

## 2023 Convention Award Winner

*Light of God Expressing in Society Award*



### Basil Brave Heart

**Basil Brave Heart** is 89 years old, a Lakota Elder and Spiritual Teacher. He is a boarding school survivor and honored Korean War Veteran. Basil lives on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. He holds a Bachelor of Science with a major in English and a minor in Biology. He has a master's degree in psychology and counseling, and a master's degree in education administration. He was an educator and School Superintendent for many years before moving back to the Pine Ridge Reservation with his wife Charlotte. They have dedicated their lives to helping people in all aspects of healing and recovery with Traditional Native and contemporary psychological wisdom.

Basil is an author and lecturer who has been teaching about the paradigm shift we are seeing now, based on the wisdom of his Ancestors. In 1938, Oglala Lakota Elder Basil Brave Heart learned about the importance of forgiveness from his grandma Lucy. More than eighty years later, his grandma Lucy's teachings were still resonating, and they initiated a movement. A movement of *Forgiveness* from a boarding school survivor that has inspired worldwide support and recognition.

Based on his grandma's wisdom, Basil led an International Ceremony for Repentance and Forgiveness in July 2019, attended by people from throughout the Americas, the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Hawaii. The ceremony and many subsequent events for the last four years, created and continue to create an opportunity for healing the wounds inflicted upon indigenous peoples, the harm sustained throughout several hundred years of colonialism, slavery, and war, as well as harm to Mother Earth.

Basil was guided to lead the re-naming of what used to be 7200-foot-tall Harney Peak to Black Elk Peak by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names. Gen. Harney led a brutal massacre of the Lakota people. Basil and the Harney families worked together with the Black Elk and Little Thunder families to not only change the name, but share ceremony and prayers for continued peace and reconciliation for the Lakota people and the Harney families.

Basil Brave Heart embodies a life of prayer. He lives a life of service to humanity, and exemplifies the Living Christ nature of humility, forgiveness, and gratitude.

Basil has been the recipient of many awards:

He received the prestigious Lakota Red Feather Society “Purple Heart” award.

At a Tribal council meeting, a resolution was made to honor and acknowledge Basil for his contribution to the community, his service to Veterans, those with PTSD and addictions.

He received the Medal of Peace award from the people of Korea.

Hanley Hazleton gave him a special award for his pioneering work with healing alcoholism with traditional native ways and his skills as a certified addictions counselor.