

Invitation to Residential School Survivors, their families and community

Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh
Taking Care of Our Children

Commemoration Ceremonies

Friday September 29th, Saturday September 30th, and Sunday October 1, 2023

Old St. Mary's Residential School - Fraser River Heritage Park
7494 Mary St, Mission, BC V2V 6Y9

Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh - An invitation to commemorate and take care of our children

It is with a heavy heart that we invite residential school survivors, their families and communities to witness a weaving of funeral and memorial ceremonies for the missing children and the unmarked graves and burials of the children who attended the St. Mary's Residential School in Mission, B.C..

These ceremonies will be held on Friday September 29th, Saturday September 30th, and Sunday, October 1st, 2023 at the Fraser River Heritage Park at 7494 Mary St, Mission, BC, the former site of the St. Mary's Residential School in Mission, BC.

Although we've always known about the missing children and unmarked graves, there has been important archival, oral historical and on-site remote sensing work since August 2021 to identify as much information as possible at three of the former Residential School sites within S'ólh Témémxw, the Stó:lō traditional territory.

There are no words that capture the pain and devastation that the children, survivors of Residential School and their families have experienced. The ceremonies are a step towards healing. We hope to bring a sense of dignity and respect for the children's spirits who have been waiting and we hope this brings a sense of peace for survivors of Residential School.

This sensitive initiative is being led by Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh, which means Taking Care of Our Children, a group of representatives from the Stó:lō Nation Chiefs Council, Stó:lō Tribal Council and Independent First Nations.

For more information, please visit the [website](#) and [facebook event page](#).

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Old St. Mary's Residential School - Fraser River Heritage Park
7494 Mary St, Mission, BC V2V 6Y9

Agenda

Friday September 29th, 2023

at the Fraser River Heritage Park - 7494 Mary St, Mission, BC V2V 6Y9

12:00 PM

- Opening Prayer
- Lunch
- Invitation for Residential School Survivors to connect and visit in a relaxing atmosphere
- Snacks, water and coffee and tea will be available
- Guided Walks around the grounds will be available (more information to follow)

5:00 PM

- Opening Prayer and Song
- Opening Remarks
- Overview of Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh - Taking Care of Our Children and the Commemoration Ceremonies
- Overview of oral, historical and archival work, including ground penetrating work done to date
- Calling of Witnesses
- Dinner Song

7:00pm

- Dinner
- Closing Remarks
- Closing Song

Saturday September 30th, 2023

at Pkw'xe:yles, new St. Mary's Residential School McCoombs St, Mission, BC V4S 1L7

Daybreak

- Burning

at the Fraser River Heritage Park - 7494 Mary St, Mission, BC V2V 6Y9

9:00 AM

- Opening Prayer and Song
- Overview of Commemoration and Housekeeping
- Calling Witnesses
- Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh - Taking Care of Our Children. A weaving of funeral and memorial work for the children.
 - Through a vision of Cyril Pierre, he has been working with Indigenous youth to carve a canoe with people figures wearing a paddle jacket and vest, with paddles that represent the seven sacred teachings.
- Youth Canoe Presentation
- Eulogy, Cyril Pierre
- Witness Response

3:00 PM

- Dinner
- Closing Remarks
- Closing Song

4:30 PM

- Time for Other Nation Ceremonies (please contact Francine Douglas at francine@istolo.net)
- Invitation for Residential School Survivors to connect and visit in a relaxing atmosphere
- Snacks, water and coffee and tea will be available

Sunday, October 1, 2023

at the Fraser River Heritage Park - 7494 Mary St, Mission, BC V2V 6Y9

9:00 AM

- Opening Song and Prayer
- Breakfast

10:00AM

- Thank you and acknowledgements
- Traditional Giveaway

12:00PM

- Song and Prayer
- Lunch

1:00PM

- Invitation for Residential School Survivors to connect and visit in a relaxing atmosphere
- Time for Other Nation Ceremonies (please contact Francine Douglas at francine@istolo.net)
- Snacks, water and coffee and tea will be available

Organizing Committee:

Helen Joe
Grand Chief Kat Pennier
Cyril Pierre
Priscilla Wells
Katherine Charlie
Ashley Pierre

Advisors

Steven Point
Gwen Point
Darwin Douglas

Event Support

Francine Douglas - francine@istolo.net