

STORIES OF A NEW
AGAPE IN ACTION

INTRODUCTION

A NEW AGAPE



THE RESOURCE BINDER

B2

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t: 416.924.9199 x 786

e: newagape@national.anglican.ca

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We find ourselves these days in a time of guilt and shame about our Church's history in the residential schools that damaged so many First Nations people. We find ourselves in a time of financial anxiety as the Church is called by the school survivors – and indeed by the courts, government, and society – to face its massive responsibilities for abuse in those schools.

Forget, for a moment, that government and society have their own responsibilities regarding the residential school and other continuing abuses of First Nations rights. Our job is to take care of our own responsibilities, and we are challenged in that as never before in the history of the Canadian Anglican Church.

In the midst of all this, we especially need the stories of healing – the stories of agape love – that you will find in this section.

The wonder of pulling together the stories and information for this New Agape binder has been the discovery that so many Anglicans across the country – Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike – are taking hold of the challenges set before them, and doing something, whatever they can, to be part of the healing process. Some projects are large and ongoing, others are more modest. But that's the beauty of such a collection: it offers something for everyone, something to fit every budget, every level of knowledge, every level of commitment.

And if you don't find a project here that makes you think: "I can do that; we can do that right here in our parish (or our diocese)," then hang on, because there's more coming. This binder is just a beginning attempt to reflect the patchwork of love and commitment to healing that we are hearing about from dioceses all across the country. Even as we were running up against our production deadlines for this first edition, more and more stories of healing activities were still coming in. We couldn't include them here this time, but we will send out regular update additions that can be added to the appropriate sections of the binder with a click of the rings (or, if you are downloading the materials from the web, with a click of the mouse).



So if you sent us a story and you can't find it here, be patient, and keep your eyes open for the next update.

If you are involved in any way in the kind of healing project that is a step in the direction of the New Agape mandate, contact us and tell us about it. Don't be shy: write, email, or phone, whichever works best for you. We want to hear your stories, big or small. After all, God has placed us in a marvellous world, richer in diversity than we can ever ask or imagine. There are many ways to follow God's path of love, and the more paths we share with one another, the more chance everyone will find the right ones for themselves.

More to the point, we hope that the stories you read here will inspire you to action. If you're not already involved in a New Agape project, then read and enjoy these stories, and take heart at the amazing amount of activity that is already underway. And if you do find the project here that inspires you to get something going in your community, then God bless – and we look forward to hearing about it from you, and being able to include it here with the other stories of New Agape love.

“ The wonder ... has been the discovery that so many Anglicans across the country ... are doing whatever they can, to be part of the healing process. Some projects are large and ongoing, others are more modest. But ... it offers something to fit every budget, every level of knowledge, every level of commitment. ”

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STORY ONE

ABORIGINAL NEIGHBOURS

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ACTIVITY: An ongoing education and solidarity group
PLACE: Vancouver Island
DIOCESE: British Columbia

In 1991, a young poor Indigenous mother of four in La Estacion, a squatter settlement in Cuernavaca, Mexico, asked Gloria Cope if there were any Indigenous people where she came from.

"I answered yes," says Gloria, a resident of Nanaimo, B.C. The Mexican woman "wondered about their living conditions, and asked me what was I doing about their problems?" A decade later, Gloria's commitment to Aboriginal Neighbours is her answer.

Gloria is a founding member of Aboriginal Neighbours, a group in British Columbia Diocese inspired by a 1996 diocesan synod resolution to educate and mend relationships between cultures. "Love your neighbour as yourself," is the group's primary mission statement. Its purpose is to encourage Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans in the diocese to learn about each other. "After all, we're all Indigenous to somewhere," says fellow founder Jill Harris.

Initiated by four people, the group now has 15 members, plus associates, spread across Vancouver Island. Aboriginal Neighbours members have spoken at deanery meetings, women's groups, and synods, and to numerous parishes. They write regularly for the *Diocesan Post*, and will help facilitate or add to any event on Aboriginal relations.

It is a measure of the respect they have earned among First Nations leaders that Aboriginal Neighbours representatives were invited to attend ceremonies for the final signing of the Nisga'a Treaty, as well as for the Seattle (Washington) commemoration of Enmegahbowh (John Johnson) on the occasion of his inclusion in the Episcopal Church Calendar of Lesser Feasts and Fasts.



