

**About National Aboriginal Day - June 21  
and our partnership with Indigenous Anglicans in  
Canada**

In 1971 the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada declared June 21 as a "National Indian Day of Prayer" and requested all dioceses to commend this day to parishes and congregations throughout Canada. In 1995, participants of the Sacred Assembly in Hull, Quebec - a national meeting of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people - revived an earlier campaign to observe June 21 as a national day to recognize the contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canada. The summer solstice, the longest day of the year, falls on June 21. For generations, this was a sacred day for many Aboriginal people on which they celebrated their culture and heritage. On June 13, 1996, Governor General Romeo Leblanc declared June 21 **National Aboriginal Day**.

In Winnipeg in 1994, representatives of the Indigenous people gathered and made a Covenant to build a truly Anglican Indigenous Church in Canada, claiming their place and responsibility "as equal partners in a new shared journey of healing, moving towards wholeness and justice."

In July of 2001, the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada commended for study and implementation the working document *A New Agape: A Plan of Anglican Work in Support of a New Partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans*. This plan expresses the commitment of the Anglican Church of Canada to a new relationship with the Indigenous (or Aboriginal) Peoples of Canada based on a partnership which focuses on the cultural, spiritual, social, and economic independence of Indigenous communities.

The Day is about celebrating the gifts of Indigenous people and giving thanks to God who has created the diversities of peoples of the world and gifted Aboriginal peoples of Canada with many treasures of wisdom, spirit and vision. Celebrate!

As we mark the passing of the summer solstice, let us pray in thanksgiving to God for the gifts that Aboriginal peoples have brought to Canada and to the church. Let us pray that we might all walk in the spirit of the Covenant made by the Indigenous partners in Canada to "do all we can to call our people into unity in a new, self-determining community within The Anglican Church of Canada".

**Healing and reconciliation between Indigenous peoples  
and newcomer peoples happens person to person,  
community to community.**

The National Aboriginal Day of Prayer is a day to honour the gifts of First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples across Canada. The Order of Service for this year has been created as an offering of welcome, sharing and celebration of the gifts of the Rupert's Land Indigenous Council, who have prepared this Liturgy for the Healing of the Land in preparation for the summer 2003 Gathering of the Lutheran World Federation in Winnipeg. The symbolism, for example, the use of the colours and directions, represents the use by Indigenous communities in that Diocese.

This offering is part of a new initiative encouraged by the Joint Working Group on Worship of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples and the Faith, Worship and Ministry Committee, as we work to lift up the gifts of local Indigenous communities.

*A New Agape*, our Church's statement of commitment to healing and reconciliation, reminds us that healing and right relationship happen person to person and community to community. After this day, you can continue to learn about Indigenous people in our church and world. Why not:

- Get to know your Aboriginal neighbours!
- Get to know Aboriginal Anglicans, their communities and stories through the Anglican Video productions, *The Seventh Fire*, *A Journey Begins with a Dream*, *Dancing the Dream*, *Walking a New Vision*, *The Healing River*, *The Healing Circle*, and others available from the Anglican Book Centre or contact your Synod office.
- Drop in electronically to visit [www.anglican.ca/acip](http://www.anglican.ca/acip) to visit the Anglican Council of Indigenous People
- Find out if your Diocese has an Indigenous Council, and invite members for a sharing circle and/or social.
- Ask your Synod office about *the New Agape Resource Binder*, which contains a wealth of information, educational and worship resources, as well as information about the Indigenous Healing Fund. See [www.anglican.ca/newagape](http://www.anglican.ca/newagape).
- Read *A New Agape: Plan for Anglican Support of Healing and Reconciliation between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous People in Canada*, available through [www.anglican.ca/acip](http://www.anglican.ca/acip), or contact your Synod office or ACIP member.
- Find out if your Diocese is represented in the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP), and invite that person to share their stories with your community

Creator God, from you  
every family in heaven and on earth  
takes its name.

You have rooted and grounded us  
in your covenant love,  
and empowered us by your Spirit  
to speak the truth in love,  
and to walk in your way towards justice and wholeness.

Mercifully grant that your people,  
journeying together in partnership,  
may be strengthened and guided  
to help one another to grow into the full stature of Christ,  
who is our light and our life. Amen.

*Covenant Collect, Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples*

Creator, we give you thanks for all you are and all you bring to us  
for our visit within your creation.

In Jesus, you place the Gospel in the center  
of this Sacred Circle  
through which all of creation is related.

Give us your strength to live together with respect  
and commitment as we grow in your spirit,  
for you are God, now and forever. Amen.

*Episcopal Native Ministries' Gospel Based Discipleship*



## National Aboriginal Day of Prayer 2005

