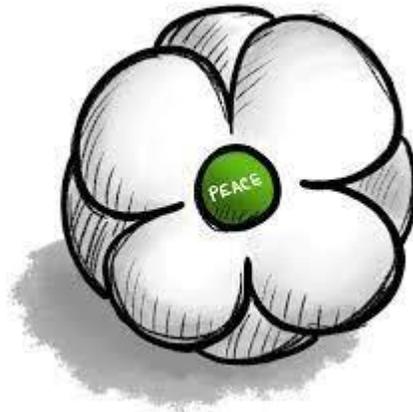


Hamilton Friends November 2019 Newsletter



Advices and Queries

37. Are you honest and truthful in all you say and do? Do you maintain strict integrity in business transactions and in your dealings with individuals and organizations? Do you use money and information entrusted to you with discretion and responsibility? Taking oaths implies a double standard of truth; in choosing to affirm instead, be aware of the claim to integrity that you are making.

Coffee List

November

3 Betty

10

17 Darlene J

24 Christina and Carol Leigh

We need volunteers to help with the coffee service! Please think about offering your help for this. We want to fill up the future roster. It would be greatly appreciated!



Calendar

Nov 24: Truth and Reconciliation Potluck (Hear our Voices) at 12:30 pm. This will feature the first section of the DVD “Hear our Voices”, made by our Friend Judith Murray. There is an article in the October newsletter about the potluck and it was announced Sunday the 10th after Meeting for Worship.

NOVEMBER
you get what you give

2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
07	08	09	10	11	12	13
14 Daylight Saving Time	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22 Veterans Day	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

December 15: First Day School Christmas presentation

DECEMBER
let heaven and nature sing

2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 First Day of Winter	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas	26	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve	1	2	3	4

A Perspective on Current News of Bolivia, Paul R. Dekar

In 1992, in my dual roles as professor of church history at McMaster Divinity College and a member of the Canadian Baptist Overseas Mission Board, I participated in a five-week intensive Spanish language course in Cochabamba, Bolivia. As well as learning some Spanish, I studied Bolivian history and culture. This was background to my organizing an intensive study tour in 1993 to commemorate a hundred years of Canadian Baptist outreach in Bolivia. As I recall these trips, two features stand out.

The first concerns the early history of Canadian Baptist involvement in Bolivia, not least the martyrdom on August 8, 1949 of Norman Dabbs, a missionary who worked in the Bolivian countryside and was killed along with six Bolivian pastors.¹ My second memory is appreciation of Bolivian Baptist ministry to the poor, especially indigenous peoples of the Altiplano (Bolivian highlands) who worked in the mining industry, notably tin, tungsten, silver and copper. Among conditions the indigenous people faced were polluted drinking water and a very high infant mortality rate, as suggested by the title of an assigned text, June Nash, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us* (Columbia University Press, 1993).

Ever since, I have had on my desk a photo of several Bolivians: David Mamani with widows whose husbands died when a Canadian owned mine collapsed. This has reminded me that my comfortable life is inter-related with that of others significantly less advantaged.

Last March, twenty-six years after my limited involvement in Bolivia, David invited me to teach a course at a Bolivian Baptist seminary in Oruro halfway between La Paz and Sucre in the Altiplano, some 3,709 meters above sea level. Oruro has been subject to cycles of boom and bust owing to its dependence on the mines. Unexpected, the invitation crossed a desire to reduce my carbon footprint. I have in recent years declined similar invitations to teach in Cuba, England and Trinidad. After David explained his concern about fundamentalist leanings of his denomination, I decided to accept the invitation. This led to search for teaching materials [Juan Driver, *Una Teología Bíblica de la Paz* by and three sermons by Martin Luther King, Jr.]; Spanish lessons; preparing class, workshop and sermon notes emailed to David and his wife Deborah who will translate; and climbing escarpment steps to prepare for the high altitude.

Meanwhile, the political situation in Bolivia has become fragile. Juan Evo Morales Ayma, an activist who has since 2006 served as the 80th President of Bolivia, is Bolivia's first president to come from the indigenous population. His administration has focused on poverty reduction and combating the influence of the United States and of multinational corporations in Bolivia.

