

Mishamikoweesh Water Partnership Epiphany 2024

As the Chair of the First Nations Metis and Inuit Committee, I want to communicate my appreciation for the generosity of the members of Trinity. Since the Reign of Christ in November 2023, gifts totalling \$10,030 have been received to forward to the Primates World Relief and Development Fund. Chief Eddie Mamakwa along with the other four Chiefs of the Shibogama Tribal Council decided to purchase a new water truck for Kingfisher Lake First Nation, built by Fort Garry Fire Trucks in Winnipeg to their specifications. Their own experience with their current water truck through the long cold winters as well as the spring thaws and fall rains in northwestern Ontario taught them what was needed. In making this decision, the Shibogama Tribal Council agreed to raise \$80,000 to cover the additional costs. During the first year of this campaign, the original plan was to raise \$150,000 for a previously owned water truck for Kingfisher Lake First Nation. By the beginning of the Advent Conspiracy campaign in November 2023, donations of \$115,000 had been received from a number of parishes in southern Ontario so only \$35,000 remained to be raised by Pimatisiwin Nipi.

Thank you for your passion for justice and your willingness to be in right relationships with Indigenous People

I am aware that two other parishes have raised \$8,700. One parish been involved with Pimatisiwin Nipi for many years. The second parish have participated in events organized by the Indigenous Solidarity Working Group at the Church of the Redeemer in Toronto over the years. This means that 55% of our goal set for this year has been reached by three parishes. I look forward to keeping you updated as donations from other parishes arrive at the Primates World Relief and Development Fund.

Over the years, Pimatisiwin Nipi has learned from the leadership at Pikangikum First Nation as well as from former Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler and the leadership at Nishnawbe Aski Nation about the problems which have arisen when contractors have been selected by the federal government for the construction of water treatment plants. Indigenous leadership in Pikangikum requested safe, clean, and running water in their homes as a way of giving hope in coping with the deaths of youth and young adults by suicide. Since 2015, much has been done to address long-term water advisories from coast to coast to coast by the federal government. Indigenous leadership has been seeking to develop a collaborative working relationship with all levels of government so that safe, clean, and running water is available in their homes. In November 2020, Pimatisiwin Nipi wrote a letter for the former National Indigenous Archbishop to send to the Prime Minister as well as the Ministers of Indigenous Services and Crown-Indigenous Relationships. Pimatisiwin Nipi advocated for collaborative relationships to be developed not only in the construction of water treatment plants but also in the installation of water distribution infrastructure and wastewater management systems. Unlike a long history of involvement with the federal government who chose contractors for various projects, the Shibogama Tribal Council chose a manufacturer who could supply parts as well as provide technical knowledge and skills for the ongoing maintenance of a new water truck whenever needed. In sharing the land and waters of this part of North America, descendants of Settlers and Newcomers have a responsibility to ensure that safe, clean, and running water is available in every Indigenous home. More work still needs to be done.