

# FIRST RESPONDERS



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## Engaging Canada's First Peoples with the First Story



**The need is evident:** Canada's First Peoples need Jesus. They need to be introduced to Him, and then disciples. They deserve communities of faith — local churches — that are thriving.

So how is this done?

It will take mature believers "moving into the neighbourhood" and in authentic ways, being Jesus. It will take earning trust and developing deep relationships. It will take time.

Your partnership is enabling Ethnos Canada to launch this new ministry.

God is pulling together a team—which includes you—that will see this ministry thrive. Some on the team are young families, full of enthusiasm and zeal. Others are experienced missionaries, desiring their years of experience to be used by God in new and exciting ways.

George and Ulli Hertwig are an example of the latter. Let me share a bit of their story.

For many years we served in a ministry context where little emphasis was placed on grasping the worldview and cultural understanding of the people we were trying to reach with the gospel.

We ministered among a Siouxian

tribe at the foot of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta and had been witnessing to Bill (name changed) about Christ, but to no avail. He was stuck in his traditional beliefs. We knew that we were missing a big piece of the puzzle, but did not know what it was.

Then, through some fascinating God-ordained circumstances, we ended up enrolling in Ethnos' cross-cultural church planting course; a training that focuses on listening, understanding, and then drawing the right conclusions before starting to teach.

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# Starting on the Right Foot

Upon returning to our home in Alberta, a prayer was answered. Bill asked me to teach him the Bible!

This time, with my newfound comprehension of how important an understanding of a person's worldview is, I sought to understand Bill's culture and beliefs before beginning to teach.

What I found was astonishing.

I had worked with and preached in this tribe for 18 years. I had spoken much about the Creator and the things of God. The entire time I was missing the mark. I was saying the "right words", but my audience was hearing the wrong message.

It was only after being equipped by Ethnos, after I developed a learners-attitude and understood how Bill saw the world that I could craft Bible lessons that resonated with Bill.

And resonate they did—Bill understood God's Word in a new and meaningful way.

—George Hertwig  
*Public Relations, FirstStory Ministries*



FirstStory Ministries—Ethnos Canada's church planting effort among Canada's First Peoples—is just starting out.

As we begin, we are asking two questions: "where we are going?" and "how we are going to get there?"

To answer these questions, we need your prayers and financial support.

## Answering "Where?"

There are over 60 distinct languages among the close to 100 different Indigenous nations in Canada. With hundreds of unreached villages, where would you send a team?

To determine the "where" we perform "ministry opportunity assessments" in various locations across Canada.

During these assessments, we visit areas where there is a call for church planters and examine the needs.

Is there a church nearby? Are there believers? What is their heart language? Will this area be open to having someone work among them? Are there tangible ways that we can help the communities as we learn their culture and language?

All these and more are questions that we seek to answer.

This step is vital as we lay the

foundation for future relationships. It is from within these relationships that we will understand the culture and effectively prepare our teams to clearly communicate the gospel.

We have already completed a number of these assessments, but we need to complete three more in early 2018.

These assessments will help us understand the needs in our country and aid us in developing our strategy.

**As we begin, we are asking two questions: "where we are going?" and "how we are going to get there?"**

Our strategy will include both engaging the established Indigenous churches, as well as the un-engaged reserves and villages across Canada.

These assessments cost an average of \$5,000. They are a vital part of wisely placing church planting teams in Canada.

## Answering "How?"

After we determine *where* we are sending teams, we need to equip our church planting teams with the right tools.

We need them to be culturally and linguistically equipped to develop deep relationships with indigenous co-workers, leaders and support persons.

These teams will also need the tools necessary to maintain spiritual, physical and emotional health as

## Explanation: Why the name "FirstStory" ?

True Christianity is not "white man's religion". God's message of hope is for all people for all time.

God's story of redemption is the *first* and most important *story* for the *first* people of Canada.

That's why we called this ministry *FirstStory*.

they move into the remote areas of Canada.

