

# Minnesota Council of Churches

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**Established in 1948**

*Manifest the Unity of the Body of Christ and  
Build the Common Good in the World*

**Membership:** 20 Protestant, Orthodox and  
Historical Black Church Denominations

# Minnesota Council of Churches

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## ■ Leadership for the Common Good

- Ecumenical Shared Leadership & the Board
  - 20 Heads of Communion United on Single Issues
- Faith in the Media
  - Relationships with the Popular Media
  - National Ecumenical and Interfaith Journals
  - *Considering Faith: Common Ground for the Common Good*
- Civic Engagement – *Minnesota Works Together*
- Anti-Poverty Initiative – *A Common Foundation*
  - Awareness and Theological Understanding
  - Public Policy Advocacy
  - Direct Service and Asset Development

# Minnesota Council of Churches

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- Unity and Relationships
- Refugee Services
- Ecumenical Rural Concerns
- Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministries
- Committee to End Sexual Misconduct in the Religious Community
- Katrina Aid Today
  
- Minnesota FoodShare
- Joint Religious Legislative Coalition
- Minnesota Collaborative Anti-Racism Initiative

# Minnesota Council of Churches

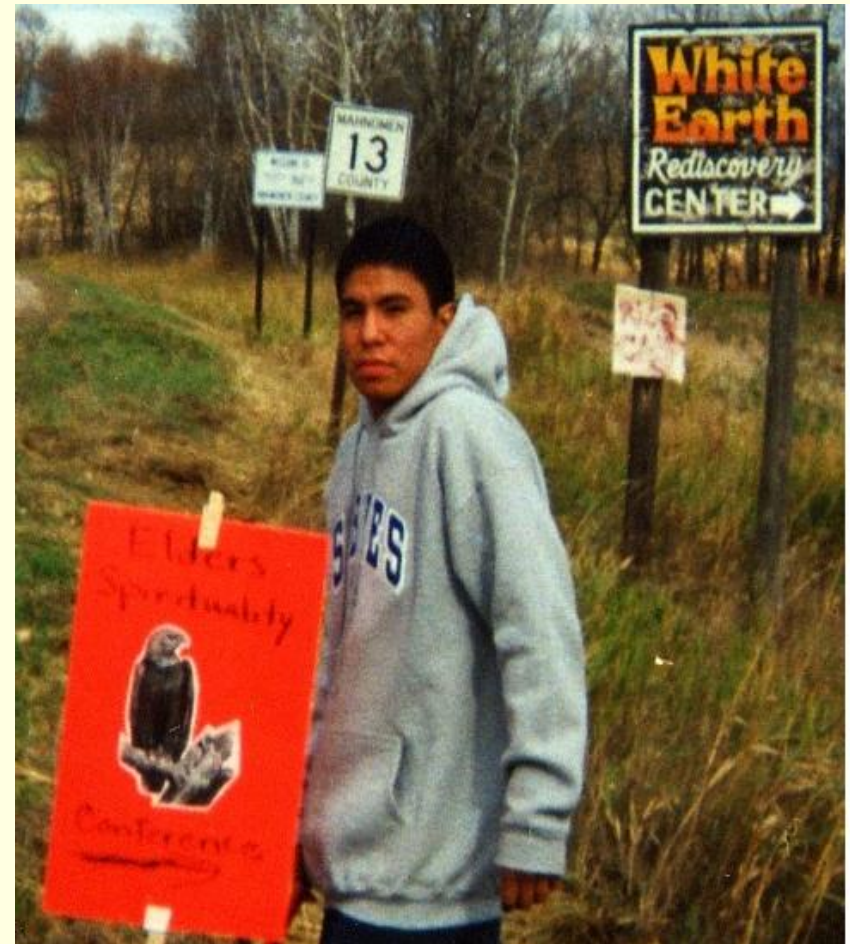
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## **DENOMINATIONAL PRESENCE**

- Baptist General Conference-1953 – 8 Mission Points
- Catholic Church – 1830's – 19 Mission Churches
- Episcopal – 1858 – 13 Missions
- Lutheran – 1970's
- United Methodist Church – Mission Churches and Advocating for Social Justice (e.g., Sovereignty)
- Presbyterian – 1850's – 2 Mission Churches
- United Church of Christ – 1972 – Financial Support to All Nations Indian Church

# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

- Historical Ministry Since the 1960's
  - By Laws of the Indian Concerns Committee of MCC
  - 1995 Mission Statement
  - 2005 Updated Mission Statement
- Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches
  - Division of Indian Work
- St. Paul Area Council of Churches
  - Department of Indian Work



# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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## 1995 MISSION STATEMENT

*To help the church to listen and build bridges between the American Indian cultures and other cultures within Minnesota by:*

- 1. Providing dialog, which leads to mutual understanding, spiritual enrichment, respect, and humor;*
- 2. Enabling program starts for administration by other entities;*
- 3. Empowering social justice ministries with American Indian communities;*
- 4. Focusing the financial resources of the church communities;*
- 5. Linking with other program resources of the MCC and denominational judicatories;*
- 6. Advocate in the power structures of the church and society, in solidarity with Indian communities, on issues of concern to Indian people such as sovereignty, treaty rights and religious freedom;*
- 7. Work to neutralize or dismantle personal, institutional, and cultural racism directed at Indian people or culture, through educational, advocacy or organizing strategies, in collaboration with the Minnesota Churches Anti-Racism Initiative and other effective anti-racist organizations.*

# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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Mary Ann Walt, MIEM Organizer  
■ Retired on December 31, 1997

## *Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministries Needs Assessment*

- Report Issued July 29, 1998
- Margaret Peake Raymond, Lenore Franzen, Elizabeth Twining Blue, and Priscilla A. Day



# **Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)**

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## **MINNESOTA INDIAN ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- February – July 1998:
  - 3 Community Forums (68 Participants)
  - Survey of 101 (+20) Individuals and Congregations
  - Historical Survey of Denominational Presence Among American Indians in Minnesota
  - Only 51 of 50,000 American Indians Statewide



# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT:**

### **THEMES FROM COMMUNITY FORUMS**

1. Need to combine Christian and traditional ways in church settings and practices
2. Need to increase American Indian community involvement in the church
3. Provide a regional building in which American Indians can practice spirituality
4. Promote the acceptance of American Indian people in churches

# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT:**

### **SAMPLE OF 20 THEMES FROM SURVEYS**

1. Clergy should be educated to respect American Indian values, traditions, and history
2. Social Support for Families Affected by Abuse or Chemical Dependency
3. Dialogue with American Indian churches, and Between American Indian and non-Indian Churches
4. Churches Provide Activities with MCC Support

# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)



## NEEDS ASSESSMENT: RECOMMENDATIONS

- Help American Indian Community “get ready to plan”
  - Extensive, Statewide Efforts with 11 American Indian tribes and many Indian Mission Congregations
- Focus on the Northern Tier of State
- Dialogue with Communities of Concern
  - Develop Meaningful Activities That Best Fit Community’s Region

# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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## NEEDS ASSESSMENT: RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT'D)

- MCC Staff Take Direct, Face-to-Face Interactive Approach in Outreach and Development
- MCC Actively Seek and Support Education That Accepts and Embraces Diversity



# **Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)**

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## **ANNUAL REPORTS – 1997 TO 1998**

- Hosted 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Elder's Spirituality Conference
- Developed New Shelter Housing for Abused Women
- Additional Consultation on Detroit Lakes Storefront/Gift Shop Project
- Five, Three-Bedroom Apartments Continuously Rented for Transitional Housing
- Battered Women's Shelter for Indian Women to Open in Early 1999
- Delivered MIEM Needs Assessment Report
- Hired Full-Time Field Organizer – Sandra G. Berlin

# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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**SANDY G. BERLIN**

**JUNE 1, 1999 BEGINS AS  
FIELD ORGANIZER**

- 1999 Goals:
  - Host Talking Circles
  - Develop Resource Bank (e.g., church information, speakers, Elders)
- 1999 Accomplishments
  - Largest Ever Elder's Spirituality Conference (80 Attendees)
  - Established New Contacts on Five of Eleven Reservations

# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2001 TO 2004**

- Prayer/Talking Circles - ~20 Per Year in Moorhead, Fargo, Minneapolis, and Bemidji
- Justice Circle in Moorhead Established
  - Study Circle Discussion Guide – Report of the Minnesota Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights – Spring 2001
- Annual Elder's Spirituality Conference
- Hosted Grant Writing Workshop with 14 Participants from Native and Hispanic Communities
- Initiated All Nations Youth Group of Moorhead/Fargo



# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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## 2005 MISSION STATEMENT

### Recognizing:

1. The encompassing nature of human spirituality as taught by American Indian Cultures,
2. The longing for wholeness
3. Christ's command to love one another, and
4. The History of oppression of Indigenous people and cultures in which the church has been an implicit partner

### We do this by our Goals:

1. Providing dialogue, which leads to mutual understanding, spiritual enrichment respect and honor
2. Serving as a spiritual resource for the wider church
3. Starting and or assisting with projects which may be program starts or administered by other entities such as but not limited to
  - Empowering social justice ministries with American Indian communities
  - Focusing the financial resource of the church communities
  - Linking with other program resources of the MCC, denominational judicatories, and other organizations.
  - Advocating in the power structures of the church and society, in solidarity with Indian communities, on issues of concern to Indian people such as sovereignty, treaty rights and religious freedom.
  - Working to neutralize or dismantle personal, institutional and cultural racism directed at Indian people or culture, through educational, advocacy or organizing strategies, in collaboration with the Minnesota Churches Anti-Racism Initiative and other effective anti-racist organizations.



# Minnesota Indian Ecumenical Ministry (MIEM)

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## 2005 MIEM ACTIVITIES

- Program Commission Assessment
- MCARI (and MIEM?) at Mille Lacs
- Responding and Support to Red Lake Nation
  - Staffing by Don Goodwin
- Explore Relationship with Presbyterian Camps (Youth, Camp Noah, CD)
  - Attempted to Re-Engage Mary Ann Walt
- Began Planning for *Elder's Spirituality Conference* for 2006