

Tribal Catholics have deep beliefs....

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Catholic.

St. Anthony's uses Indian symbols in its ceremonies. Where other churches would have a statue or banner hanging on the front wall, St. Anthony's has a large, colorful weaving called a god's eye. The church gives out eagle feathers for baptism, first communion, confirmation and at death.

Eagle feathers are sacred in the Menominee and it is only with the permission of the tribal elders that St. Anthony's can use them.

The Wolf River Drummers from the Big Drum society in Zoer played for the powwow. The children danced in competition grouped by age. Girls are allowed to compete, though they only would have watched traditionally.

The worshippers in the traditional religion in Zoer pray for St. Anthony's and the St. Anthony's parishioners pray for the people in Zoer, Dory said.

The children said the sign of the cross and the Our Father in Menominee. They use cedar smoke on solemn occasions rather than the incense found in most Catholic churches.

"That fits well with our rites," Dory said of the cedar smoke. The Menominee symbols were sacred before Catholics started using them, he said. "We don't make them holy by using them."

Sister Martha Carpenter, who has taught at the church school for 13 years, is doing her master's thesis on Menominee religious symbols.

She explained that today's powwow is a blessing of the planting and the hunting season. Powwows come at the changing of the seasons. She echoed Dory's statement.

"We don't have to baptize their



Father Michael Dory

symbols. We respect what we find there. They are holy," she said.

The parish and school are run by Dory, four lay teachers and sisters Martha, James Marie Riebe, Mary Lou Loomis (a Chippewa), Mary Francis O'Donnell and principal Sister Karen Kranhennuh.

The sisters are "the glue that holds the place together," volunteered one parishioner.

Dory has no argument with that. "Without them (the sisters), we would not have a school," he said.

The well trained educators, some with master's degrees, work for \$3,000 a year. Parish members take part in woodcutting parties to heat the school, sisters' house and rectory. There is something else the school

could not operate without: Gambling. A high-stakes bingo game finances the operation of the school.

"Financially, it's just a constant struggle," Dory said. "We live on gambling. We also see the bad about it. We wish there was another way. A \$1 million endowment would help."

Bingo revenues are slipping because of the success of other bingo operations on reservations, he said, and the gaming operation announced by the Menominees for Keshewa this week will likely make it worse.

The school, which includes grades 1-8, is perhaps the only Catholic elementary school in the diocese with a waiting list, Dory said. It is very strict about mass attendance, daily homework and discipline, he said, and stresses basic math and reading in its teaching.

Indian art decorating the classrooms and a bear pelt hanging from the wall in the library suggest this is a school living in another culture. So does the conversation. One young girl showed off her braided hair to Dory and said proudly that her father had done it for her. Dory responded by asking whether her father also has a braid.

Opposite the bear pelt in the library are seven personal computers to provide computer instruction in every grade. Computer teacher Jane Webster left the public school on the reservation and took less money to come to St. Anthony's. She said she wanted the chance to set up a full grade 1-8 computer instruction program, and serves on the diocese curriculum committee to set up similar programs elsewhere. Webster also is the librarian and reading specialist.

Menominee County began the year with a 36% unemployment rate, the worst in the state, Dory said the residents don't see themselves as poor.

One day he asked third graders for the names of poor families to send them food baskets. They couldn't think of any. The school raised money for the poor through fish fries during Lent, the poor who benefitted were in the Dominican Republic. Dory said he thinks it is good for them to realize there are people who have it worse.

The reservation is like another world, Dory said. He has learned to hunt bear and trap. The bear's head and bobcat pelt in his livingroom attest to that.

