

# “Starlight” — 47 - 04

## PAUSE TO CONSIDER: REFLECTIONS ON SESSION #4

1. I finished reading a another good book today — “**Followings: Embodied Discipleship in a Digital Age**” by Andria Irwin (Digital Minister from Highwood United in Vancouver and soon to be at Hillhurst, here in Calgary and her co-writer, Jason Byassee (Professor at Vancouver School of Theology.) Andria seems to be “writing about us” as we gather on Monday nights from Kamloops to Toronto with Calgary in between and with participants from all walks of life and spiritual stances. A description of their book is that it “offers theological reflection on the impact of technology on Christian discipleship, showing how new technologies and the rise of social media impact the way we interact with each other, ourselves, and the world.”

At St.David’s, we have subscribed to a level of ZOOM that allows us to have five primary hosts. We are all named “Butterfly” when we connect to ZOOM and through this medium, we are able to come into contact on a weekly basis to many St. Davidians as well as online partners of St. David’s. Over the time of ZOOM at St. David’s we have added many new adherents so that when letters are sent out to the congregation via mail, we only have 42 folk listed. We have hosted AGM and Budget meetings online as well as Sunday morning services, regular and emergent council meetings, prayer chain meetings and other council-related meetings, Friendship Group gatherings, Pastoral Care informal gatherings in addition two Monday Nights Book Studies and Thursday Morning Bible Studies, Discipleship seems to be alive and well.

Thank you, so much, for joining with us on Monday Nights or, quite possibly, by checking into [sduc.ca](http://sduc.ca) weekly to follow our published slide preentations for each session.

2. Last night, we finished Book One — “Wild Things - 1980” and further immersed ourselves in the writings of Richard Wagamese. The video segment from “Indian Horse” gave us a clue to his writing success — his main fictional character, Saul, takes over the author and insists that he incorporate the impact of Residential Schools. He addresses the question, “What did native people actually lose?” He reads from p. 53 of his book the story of the 12 youngsters with the smell of fish on their hands. The story stands alone for us to do what we want with it — the magic of story telling.
3. Unlike Emmy and Winnie, I have never been forced to steal in order to eat. Again, through the gift of story, we feel the dilemma faced by this woman and her daughter with no food, no job, living in a deserted farmhouse far from town. Contrast this with their welcoming arrival at the Starlight Farm with Frank and Eugene — a safe good place.
4. We have a ringside seat into the hearts and minds of Cadotte and Anderson as **vengeance** takes over their lives. We can suspect that their whole approach to life is about vengeance... them against the world!! And, by contrast, we glimpse the **generosity** of spirit of Frank and Eugene, of Maddie (social services) and of Mrs. Gaines in line at the bank.

### 3. From Chat - Session #4

Unfortunately, we kept everyone so busy last night that chat was minimal. Mike wondered in his break out room if perhaps, in indigenous lore, evil spirits have their journey to make as well? Hmm? As Wagamese said, “Teachings come from everywhere when you open yourself to them. That’s the trick of it really, to open yourself to everything and everything opens itself to you.” We have such front-row seating into the mind of Wagamese through his characters.

John mentioned the longer monologues we hear from Frank. Reflecting upon this, he deals at length with Eugene after inviting Emmy and Winnie into their lives, with Chapman and Mrs. Gaines as he waits in line at the bank, with Deacon as he comments on “Wild Things.” Bit by bit we learn more and more about Frank and the other characters. **Feel free to email me following the session if you are suddenly struck with an epiphany (or two) that you would be willing to share.**

5. Rev. John Pentland's article in the Herald last Saturday is worth the read: <https://calgaryherald.pressreader.com/article/282608856003737>

6. **Closing: Thank you, Karen and Joan, for the link to the Transcanada Trail with Diane Whelan.** Karen sent me another link after last night's session — **Message from Karen:**

I thought the Toques & Canoe article & this video were a bit better to describe the journey & connections to indigenous people & the land. Hope you can pass them on.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/video/filmmaker-reflects-on-lessons-learned-after-six-year-trans-canada-trail-journey/?fbclid=IwAR3PITdDe-0Ghop3GX7s3lt8meEAlkMNUXaskzNEd6vmmjl8of20ecWpKwE#x>

7. I have included the readings from the audiotape of "Starlight" — chapters 12 and 13 which can be listened to here or on the [sduc.ca](http://sduc.ca) website / Ministries Adult Spiritual Development Ministry page

### **8. Truth before Reconciliation: 8 ways to identify and confront residential School denialism.**

So far we have explored "Cultural Genocide," "Schooling" and "But they learned new skills." Today I'll pick up a fourth phrase used by denialists when it comes to discussing residential schools. This segment speaks to the issue of "They had good intentions" — another argument used to justify residential schools. It was argued that the educational (and religious) institutions had good intentions.

■ **"4. "They had good intentions":** No matter how many bodies are found, how many people testify to the lifelong traumas of extensive abuse at the hands of church officials and teachers, denialists evoke the "good intentions" of some school officials as justification for

their maintenance of a [genocidal school system](#) for over a century.

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Last night I listened to the audiotape of **Book Two – chapters 1-3** and, continued to ask myself as I listened (and read) **what does this reading say to me about Canadian cultures, their meaning and values..... To this I added listening for the challenges of child poverty, battered woman syndrome and how Wagamese treats these issues in his book.**

**Book Two is entitled “Deer Stalker” – very appropriate as we learn about a two prong approach to the title. Chapter One** finds Frank and Eugene going about the regular tasks of farming, this time, fencing. Maddie, from Endako Family Services, comes to the farm with a request regarding Winnie. Evidently she is having troubles at school, resorting to using her fists to settle differences. Maddie has a copy of a “Starlight” photo on her wall that overwhelmingly suggests ‘calmness’ and she feels that is what Winnie needs most of all. Frank can offer her that. Frank’s description of Winnie as a half-broke horse shows how perceptive his character happens to be. As we move through the chapter, we find out more of the history behind Frank and Emmy, explaining why they are the way they are.

**Chapter Two** has Frank teaching Emmy and Winnie how to ride horses as they prepare to go on a trail ride. This chapter is incredibly beautiful, in my estimation. Deer Stalking takes on a unique meaning as Frank shows Emmy and Winnie “old skills.”

**Chapter Three** is a short one that reveals how Cadotte and Anderson are “stalking” Emmy and Winnie. They are further consumed with Vengeance as they move from town to town and job to job.

Enjoy your read. See you next week.

Thoughtfully yours,  
Brenda