Peggy Svanvik, a Namgis First Nations elder, told the 1997 B.C. diocesan synod of the desperate need to encourage young Aboriginal people to learn about their history and culture. She emphasized that keeping their language is key to their survival. From this came the idea of a new hymnal for Kwak'wala-speaking Anglicans, and Aboriginal Neighbours played a key role in raising more than \$14,000 to fund the project.

Aboriginal Neighbours members continue to learn, teach, challenge, and be challenged. Much of their recent work focused on the B.C. government's referendum on First Nations treaty rights. Within the group, as Gloria Cope puts it, we seek "a coming-together, a weaving of cultures between natives and non-natives, without either group becoming a dominating force. I know that if we are to make a difference in righting relationships in the larger community, it is essential to maintain right relationship with our own neighbours."

For more information, contact:

Gloria Cope

t: (250) 758-3296

e: ralglo@island.net.

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

The Diocese of Montreal has a group, the First Nations Relations Committee, which encourages Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to build closer ties with one another. The Committee has organized events such as "Walking With First Nations," a diocese-wide information and discussion session on residential schools. The Diocesan Council also passed resolutions urging every parish to sponsor an educational event on Aboriginal issues, and urging non-Indigenous and Indigenous parishes to develop partnerships with each other.

Suggested Activity

Is there a group in your diocese which is working to heal the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people? Check the **Links** section for the names of diocesan representatives and regional social justice groups working on Aboriginal issues, or contact your diocese to find out about groups working on healing initiatives in your region.

Resources

The book *Nation to Nation* (John Bird, Lorraine Land, and Murray MacAdam, editors) contains a section by non-Aboriginal individuals reflecting on their experiences working in partnership with Aboriginal communities on Aboriginal rights issues. See the **Links** section for more information.

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STORY TWO

A HOME IN THE CITY

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ACTIVITY:
An Urban Indigenous Parish
PLACE: Winnipeg and area
DIOCESE: Rupert's Land

Please note that St. Helen's Ayamihewkamik Anglican Church has now been disestablished. However, its model of ministry is a valuable example of what may be possible.

With more and more First Nations people living in Canada's urban centres, it's becoming increasingly important for them to have a church in the city where they feel comfortable and can be with other people like themselves, says the Rev. Barbara Shoomski. "It's hard for them to walk into a parish and be the only one (who is an Indigenous person)."

For the last eight years Barbara has been the deacon-in-charge at the 15-year-old St. Helen's Ayamihewkamik Anglican Church, the only Anglican Indigenous parish in Winnipeg. The Cree name means "House of Prayer." Barbara herself is Cree.

Services at St. Helen's are typical of most Anglican parishes. Many of the people who attend are from out of town and come to church while they are in Winnipeg for medical treatments. Barbara, who is hired for Sundays only, is trying to make the parish better known.

Right now St. Helen's is in transition. The people who attend cannot support it financially and a task force is studying its future. Over the winter, worshipers had to meet in another church because they could not afford to pay to heat St. Helens.

Other Indigenous ministry initiatives in Rupert's Land include West Broadway Community Ministry in Winnipeg's inner city. Run jointly by the Anglican diocese and the United Church of Canada, it is staffed by an Indigenous priest. The Rupert's Land Indigenous Council (RLIC), chaired by Freda Bear, also carries on outreach activities like speaking to vestries, men's breakfasts, and an event at Mennonite University.

In 2001, the Anglican Church of Canada's Healing Fund gave almost \$25,000 to Rupert's Land for the Diocesan Urban Aboriginal Outreach Ministry Board to work with Indigenous people on three goals:



- to establish a sense of belonging;
- to foster holistic approaches to healing; and
- to improve the linkages and understanding between urban and reserve communities.

Susan Suppes of the diocesan staff says Indigenous ministry is “still in the developing stages” in Winnipeg. “A challenge will be to develop a strong Indigenous faith community where chaplaincies and outreach ministries can function as a base.”