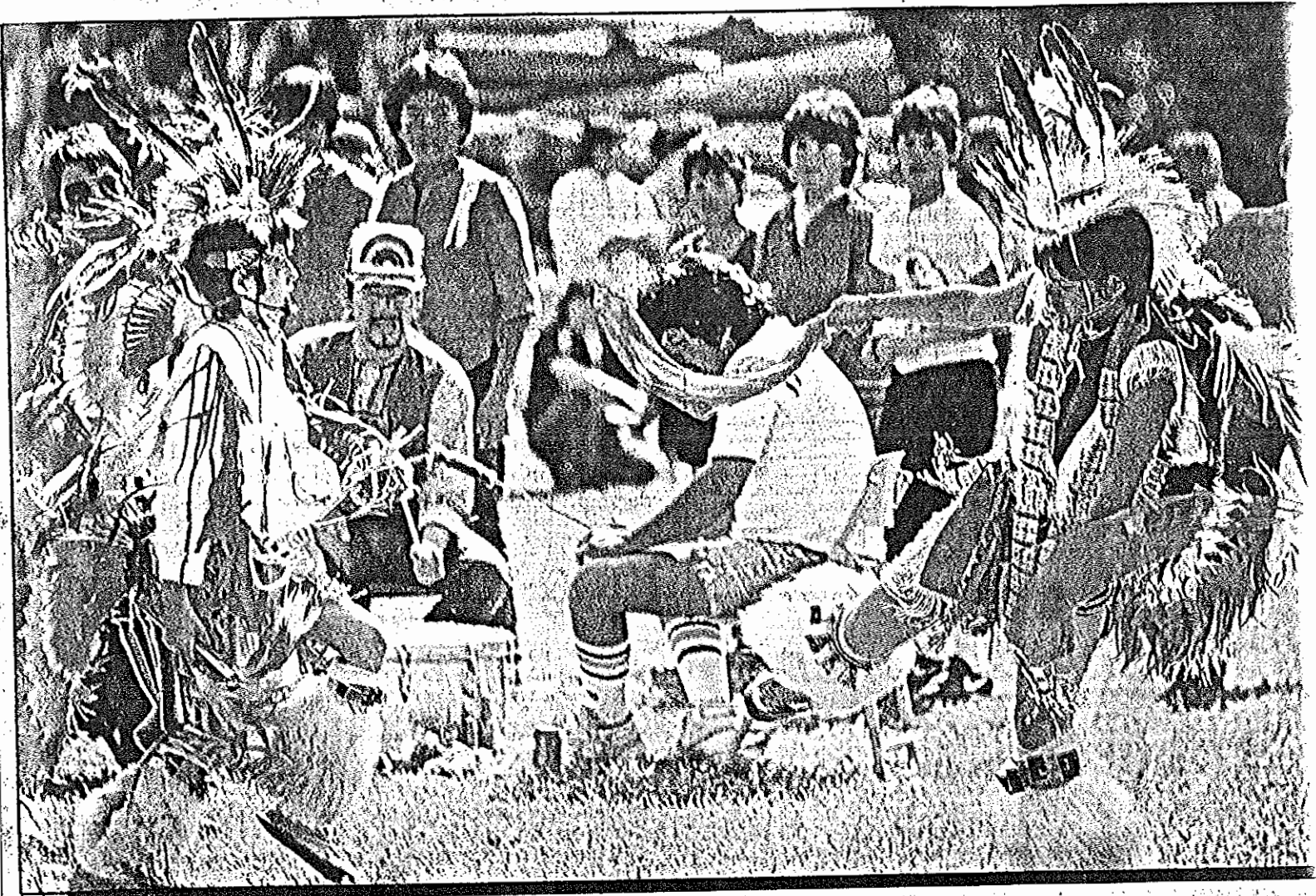
Beyond the cultural differences is the isolation. There are no movies, no theaters, no home delivery of daily newspapers.

"You've got a lot of time to spend with yourself, more than anywhere else I've been," he said. "When you find yourself alone so much, you really come to rely on prayer."

Acceptance does not come immediately for a white priest on a reservation, Dory said. He had to prove first that he wasn't a do-gooder there to rescue them from their way of life and wasn't just passing through.

"You always are white up here. You never become Indian," he said. "To live up here, you really come to love the Indian ways. It takes a couple of years to be accepted, but once you are accepted, you really are loved."

