondas@lhn.org



Jocelyn McKay is being trained to replace Mary as the bookkeeper in the LHN office

Jocelyn@lhn.org



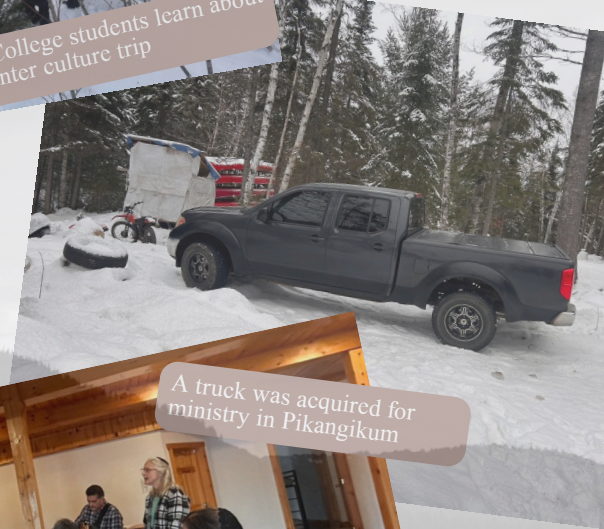
Alena Hunter assists with social media and other tasks around the LHN office.

Alena@lhn.org

Highlights



Rosedale Bible College students learn about trapping on a winter culture trip



A truck was acquired for ministry in Pikangikum



Staff Prayer Gathering



Andrew Visiting Plainview Mennonite Church in Kansas



Easter service in Pikangikum with locals, teachers and ministry staff!



Priscilla Schrock is the LHNM US worker, she processes all US donations and completes the US side of LHNM's paperwork and business.
Priscilla@lhn.org

Associates



LaMar & Janice Weaver

Red Lake,
H (807) 727-2653 • L (807) 727-0696
lamar@LHN.org



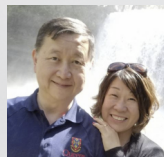
Rob & Sharlene Dilts

Jonathan
Golden Lake
H (613) 625-2064 C (613) 602-7970
rdilts@LHN.org



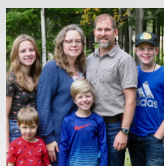
Sebai & Beverly Yaman

Boaz, Zaccai, Galilee
Thunder Bay
S (807) 707-7087 • B (807) 707-7979
sb.yaman@lhn.org



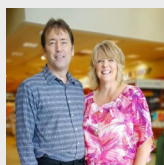
Andy & Eva Wang

Sudbury
(647) 272-6746
Andy@LHN.org



Rob & Joy Weaver

Abbey, Sam, Jude, Micah
Morson
H (807) 271-1035
rjweaver@LHN.org



Stan & Sally Bragg

Southampton
H (519) 797-3668
s.bragg@LHN.org



Merle & Rita Nisly

Red Lake
M (807) 728-2916 • R (807) 728-0576
mnisly@LHN.org

STEP

STEP (Stories Told, Experiences Processed) is an initiative started by a group of concerned individuals who formerly worked at Indian Residential Schools operated by Mennonite missions in Northwestern Ontario. The initiative is mutually endorsed by Living Hope Native Ministries and Northern Youth Programs.

The goal of STEP is to organize intentional conversations to process the impact of Indian Residential Schools on First Nations communities and individuals, and to reflect on how working at these schools affected former staff and their families. To learn or to become part of a conversation, please contact the leadership of LHN or NYP or visit <https://lhn.org/former-staff-of-residential-schools/>.

Step Gathering Fall 2024



A Reflection From Mary

In December 1971, almost 54 years ago, I arrived in Red Lake, ON, to work with Northern Light Gospel Mission for 2 1/2 years as a young volunteer. For the first 6 months, I worked in the 'Handicraft Store,' and then in the Headquarters office there on the rocky banks of Red Lake. One could not imagine that in 2018, I would return to help in the office of Living Hope Native Ministries as the bookkeeper. With Merle Nisly's retirement, there were three of us, Stuart, Rhonda, and I, who assisted in the move of the office from Red Lake to Thunder Bay. Though we all had previous connections to the mission, we were new to the office. Through much prayer and dependence on the Lord, we bravely worked through the transition to keep the ministry alive and well.

I have been blessed and honoured to be a part of the mission in these times. The changes that I have seen and experienced have been breathtaking. I recognize the hand of God and anticipate His leading for the future of this ministry. "I pray that the fruit of my labours would bring much glory to God" - John 15:8.

-Mary Keesic



Administration & Board of Directors

Pray for God's guidance for the LHN Administration and Board of Directors: Andrew Lang (Executive Director), Clarence Meekis (Chairman), Wendell Graber (Secretary), Anthony Shapwaykeesic and David Traintinger.

US Board Members: Sheldon Swartzentruber, Matt Funk, and Eldo Miller.