For more information contact:
 Rev. Barbara Shoomski t: 204.668.6622
 Freda Bear t: 204.646.2105
 West Broadway Community Ministry
 t: 204.774.2773

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Providing a “home in the city” for Aboriginal peoples can take many different forms. The Diocese of Toronto, for instance, recently hired its first full-time Pastor for Aboriginal Ministries: Andrew Wesley, who is originally from Moosonee, will be ministering to Canada’s largest urban Aboriginal population.

Some dioceses sent stories of urban Aboriginal ministries and social programs which provide an urban “home” to Indigenous congregations and urban Aboriginal communities. For instance, the Dioceses of Edmonton and Ottawa sent stories of a number of urban agencies that they support, and which provide programs for urban Aboriginal people.

Another way of providing “home in the city” was reported by St. John’s Anglican Church in Peterborough, which until recently housed the Peterborough Native Friendship Centre. The Diocese of Ottawa also reported on its recent contribution of \$10,000 to the Odawa Native Friendship Centre.

The Diocese of Ottawa reported on how Christ Church Cathedral has provided a home in the city by offering kitchen facilities for numerous Aboriginal gatherings, and by providing meeting and prayer space for Aboriginal delegations visiting Ottawa for treaty and political negotiations with the federal government.

Suggested Activity

What kind of a “home” does your diocese offer to urban Aboriginal people? Are there Anglican, ecumenical, or community ministries and programs which your parish or diocese could support which provide a place of comfort and sense of belonging for urban Aboriginal people?

Resources

The **Links** section provides information about the Anglican Healing Fund, which supports projects like the Rupert’s Land Urban Aboriginal Outreach Ministry Board.



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STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS, ENHANCING INDIGENOUS WITNESS

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B8

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ACTIVITY:
Hiring a diocesan
Co-ordinator for First Nations
Ministries
PLACE: Greater Vancouver Area
DIOCESE: New Westminster

Sherry Small started work March 2002 as Co-ordinator for First Nations Ministries in the Diocese of New Westminster. Sherry sees her role in this half-time position as both helping Anglicans in the diocese strengthen their relationship with First Nations people, and drawing together and enhancing Indigenous witness in the diocese.

She started by pulling together materials for National Aboriginal Day in June. She is also helping develop materials to educate and foster increased understanding, and seeking opportunities for healing and reconciliation within the church between First Nations and others. She is part of the diocese's parish-support ministry team, and works with an advisory committee to provide support and feedback, and help keep her on track.

Sherry believes in a hands-on, cross-cultural approach. In speaking at deaneries and parish groups, she stresses the need to help non-Indigenous people to understand colonization in a non-threatening atmosphere where they are encouraged to ask questions. She is available to help parishes connect with First Nations individuals, families, and communities and to find ways to build relationships, including finding resource people to help parishes understand underlying issues involving First Nations people.

Sherry has worked as a special-education assistance teacher and a trained facilitator. She also has experience as an advocate for First Nations people, a lay reader, and Restorative Justice Co-ordinator. In her other half-time position she works with First Nations individuals who were once adopted or fostered out and who are seeking to recover their "Indian Status" and cultural identity, or trying to reunite with families or communities.



For more information, contact:
Sherry Small
t: 604.684.6306 x 25 (office) or
604.904.6631 (home)
e: ssmall@vancouver.anglican.ca

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

The Diocese of Toronto recently hired its first Pastor for Aboriginal Ministries. Andrew Wesley, who is originally from Moosonee, will provide pastoral care to Toronto's Aboriginal community, lead Anglican worship services, and raise awareness of First Nations' issues within the diocese.

Suggested Activity

Even if your diocese does not have a staff person to help strengthen relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, there are many opportunities to enhance Indigenous witness. Some ideas for cross-cultural relationship building include:

- Invite a speaker to a parish or diocesan group, such as an Indigenous person involved in local or regional efforts to create bridges between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities (your local Friendship Centres can likely suggest a suitable speaker).
- If you cannot find someone to speak in person, consider using one of the excellent Anglican videos on Indigenous issues, listed in the **Links** section, as a discussion starter for a church study or adult Sunday School group. This is another way to hear Indigenous Anglicans speaking in their own words about the relationship between the Church and Aboriginal peoples.

Can your parish or diocese find ways to support a regional group which is dedicated to building healing relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples?