"It really is a different culture. Sometimes I think it would be easier if everyone spoke Menominee to remind you it's another culture."



Bernard Webster, left, and Jody Sanapaw dance during a Neopit powwow.

Tribal Catholics have deep beliefs

By David Horst
Post-Crescent staff writer

More photos on A-4

NEOPIT — Two old religions as firm as the earth melded when the Catholic priest gave the final blessing and the rhythmic booming of the big drum sounded the recessional.

Indian children danced from the pews, bells jingling on the ankle bands of their traditional costumes, with a solemn Menominee chant filling St. Anthony's Catholic Church.

Last Thursday, the school children of St. Anthony's celebrated both the Ascension and Kateri Tekawitha Day, a feast dedicated to a half Mohawk, half Algonquin woman who may become the first saint from the United States.

Pope John Paul II declared her blessed in 1980, one step from sainthood.

"Up here she's a saint. We cut out that middle ground," said Father Michael Dory, the pastor at St. Anthony's for the past four years who has also worked at Holy Angels in Darboy and at St. Elizabeth Hospital in Appleton.

He was explaining the joining of traditional Menominee beliefs with Catholic doctrine before the powwow when a bald eagle began to circle overhead.

The children excitedly called to him and pointed to the eagle. It was a sign that the Great Spirit was present at the ceremony, there in the form of the eagle which acts as the messenger between heaven and earth. The

children shouted pointing out a second eagle then a third. Soon three bald eagles circled high in the sky over the powwow and a fourth bald eagle and a golden eagle flew down close over the school building.

Dory treats the Menominee beliefs with reverence.

"It's kind of eerie. So often the big drum calls the great spirit and that is the great spirit," he said pointing to the first eagle. "I don't know how many funerals we walked out of the church and there was an eagle flying overhead, or we get to the cemetery and there's an eagle. It really makes a believer of you."

He believes traditional beliefs can fit in with Catholic doctrine here on the Menominee reservation where 90% of the residents are

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It was suggested that the New York Representatives as Ken Snyder about leading a workshop on the Christian Creation Story compared with the Traditional Native American Creation Story.

Other ideas discussed were :

Scheduling
Song Leaders
Youth Participation
Food

It was suggested that we continue to brainstorm overnight and bring our ideas back on Saturday morning.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

A brief worship service was shared by Pastor Timblin. Our thanks to him for sharing words of the "Unity" that we are to be about.