We are creating a resource library of modules and books. We are also building a list of people who can help teach our candidates as they join our teams of church planters.

This is by no means the end of what our personnel need to learn. On the contrary, this is just one step in

becoming clear communicators of God's most important message.

FirstStory Ministries will be leveraging more than 140 years of ministry experience. This includes the 70 years of church planting experience in Canada that Northern Canada Evangelical Mission (NCEM) is bringing to the table. It also includes Ethnos Canada's 75 years of cross-cultural church

planting experience.

All this experience will help us achieve our goal: a thriving indigenous church—with its own leaders, sending out its own missionaries, training its members—in every tribe, tongue and nation.

—By Ken Dewar  
Coordinating Director,  
FirstStory Ministries



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## Opportunity: Equipping families to serve Canada's First Peoples

Seventy-five years is a long time to be working at one job. Yet that is what Ethnos has been about: endeavouring to see a thriving church for every people. A thriving church indicates that the church has its own leaders, sends out its own missionaries, and trains its members.

But who does the training? And how is it able to continue?

It is important to note that the founders of Ethnos (then New Tribes Mission) had some very specific goals. One of those goals was voiced in 1942 as one of the guiding principles for the mission: “Self-propagation of the [aboriginal] churches shall be encouraged. Every means at our disposal shall be employed to bring the churches to a self-sustaining basis. [Indigenous] workers shall be encouraged and trained to become effective Christian leaders, and the responsibility of the work shall be passed on to them as quickly as possible.” *The Story of New Tribes Mission*, page 25.

Your partnership helps to make the training possible. Training involves much time, energy and resources. Your gifts allow trainers to develop curricula, to develop the programs and campus where the information is disseminated, and to subsidize the cost of training for families preparing to plant thriving churches among Canada's First Peoples.

You have options as you prayerfully consider the part you could play in providing training for the next generation of missionaries to Canada's First Peoples.

1. You can give by mail. Use the enclosed response card to mail a cheque to **Ethnos Canada**.
2. You can give with a credit card. Go to [firststoryministries.ca/firstresponders/](https://firststoryministries.ca/firstresponders/) and click “Donate to this project”.
3. Pre-Authorized Debit is a safe and efficient way to support FirstStory Ministries. There are two ways you can do this: call **844-855-6862** to request a PAD form or go to [ethnos.ca/monthly-pad/](https://ethnos.ca/monthly-pad/)

# Making Access Affordable

## \$32.99 for toilet paper! Are you kidding me?

Can you imagine paying \$32.99 for toilet paper and considering it a bargain?

As we travel through the north, one thing that always stands out is the price of many basic needs that we take for granted, like toilet paper.

The cost to transport materials and goods is very expensive and the cost to fly into many remote locations is in many ways cost prohibitive.

One round-trip ticket to a village where we would like to send a team costs \$3,500 per person!

That's why we need an aviation program. To maintain healthy teams and make ministry affordable, FirstStory Ministries is looking to NTM Aviation for help in taking the gospel of Jesus Christ to the least reached areas of Canada.

With the help of NTM Aviation, a family of five along with their supplies can fly for less than the cost of one round trip ticket on a commercial airline. We can also fly in consultants and leaders to encourage and help our teams as they establish thriving churches.

Your help with the cost of FirstStory flights:

- enables our church planting teams to live in remote areas that need the gospel.
- allows missionaries to travel and personally share with their supporters how God is at work.
- enables FirstStory leadership and consultants to encourage and support our teams.
- helps families on isolated teams get away for times of spiritual refreshment in the midst of difficult ministry contexts.

### You have options as you prayerfully consider the part you could play in helping launch FirstStory Ministries.

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Many communities are not accessible by road.

Photos by Ken Dewar

**TO LEARN MORE,** call **844-855-6862**, email [information@firststoryministries.ca](mailto:information@firststoryministries.ca), or use the enclosed response card.