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GOD IS LEADING US INTO SOMETHING NEW

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ACTIVITY:
Diocesan workshop on Residential Schools
PLACE & DIOCESE: Montreal

During the last three years, members of Montreal Diocese have planned a variety of activities to raise awareness around First Nations issues. Walking with First Nations was one of our events, a diocese-wide discussion and information session on residential schools and the Church. About 80 people attended the event on October 28, 2000 at Montreal's Christ Church Cathedral. Although Montreal Diocese had not had a residential school, we wanted to learn how to share in the journey of healing and transformation that First Nations have been undergoing for years.

Montreal Bishop Andrew Hutchison greeted participants, and Rev. Mervin Wolfleg, an Anglican priest and elder in Alberta's Siksika nation, led our opening prayer and closing worship. Topics during the day covered a wide spectrum: Anna de Aguayo gave a presentation on the history of residential schools, and Dr. Anne Douglas explained some of the cultural abuse. Michael Loft, a family counsellor at Kahnawake reserve, talked about the hidden secondary victims of the Indian residential school era – the children and grandchildren of the school survivors.

A challenging and informative panel discussion included Loft; Wolfleg; national church co-ordinator for Native Ministries, Donna Bomberry; and Bevan Skerit, counsellor at Waseskun House, a recovery and healing centre in the Laurentians north of Montreal.

Canon Gordon Light, then principal secretary to the Primate, outlined the history of the residential schools and the related litigation, and spoke of three goals of the national Church: healing and reconciliation (including truth-telling, supporting land and treaty rights, and just compensation); survival of the Church, probably in a new form or structure; and negotiating an equitable division of



responsibility with the Federal government.

Light urged us to listen, to hear the story, and to enter into the dialogue.

Through questions and concerns shared with our speakers, we left with deeper insights and greater understanding to help us move forward together as part of the

reconciliation process. As Archbishop Michael Peers stated in his pastoral letter of May 28, 2000: “For many in the Church, things are being shaken up and it feels like chaos. But we stand up and raise our heads; God is present and leads us into something new.”

For more information, contact:
Sue Winn: t: 514.457.0736
e: swinn@lbpsb.qc.ca

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Many dioceses sent stories of educational events on residential schools. For example, St. Simon's Anglican Church (Oakville) in the Diocese of Niagara organized a parish study group (see story #15). The Diocese of British Columbia invited a residential school survivor to address a diocesan synod. The Diocese of Algoma has supported the Shingwauk Alumni, survivors of a non-Anglican residential school. The Diocese of Ontario established a diocesan Residential Schools Taskforce.

Suggested Activity

Even if your diocese did not have a residential school, you could, like the Diocese of Montreal, consider opportunities to learn about the journey of healing and transformation that First Nations have been undergoing for years. Some ideas for learning opportunities include:

- Bring in a guest speaker to talk about the residential schools experience of many Aboriginal people (and the impacts on second and third generation descendents of residential schools survivors). The Anglican Healing Fund or Council of Indigenous Peoples may be able to suggest a local or regional speaker (check the resource listings for contact information). Your local Native Friendship Centre or a local First Nations organization may be able to recommend a speaker
- If you cannot locate a speaker to come in person, consider using one of the excellent Anglican videos, which profile Indigenous Anglicans speaking in their own words about the impact of residential schools on their communities. See the **Links** section for more information.

Resources

The **Links** section provides information about book, magazine, video and website resources on residential schools, and contact information for the Anglican Healing Fund.



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LISTENING BEFORE WE SPEAK

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ACTIVITY: Parish Weekly
Lenten Series

PLACE: St. Augustine's parish,
Edmonton

DIOCESE: Edmonton

*"I was struck by how much we
didn't know. I feel like we just
scratched the surface."*

Vestry Member

In January 2001, our vestry was approached by a parishioner who wanted us to send a letter of support and care to the communities of Davis Inlet and Shishatshit in Labrador. In discussion we realized we knew almost nothing about the issues Indigenous people face. So instead of just passing an ill-understood motion and sending a confused letter, we decided to devote our energy to learning more.