Sunday - August 30

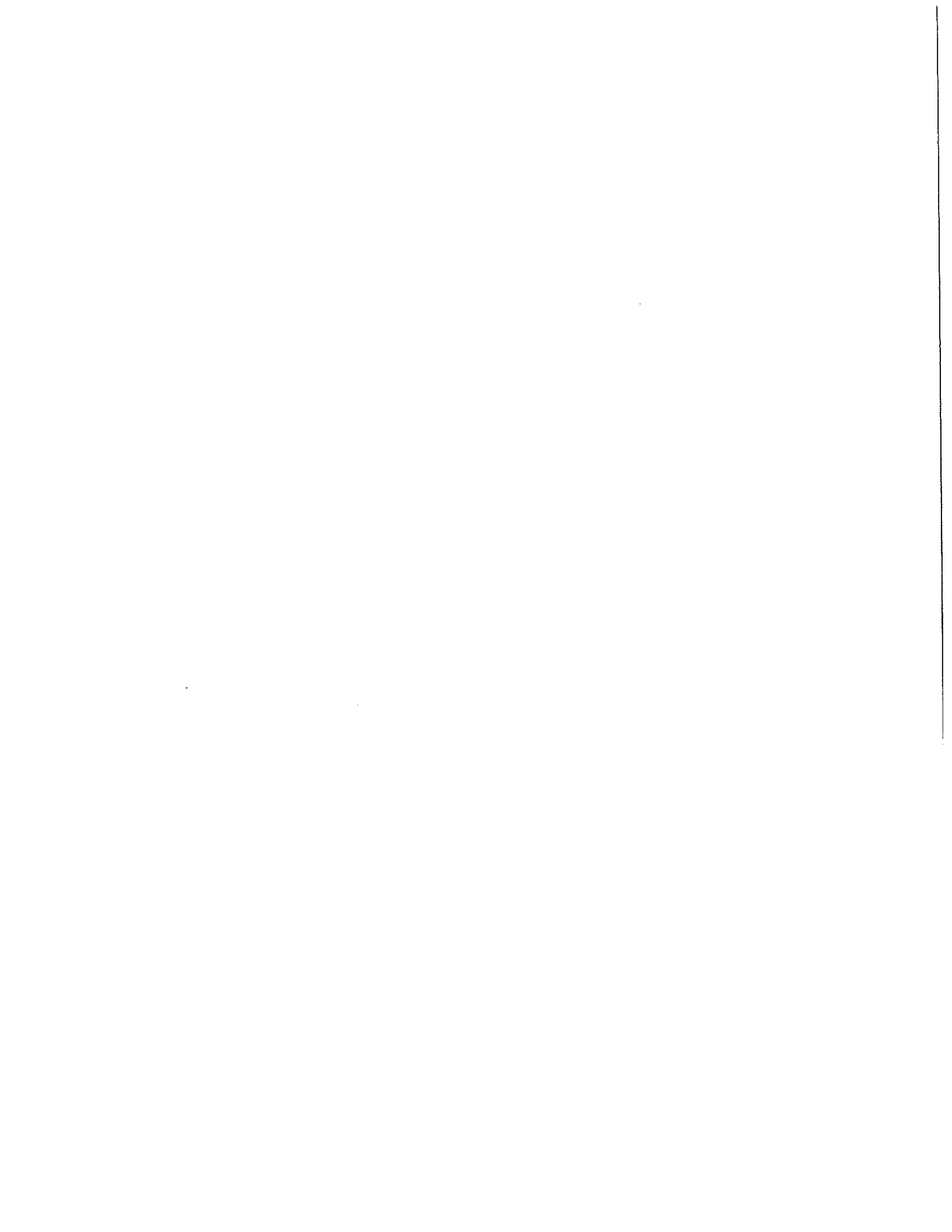
Sunrise	---	Sunrise Ceremony
8:00 - 9:00	---	Breakfast
9:00 - 10:00	---	Evaluation/Feedback
10:00 - 11:00	---	Singspiration/Testimony
11:00 - 12:00	---	Closing Worship
12:00 - 1:00	---	Closing Noon Meal

Workshop ideas shared:

1. Sweat lodge
2. Baptism vs. Naming Ceremony
3. Funeral Practices or Purification
4. Healing Services
5. Christianity & Traditionalism as one---a way of life
6. Storytelling

Camp Theme: Integrating Christian and Traditional Native American Concepts

It was suggest that a 1-2 day Orientation meeting take place in order for resource persons to dialogue and get to know one another. This could possibly take place in the last week of July.



C. METHODS AND TIME SCHEDULES

We intend to create an educational workshop built around the traditional Christian camp meeting experience. This event is primarily for Native American people from across the N.E. Region and for majority persons that need/desire information and experience about the Native American community. We especially want conference leaders to attend. We will also be sure that, among the participants, there will be a group of Native Americans who live by and practice the traditional Native American religion.

In the workshop setting, leaders will facilitate dialogue and understanding between Native Americans who are Christian and Native Americans who are traditionalists in their faith.

Resource persons will teach biblical stories and help with theological reflection related to "Creation" theology. They will also help the participants relate their new learnings and understandings to Christian worship and education and help to develop worship and education models to be used in the camp meeting and with local congregations in the future.

