

Dear Friends,

On behalf of those who live and work in Council of the North I want to thank you for the ongoing and generous support we receive from the Anglican Church of Canada and congregations like yours.

The Council of the North, made up of nine dioceses, the archdeaconry of Labrador and the Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior, faces very unique challenges: vast distances, isolation, the continuing effects of poverty, and the legacy of the residential school system. All of these contribute to an increased level of pastoral needs.

Within these dioceses, almost 50% of clergy are non-stipendiary, and the high cost of transportation in the north makes frequent travel within each diocese cost-prohibitive. Many of our priests spend countless hours performing ministry in their communities outside of their regular jobs. Providing ministry in the north also requires culturally-sensitive leaders trained and equipped for mission. Partnerships between Indigenous schools of ministry and theological colleges provide the opportunity for staff and students from across the country to gain access to the quality education and culturally-appropriate teaching that is required.

Missioning to Canada's north, a priority since the earliest days of the Anglican Church, makes the modern day work of the Council a ministry of the whole church, by the whole church.

I would like to encourage your parish to host a Council of the North Sunday, in either September, October or November of this year. This special Sunday would be an opportunity for your congregation to come together in awareness, fellowship and prayer for this important ministry in our church. For every one hundred dollars that Anglicans give to their local congregations across this country, approximately one dollar of it goes to support the work of the Council. On this chosen Sunday, you may wish to designate a part of the offering or take up a special collection for the Council or for one of our highlighted ministries such as nurturing northern leaders or helping to honour clergy in northern communities.

The scriptures say "We, who are many, are one body in Christ and individually members one of another" (Romans 12:5). Your parish's commitment and generosity will make these words a reality. The faithful and sacrificial ministry of countless laity and clergy in the north is an inspiration; let us seek to walk together as partners on this journey of Christ's ministry and mission within our church.

With prayers of thanksgiving for your partnership, I remain,

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small cross-like mark at the beginning.

The Rt. Rev. Michael Hawkins
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