In six short weeks we planned an education series using eight of the best local resource people available – six Indigenous and two not. On each of the seven Wednesdays of Lent we gathered for a simple Eucharist followed by exploration of the following topics:

- *An Introduction to the Aboriginal Experience* using *The Seventh Fire* video and study guide, the "Covenant" and "Our Journey of Spiritual Renewal";
- *The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, using "I, Witness," a moving slide show organized in response to the report by feisty First Nations artist Jane Ash Poitras;
- *The Justice System*, with a "You Be the Judge" exercise facilitated by Judge Janet Franklin and Bronwyn Shoush, Aboriginal Justice Initiatives Director with the Department of Justice;
- *Tradition, Culture and Language*, with the Ven. Sydney Black and his wife Melba sharing their experiences of being Indigenous people in a largely white church;
- *Residential Schools*, with Dr. Stan Wilson helping us look at this painful experience;
- *Different Types of Land Claims*, with Prof. James Dempsey to help us look at examples of good and bad faith; and
- *A Reflection on the Church's Role*, with Bishop Victoria Matthews.

"I was struck by how much we didn't



know,” said one vestry member. “I feel like we just scratched the surface.” Attendance ranged from 43 to 68, and evenings ran overtime because people were so engrossed in the discussions. We raised awareness and challenged assumptions in a community where few of us had had contact with First Nations people.

We continued our discussions in 2002

with five sessions on the theme of reconciliation. Esther Wesley from the Healing Fund facilitated one evening, and other sessions focused on compassion; gentleness; reconciliation with the earth; and spirituality. While not as directly focused on Indigenous issues as the 2001 study, it did flow from what we had explored the year before.

For more information, contact:
The Rev. Dan Ash t: 780.466.5532

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Dioceses across the country submitted stories about different types of educational events which parish and diocesan groups had organized to learn more about Aboriginal issues. For instance, Story #15 (“Informative Presentations, Enjoyable Discussion”) gives an example of a weekly learning group in which different parish members researched and made presentations on Aboriginal issues. Story #14 (“Not to Learn About, But to Learn With One Another”) provides an example of an educational trip to an Aboriginal community.

Suggested Activity

There are many opportunities to learn more about Aboriginal peoples and issues generally. Check the **Links** section for books, videos, and websites that provide interesting information about Aboriginal peoples, cultures, and issues in Canada. Consider setting up a church education series like the one in St. Augustine’s story, to which you invite Aboriginal speakers who can provide perspectives on issues as

diverse as cultural renewal, Indigenous spirituality, Aboriginal justice issues, residential schools, the Aboriginal arts, and more. Your local or regional Aboriginal organizations or Friendship Centre could provide suggested speakers, or you could contact the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples or the Indigenous Justice desk at the Anglican Church for ideas (see the **Links** section for contact information). If you cannot find an Aboriginal speaker to come in person, videos are an alternative way to hear Aboriginal people and communities talk about their experiences in their own words. See the **Links** section for video ideas.

Resources

The **Links** section provides information on Anglican and National Film Board videos which can be used as discussion starters. The book *Nation to Nation* (John Bird, Lorraine Land, and Murray MacAdam, editors) is a helpful resource if you are looking for short analysis articles on Aboriginal issues or for firsthand stories from Aboriginal communities about their concerns.



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SPREADING “THE WORD” PROTECTS LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

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ACTIVITY: Translation of the Bible into Inuktitut
PLACE: Various Arctic locations
DIOCESE: The Arctic

The story is told of an early Anglican missionary to the Arctic trying to translate some Bible verses into Inuktitut, the language of the eastern Arctic. Searching for a word to convey joy, he asked his Inuit companions to describe their sled dogs' excitement at feeding time. He duly used the word given, only to discover years later that his translated passage read: "When the disciples saw Jesus, they all wagged their tails."

The Bible has been translated into more than 2,200 languages. Yet it's unlikely that any of the other translation efforts can equal the daunting challenge of matching Scripture's 750,000 different words with their Inuktitut equivalents. The Arctic world is so different from the Middle East, where the Bible stories originated. How do you translate "dove," when the bird is not found in the Arctic? The translators' solution: "dove, like ptarmigan."