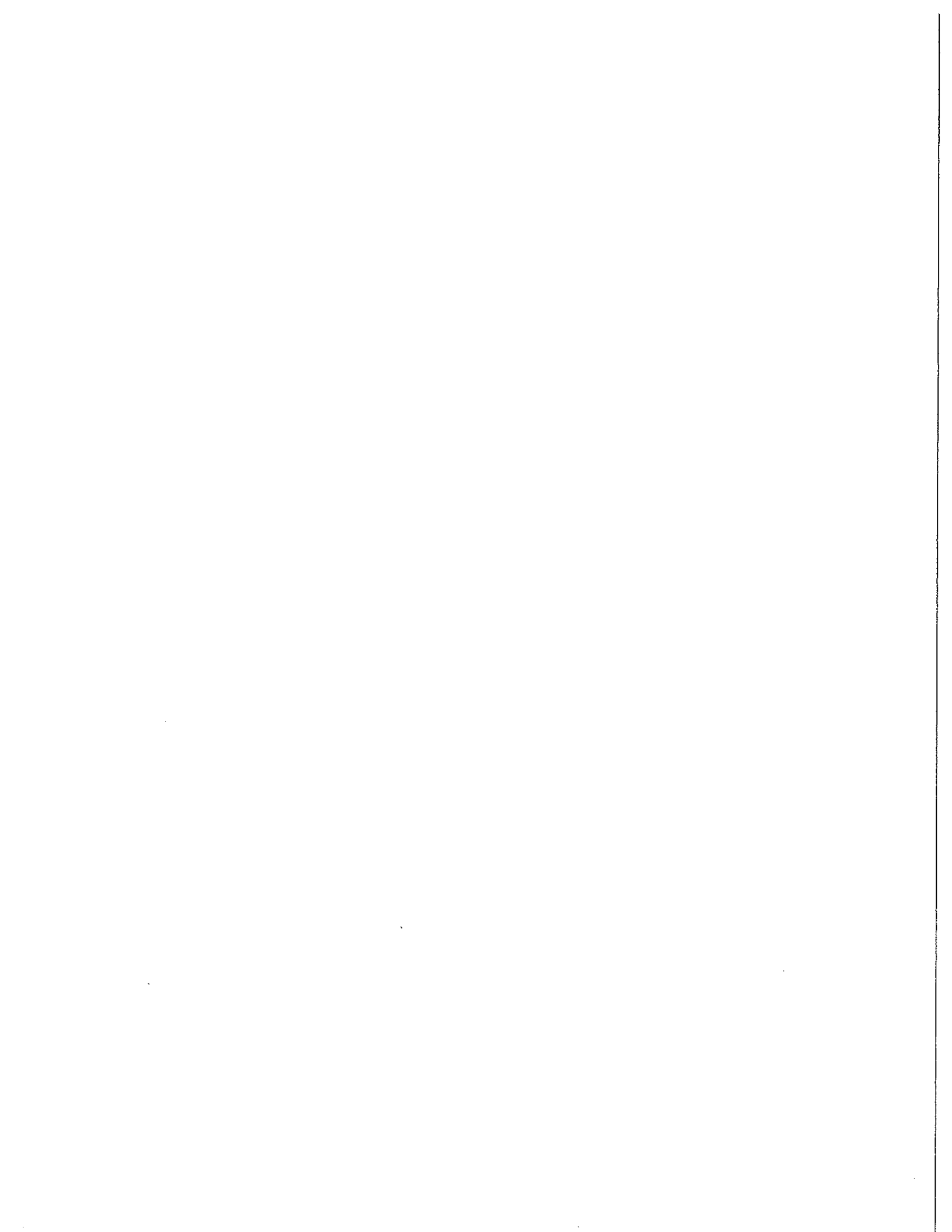
This event will begin on a Friday and end on the following Sunday in the summer of 1987. The morning of each day will be devoted to study and discussion. The afternoon will be a time for arts and crafts. The evening will be used for worship and preaching.

We are expecting 200 persons to attend this event.

D. EVALUATION PLAN

We will design an evaluation tool that will be sent to all participants after they return home. The form will invite criticism and affirmations plus suggestions for improvement.

We will seek a 6 month report from each congregation who had members attending, seeking information about changes in attitudes and worship styles. We will also seek information about community activities with, and feelings about, relationships with the non-Christian Native American community. This will be reported to all congregations in the Region and in the "Echo of the Four Winds."