In response to growing unrest and after international monitors identified serious irregularities in the election earlier this fall, Morales called for fresh elections and recommended a new ballot. Then on November 10, 2019, after the military issued an ultimatum demanding his resignation in the wake of an Organization of American States report alleging his government had rigged the elections, he resigned. Along with many Latin American governments and political leaders, Morales has maintained that his

¹ Norman Harold Dabbs, *Dawn Over the Bolivian Hills* (Toronto: CBOMB, 1952).

removal is a coup. As of this writing, the military has said it would not “confront the people” who have taken to the streets.¹

Following violent clashes over recent days, it is unclear if new elections will pacify the country. At least three people have died in the unrest. The latest reported death was that of a 20-year-old student last week. More than 300 people have been injured in clashes between anti-government protesters and Morales supporters since the election. My friend David Mamani contends that Morales resigned to prevent further bloodshed.

David’s description of the situation recalls my experiences in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Colombia where I participated in several Fellowship of Reconciliation and Baptist Peace Fellowship delegations. In all these cases, poverty has engendered the struggle of the poor majority to demand justice and of the governing elites to resist.

As the time I originally wrote this piece [November 11], I had received an email reporting that the situation seems to be calming down a bit. This proved not to be the case, and when the Government of Canada issued travel advisories warning Canadian residents to avoid all non-essential travel to Bolivia, and to several areas of Peru {where I had planned to travel after my two weeks in Bolivia}, I postponed my travel indefinitely. Please hold the people of Bolivia and Peru in the Light.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/10/evo-morales-concedes-to-new-elections-after-serious-irregularities-found>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evo_Morales

Hi everyone,

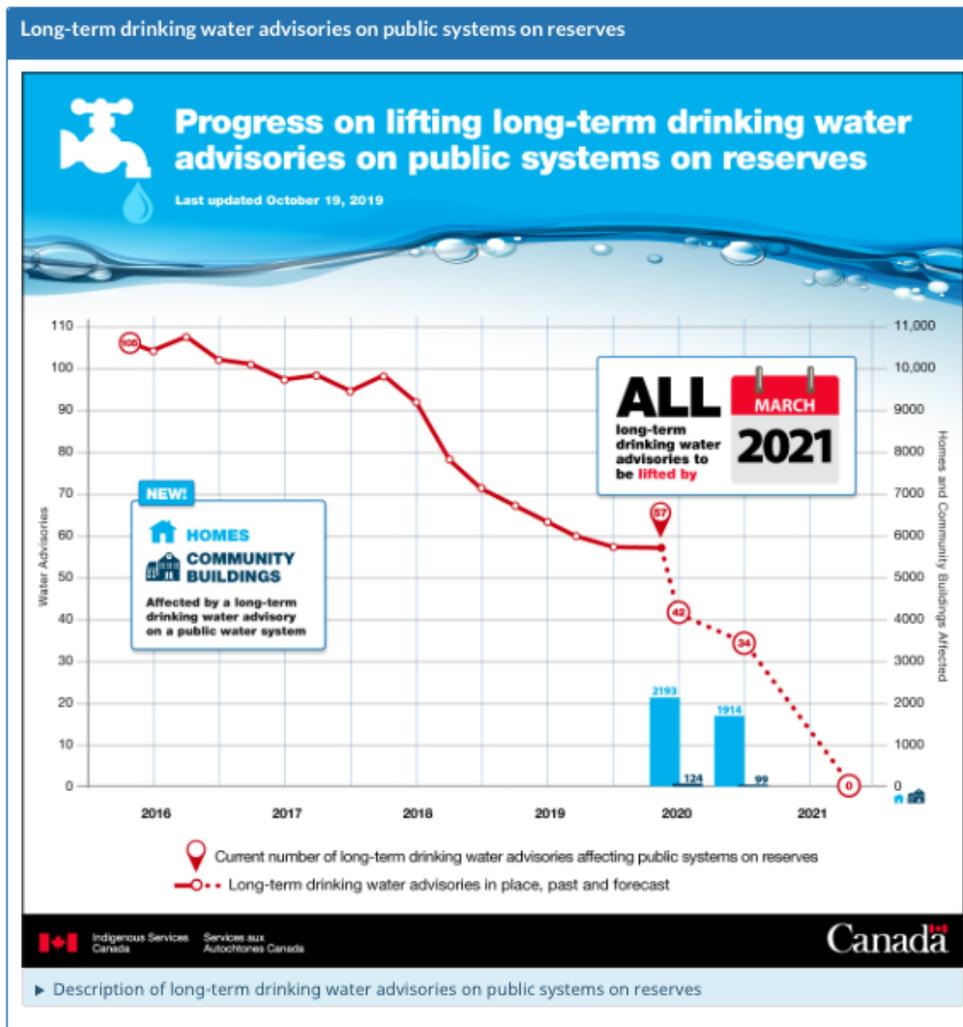
Here's some good news from my field (water issues).