In 1978, the Canadian Bible Society's translator Eugene Nida traveled to Baffin Island to recruit translators from among Inuit Anglicans. Most of the region's 17,500 people are Anglican. His eventual team included the Rev. Canon Ben Arreak, the Rev. Joshua Arreak, the Rev. Canon Jonas Allooloo and (now) Bishop Andrew Atagotaaluk, all from the Diocese of the Arctic.

Over the years they met at various locations throughout the diocese, or traveled to the Bible Society's headquarters in Kitchener, Ont. The society covered project costs and the Church supported the work by releasing the translators from some parish duties so they could devote time to translation.

To make sure the translation covered all five Inuktitut dialects, says team leader Canon Arreak, they added footnotes for words that were not the same in all regions. "Translation is hard work."

Twenty-four years later, the monumen-



tal task is nearing completion, with a first draft of the Hebrew scriptures to accompany a New Testament released in 1992. The new Bible will be available in 2005 after final proof reading and preparation of Inuktitut study guides.

The project clearly meets a need among Inuit Anglicans. All 4,000 copies of the first printing of the New Testament sold

out quickly; some people stayed up all night reading it. Already people are asking for copies of the Hebrew scriptures.

Enabling Inuit Anglicans to read the Scriptures in their own language has deepened both the faith and the self-esteem of the Inuit, asserts Canon Arreak; "It's another way to protect our language and culture."

For more information, contact:

Canon Benjamin Arreak t: 819.964.2324
The Canadian Bible Society
t: 519.741.8255

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

The Diocese of Caledonia reports that the Nisga'a parishes in their region have translated the Service of Holy Eucharist into the Nisga'a language, and are hoping to expand and update that translation soon. Indigenous Anglicans from the Naskapi community of Kawawachikamach in the Diocese of Quebec sent in the story of their work with Wycliffe Bible Translators to translate the Bible into Naskapi.

Suggested Activity

The Canadian Bible Society (t: 519.741.8255; w: www.biblesociety.ca) has excellent videos and information about their Bible translation programs which could be used as a discussion starter in a church or diocesan study group session.

Resources

The Links section of this binder includes information about theological and liturgical resources for Indigenous Anglicans. We particularly recommend *A Disciples Prayer Book*, developed by the Native Ministries of the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. and the *Dancing Sun* materials (see the Links section for more information).

In addition, the Anglican Book Centre carries a number of Aboriginal language resources, including *The Book of Common Prayer in the Language of the Cree*, *Psalms and Hymns in the Language of the Cree*, and an Inuktitut Hymn Book. See the Links section for information about these resources.

The Canadian Bible Society has published the New Testament in James Bay Cree, Moose Cree, Mi'kmaq, Algonquin, Plains Cree, and Ojibwe (and are currently working on a Dog Rib New Testament). The Society is also working on an Ojibwe Old Testament and a version of the entire Bible in Mohawk.

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EXAMINING OUR COLONIAL ASSUMPTIONS

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ACTIVITY:
Workshops on colonialism and language
PLACE: Vancouver Island
DIOCESE:
British Columbia

In 2001 two exciting and challenging workshops focused on the language of colonialism, and on how oppression can be part of our everyday lives.

In September, Aboriginal Neighbours hosted a day-long workshop led by Jill Harris from the Penelakut reserve. After watching the Anglican Church video, *The Seventh Fire*, the 24 participants, who were already involved with Aboriginal Neighbours or similar groups, looked at how colonial language has been used in oppression. They “unpacked” the language used in the film by fur traders, Aboriginal people, the Church, and the narrator. Terms like “mainstream church,” “progress,” and “development” were examined and analysed. We are not called to do some-thing “for” aboriginal people, but rather to look at ourselves as church, at how we continue colonial oppression by using this language, and how we can change it by changing the perspective that Christianity is European.

Two months later, Jill Harris and United Church minister Dan Kirkegaard led 40 more participants through another day of workshops, part of the five-year “Pilgrimage to Right Relationships” commitment made by the ecumenical community on Vancouver Island.

Jill Harris looked at how the language of colonialism has changed our interpretation of landscapes. For example, a wetland that is supermarket, school, medicine chest and more for Indigenous people was labelled a “wasteland” by the European colonizers. This helps bring a new perspective to what is happening with land rights negotiations, and in the treaty processes. It also deepens understanding of some of the pain of Aboriginal peoples.