ETHNIC MINORITY LOCAL CHURCH MISSIONAL PRIORITY
FUNDING REQUEST

Addendum to NE Region Theology & Worship
Workshop Request

A. PROBLEM/NEEDS STATEMENT:

The United Methodist Native American Church communities (17 mission churches) in the N.E. Region, which covers both the North East and North Central Jurisdictions, has identified a real need in the area of Theology and Worship.

It would be very helpful if the congregations in the region could better understand the theological and biblical basis of "creation" and combine such a study with an educational experience involving the traditional Native American religion.

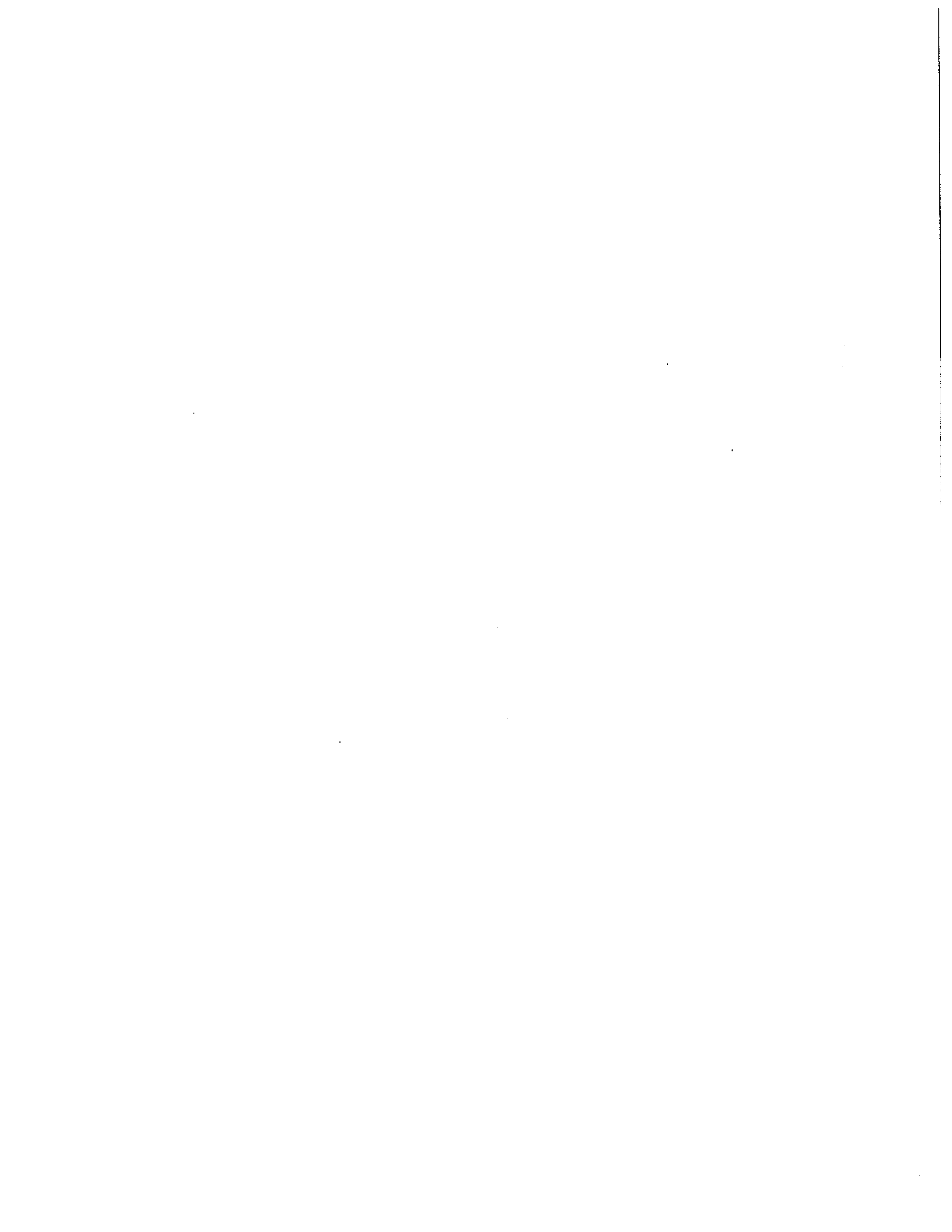
There would be much benefit as a result of fellowship and study with Native Americans who practice and live by the traditional Native American religion. It would help unify the larger Native American community. They could also learn from each other and enrich both segments of the community.