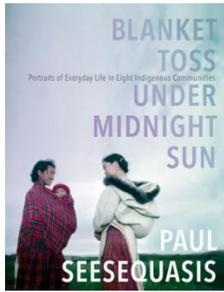
One of the signature accomplishments of the Liberal government has been their work to improve drinking water quality on Canada's reserves.

When the Liberals took power from the Harper Conservatives in November 2015, there were about 105 long-term drinking water advisories for Canada's reserves. That number is now down by 46% to 57, and on the current schedule all of those will be resolved by sometime in 2021!

This is good news in every way - for the affected reserves, for the country, for all of us. An important step towards reconciliation.

Best wishes, Wilf Ruland (P. Geo.)





I was very pleased to be able to attend a talk at the AGO on October 25 with Paul Seesequasis, Cree writer and journalist, and Wanda Nanibush, Curator of the Indigenous Collections. They discussed Paul's project of collecting archival photographs of indigenous people and communities, and taking them home to their communities. Very many of these pictures were never seen by their subjects. Through social media, Paul has for several years been finding names for many of the unidentified individuals. This project has given rise to a book, *Blanket Toss Under Midnight Sun*, which is a selection of photos from a number of different communities and photographers.

The idea for the project and book came from Paul's mother after she had told her story before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. She lamented to her son that now the wider public would know about the pain and suffering, but that this eclipsed the fact that life went on in Indigenous communities and families, and that good things continued to happen, joy still thrived, people survived. Paul's projects and the book are a reclamation of this fact. I have the book, and I highly recommend it to everyone to read.

-Submitted by Carol Leigh Wehking

Hear Our Voices is a fascinating and informative video made by Judith Murray. It is a series of four interviews with First Nations people from various parts of Canada, in which we hear First Nations people speak for themselves.

As part of our commitment as a Meeting to educate ourselves about indigenous issues and people, we will view the first of these, featuring Chief Perry Bellegarde, at our lunch potluck on Sunday, 24 November, after Meeting.

Afterwards, Judith will lead the discussion. Please come!

SUPPER GROUPS



Are you in a supper (or lunch) group of Hamilton Friends? Is it going strong, or are you ready to mix it up again and spend some time with a different group of Friends? Or are you new to the groups but intrigued? Our supper groups are groups of about 6 to 8 people who get together from time to time (monthly is usually the goal but isn't always possible!) to share a meal with no agenda other than enjoying each other's company and talking about whatever comes to mind. Some groups meet in each other's homes, some have chosen restaurants all or part of the time, some have their gathering at lunchtime rather than suppertime.

If you're in a group now that's ready to "re-group", or if you're not in a group and would like to be, watch for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board at Meeting where you can show your interest and indicate any limitations. Or you can contact Bev (beverly_shepard@simpatico.ca) (905-659-6119) directly. If you're in a group that wishes to continue, that's fine -- carry on!

Meeting for worship with the Cambridge Worship Group will be at the home of Glenna and Carol Leigh, 157 Grand Avenue South in Cambridge, 2:00 p.m. on Friday, November 22. All are welcome.

Please let us know if you plan to attend: clwehking@gmail.com or 519 623-2456