Dan Kirkegaard talked about “resisting the urge to fix while standing in our own integrity.” He said that being true to our own beliefs is important, but that we also need to be in dialogue – whether or not we are in full agreement with what our neighbours are saying. We often only decide we must “fix” a problem when it escalates into violence, he noted, even though we have been content to ignore it until that point.

Neither can those who have had a major role in creating the present problem simply jump in with a solution, assuming it is the correct one. Those who live with the problem every day must be allowed to identify and implement solutions, with our support.

Both workshops were considered highly engaging and thought-provoking.

For more information, contact:
Dan Kirkegaard t: 604.522.6454 or
Jill Harris t: 250.246.9954

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Do you participate in a group which is already active on Aboriginal issues? Why not use one of these resources as a discussion-starter for your group, to reflect on issues of colonialism and stereotyping even within groups sympathetic to Aboriginal concerns?

Resources

In addition to the resources listed in the **Links** section, we suggest two resources which are appropriate for people already involved in relationship-building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities:

- *Becoming an Ally: Breaking the Cycle of Oppression* by Anne Bishop (Halifax: Fernwood, 1995) is a helpful resource for non-Indigenous individuals and groups to help reflect on what it means to truly become an ally to groups facing oppression.
- “Romancing the Other in Aboriginal Support Work,” a chapter by Jennifer Barron in the book *Nation to Nation: Aboriginal Sovereignty and the Future of Canada*, edited by John Bird, Lorraine Land, and Murray MacAdam (Toronto: Irwin, 2002), provides an excellent analysis of the hazards of stereotyping, even amongst sympathetic non-Indigenous groups who support Aboriginal concerns.

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A MAJOR STEP IN THE DIRECTION OF HEALING

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ACTIVITY: Diocesan Sacred Circle Gathering

PLACE: Peguis First Nation, Manitoba

DIOCESE: Rupert's Land

They came, from all over the diocese, 200 of them, to Peguis First Nation west of Lake Winnipeg. They shared stories, they cried, they laughed, and at the end of the day many were eager for more.

A Sacred Circle is a spiritual gathering of First Nations people to share stories, teachings, prayers, and healing. They are a part of our Aboriginal traditions, now being reborn within the Anglican Church through the National Sacred Circles. Our theme for this diocese's first Sacred Circle, on June 22, 2002, was "Toward Healing and Reconciliation," and before the day was over our diocese had taken a major step in that direction.

The Sacred Circle began under threat of thunderstorms with traditional teachings about the circle, the four directions, and community. Bishop Donald Phillips added his prayers, and drummers and singers offered a prayer song.

The rain let up in time to go outdoors for the Blanket Exercise, a graphic tool for experiencing a sense of the history of the First Nations after the arrival of the Europeans. As Indigenous people walked on outspread blankets, the coverings were folded from beneath them, representing the seizure of lands by government and settlers. Eventually, many participants were crammed onto the small remaining patches of blankets.

After the people of Peguis had presented their history in dramatic form, the bishop offered an apology to the Indigenous people of the diocese, on behalf of the gathering. There followed a traditional teaching about food, and participants regrouped under overcast skies for a major feast.

After lunch, participants learned about sharing circles by breaking into small groups to talk about the events of the day and reflect on healing. Our Sacred Circle was also intergenerational – the children



had collected rocks for the sharing circles, and also printed their hand prints on an altar frontal and stole for the bishop. By the closing eucharist, the clouds had broken and the sun was shining.

Earlier in the day, members of the Circle had received slips of paper to write down whatever burdens or cares were on their hearts. During confession, the slips were collected and burned in a sacred fire. In his sermon, Bishop Donald reflected on the importance of listening in the healing journey.

After Communion, many came forward for prayers of healing and reconciliation. We ended the day with singing and drumming.

For more information contact:
Rev. Canon Murray Still t: 204.488.7851

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Some dioceses sent stories of Sacred Circles, or other gatherings which brought people together for prayer and healing (such as the Gospel Jamborees in the Diocese of Keewatin, see story #16, "Experiencing the Healing Power of Music and Prayer"). Other dioceses, such as Nova Scotia/ PEI sent in stories about their reports to their diocese (for instance, through diocesan newspapers) on national Sacred Circles.