It is also felt that Christian worship leaders in the congregations would benefit from thinking about ways to include "traditional" religious thoughts, ideas and practices in Christian worship as a way to enhance Native American worship. This may help youth and young adults who desire to worship with and enter a Christian fellowship group.

And, last, there is a great need to help the majority people understand the Native American view of creation and to understand Native American traditions and culture.

B. OBJECTIVES:

1. Native American people attending this event will discover ways to bridge gaps that exist between the "Christian" community and the "Traditional" religious community.
2. Participants will increase their understanding and appreciation for the "creation" through Bible study, theological reflections and dialogue with "Traditional Religion" believers.
3. Participants will study worship forms and will design worship services that will reflect their study of "Traditional" practices. The goal is to enhance Christian worship in the Native American style.
4. Participants will worship together using the worship services designed in class/workshop. This experience will assist and encourage people to study worship issues in their own congregations and make appropriate and helpful changes.
5. Key conference leaders will be invited to attend this event. They will be exposed to the thinking and the experiences of the Native American community.



NE Region
Minutes, June 26 & 27, 1987

Friday - 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was opened with getting and prayer shared by Oneida United Methodist Church pastor, Carson Timblin.

The chairperson raised a concern about the inclusion of the other conferences in the region in planning. It is felt that more input is needed from the other regional representatives in order to obtain a good cross section of ideas and participation at the camp.

A brainstorming session took place. Ideas generated are as follows:

- Workshop Themes:
1. Baptism vs. Tradition practices
 2. Marriage practices & rituals
 3. Ceremonial practices vs. Christian Calander
 4. Christian Creation Story vs. Tradional Creation Story

Another "Brainstorming" session took place. A schedule was developed as follows:

Friday - August 28

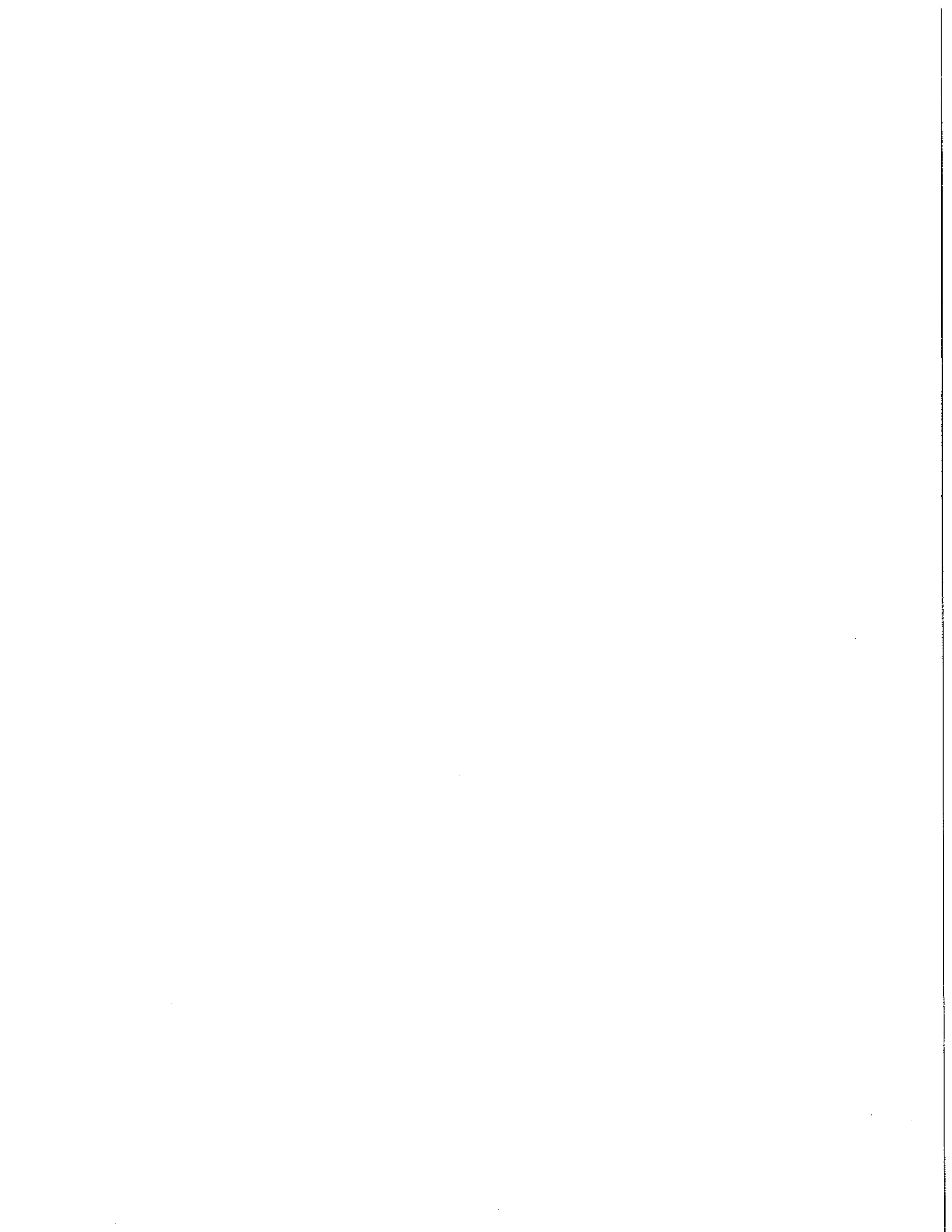
- 9:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. --- Registration
5:30 p.m. --- Dinner
7:00 p.m. --- Revival Ceremony

(Refreshments to follow)

Saturday - August 29

- 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. --- Breakfast
9:00 - 10:00 a.m. --- Getting Acquainted
Sharing of Camp Goals
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. --- Workshops
12:00 - 1:00 p.m. --- Lunch
1:00 - 3:00 --- Workshops
3:00 - 5:00 --- Free Time --- Jewelry, Basketry, Beading, Video
5:30 - 6:30 p.m. --- Dinner
7:00 - --- Revival Ceremony; singspiration, talent show
w/youth

refreshments --- storytelling



BUDGET DETAILS

Personnel

We believe we need four (4) resource leaders to teach Bible, Theology, Worship and Traditional Native American Religion. We will also need a strong preacher, plus two (2) different leaders in music and singing. This is a total of six (6) resource leaders.

Travel

We are inviting people to come from all points in the N.E. Region, which means long distance travel for many families. Because many Native American families are poor, we feel we must be ready to offer significant financial help to any family needing support.

Scholarship

We feel there will be a real need to help families cover the on site cost of attending this three day event. If the family is large, the food cost will be considerable for that family. There is also a cost for lodging space. We want to be sure that no family will be denied this experience because of a lack of funds.

Please keep in mind that the North Central Jurisdiction Council on Ministries gave only a token amount of money to the N.E. Region and the North East Jurisdiction does not supply any funds. The N.E. Region has about \$1,000 in their treasury which must be used to cover meeting costs as we plan for the 1988 Jurisdictional Conference where we will present funding requests for the future.

Because we are a regional caucus that covers many annual conferences and because we are a young group that has not developed necessary processes, we do not get money from annual conferences at this time. We are totally dependent on the General Church boards and agencies. We hope to change this fact in the coming years.

6/30/86;kjh

