

In Memory of Rev. Hubert 'Phil' Ireland

MISSIONARY – EVANGELIST – PASTOR

BY JAMES EAGLES

RIGHT:
Pastor Hubert
Ireland: a man
sent by the Lord
to minister the
Gospel to the First
Nations tribes.

On the morning of July 30 I received word that my former Pastor, friend, mentor and Native American Outreach missionary Rev. Hubert Ireland had gone to be with the Lord. I attended his funeral, with close to 400 people attending at his birthplace and homestead of the Oneida First Nations reserve.

Dozens of pastors, evangelists and Christian workers were in attendance from all over Canada and the U.S.A. The beloved Oneida Choir sang the beautiful songs of Sion in their Oneida language.

In addition to being my Pastor for seven years from 1978 to 1985, Rev. Ireland was a man sent by the Lord to minister the Gospel to the First Nations tribes in Ontario and also in the U.S.A. Together he teamed up with Dr. Bob Finley, the founder of this Mission, and he pioneered the indigenous mission to Aboriginal Peoples known as Native American Outreach.

Thanks to Pastor Ireland's vision for evangelism to First Nations peoples and missionary work over the last 50 years, congregations have been established and churches built in such places as Fort Severn on Hudson Bay, Oneida Reservation in southwestern Ontario and other churches in Fort Erie, Ontario and in Cattaraugus reservation in New York state. In addition Rev. Ireland brought his vibrant and gifted preaching, singing and music to many churches and many reservations, including Walpole Island, Muncey, Rama, New Credit and Six Nations—to name only a few. He founded Native American Outreach (NAO) to help accomplish this.

Intercede (formerly named Christian Aid Mission) helped him raise certain funds back in the eighties to build the churches in Fort Severn and in Oneida, and these churches are going strong today. Rev. Ireland also conducted services in the former building that was the first HQ for this Mission in Fort Erie.

In addition to his pioneer missionary work and pastoral work, Pastor Ireland did evangelistic work in countless hundreds of churches and camp meetings all over the United States and Canada. He brought the joyful sound of the Gospel message and music wherever he went. He is predeceased by his son Terrell and leaves behind his dear wife Kathryn and his daughters Debbie, LaDonna, Cindy and their families.

I remember him singing and leading us in the Oneida language, the words of that old Gospel hymn—"At the Cross, at the Cross, Where I first saw the Light"—and how our hearts were moved to serve the Lord.

May this Oneida Missionary of the First Nations be remembered for the great Message he brought to all of us—"Christ in You, the Hope of Glory." Amen.