

Nanockashee Jacob Charles

Na-nock-ashee means Hummingbird in Anishinaabemowin. In his home community of the Chippewas of Georgina Island, Jacob Charles has provided leadership in gathering a men's drumming circle on Wednesday evenings for a number of years. Nanockashee and the other drummers find healing in these weekly gatherings, following the protocols set by the teachings of the Elders in connecting with each other and with Creator/Great Mystery. As a Drum Carrier and a Pipe Carrier, Nanockashee is being taught traditional ceremonies through the Midewiwin Lodge and travels to Wisconsin to learn from respected Knowledge Keepers. Nanockashee continues to work creatively in supporting children and youth in learning about their traditional teachings and the benefits of speaking Anishinaabemowin.

As an Indigenous Participant in Talking Circles with the Reverend David Franks, Nanockashee has made contributions which have been much appreciated by participants from local Anglican Churches as well as Lutherans from the Lutheran and Anglican Mission of the Bruce Peninsula and leadership in the Shining Waters Regional Council of the United Church. Nanockashee has shared his own journey of healing over the years in dealing with his own experiences of the oppressive implementation of the Williams Treaties 1923 as well as the ongoing destructive impact upon his extended family and members of the Chippewas of Georgina Island. Apologies from the federal and provincial governments in 2018 set a context for a comprehensive package of reparations to build more constructive relationships moving forward not only for the Chippewas of Georgina Island but also for the other six First of the William's Treaties, the Chippewas of Rama, the Chippewas of Beausoleil, the Missisaugas of Hiawatha, the Missisaugas of Alderville, and the Missisaugas of Curve Lake.

In an interview during worship on Indigenous Sunday last year, Nanockashee explained how weekly participation in a Drumming Circle helped strengthen relationships among the families of participants and inspired fishing and hunting expeditions to bring food back to the Elders and other vulnerable members of their Indigenous community as had happened for thousands of years. Nanockashee also explained how participants of their Drumming Circle gained knowledge about the traditional role of men and a more comprehensive appreciation of the role of women in their community.

This year, the Reverend David Franks will interview Nanockashee about the impact of return of the Pow Wow among the Chippewas of Georgina Island, particularly among the children and youth.

As the Owner/Operator of First Nation Cultural Tours, Nanockashee Jacob Charles sings traditional songs in honouring the Ancestors who learned to connect with Creator/Divine Mystery and care for Mother Earth. Nanockashee also dances in regalia as a form of prayer and in thanksgiving for all that Creator/Divine Mystery provides each and every day to walk in a good way. Nanockashee also shares stories of his People, offers sacred medicines as a spiritual practice, introduces eagle feathers and Indigenous artifacts through teaching for children, youth, and adults, leads drumming circles, guides participants on walking trails and out on the waters of Lake Simcoe.