Resources

There are several excellent Anglican videos documenting sacred gatherings of Indigenous Anglicans for prayer and healing. See particularly *Walking a New Vision: the Fourth Sacred Circle*, which documents the national Anglican Indigenous Sacred Circle gathering in 2000 in Port Elgin (Diocese of Huron). See the **Links** section for more details.

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MAKING A PLACE FOR FIRST NATIONS VOICES

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ACTIVITY: Diocesan Indigenous Council
PLACE & DIOCESE: Moosonee

About 60 percent of the members of the Diocese of Moosonee are Indigenous people, mainly Cree with some Oji-Cree and Ojibway. But until recently only two members of the diocesan executive were First Nations people. We didn't have a real voice in the decision-making of the diocese – and we wanted one.

The request to form a diocesan council of Indigenous People first came up at Diocesan Synod. Bishop Caleb Lawrence supported it, as did the national Anglican Council of Indigenous People. So the two Indigenous members of the diocesan executive began meeting together before executive meetings, to discuss issues in the First Nations communities. But it still wasn't right; they were not really speaking on behalf of all Indigenous people. So we decided each of the 10 First Nations parishes in James Bay Deanery would choose their own representative.

We usually gather along with the deanery meetings, to keep the costs down, and maybe once before a diocesan executive meeting, when there are issues on the executive agenda we particularly want to address. We still don't have people from the western part of the diocese, Hornepayne and Ogoki Post, because of distances. Maybe we could include a representative from each of the other two deaneries, which both have Indigenous people in their congregations.

We've also begun choosing two non-Aboriginal people to sit with us. We live with these people in the diocese and we need to work with them; we need to create bridges. Originally we considered the non-Aboriginal people as partners. Now we consider them full members.

If church people from down south are traveling in the area, we may also ask them to sit with us as partners.

Our next project is to get more youth



representation on the council, and to begin to address youth issues in our communities. We already have a Youth Ministry Task Group.

For us the Diocesan Council of Indigenous People helps bring in issues

and concerns from the national Anglican Council of Indigenous People, and from General Synod, and gives us a structure through which we can express our local needs and expectations of the diocese. Our voices have been integrated into the larger direction-setting structure.

For more information, contact:
Grace Delaney, Moose Factory
t: 705.658.4811
Cliff Dee, Kashechewan
t: 705.275.4530
Bishop Caleb Lawrence
t: 705.360.1129

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

A number of dioceses now have Indigenous Councils (including Algoma, Athabasca, Caledonia, Huron, and Rupert's Land) which participate in decision-making or advising about issues of particular concern to Indigenous Anglicans. (See also the *Self Determination* section, A5).

Suggested Activity

Think of the various church forums in which you participate – such as your parish council, a diocesan council or committee, or a national board or committee you sit on. Do these forums allow the opportunity for Aboriginal

people to participate in advising and decision-making? If there are opportunities for participation, to what degree are they meaningful (in other words, to what degree do the contributions and needs of Aboriginal People actually result in changes or different decisions?)

Resources

The Anglican Church, and the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, have developed a number of resources on Indigenous Anglican self-determination. The 1994 Covenant made by Indigenous Anglicans was a critical step in the journey towards an Indigenous Anglican Church in Canada (see the reprint of the *Covenant* at A21). There are a number of books, videos, and other materials and contacts listed in the **Links** section of the binder. We particularly recommend the Anglican videos, *The Healing Circle*, *The Journey Begins With a Dream* and *The Seventh Fire: First Peoples and the Anglican Church*.

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A SMALL PART IN A LABOUR OF LOVE

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ACTIVITY: Fundraising to help a community in crisis

PLACE: Vancouver Island

DIOCESE: British Columbia

“Here is an opportunity for us to show our concern, joining our hands with our Aboriginal neighbours and fellow Anglicans in a practical partnership,” said Mavis Gillie when she heard about the devastating loss faced by Namgis First Nation in Alert Bay, BC. The Big House of this predominantly Anglican community was destroyed by fire in August 1997.

The Anglican Church established missions in Alert Bay, Fort Rupert, and Kingcome Inlet more than a century ago. But long-standing controversies over land had driven a wedge between the Church and the people, as had the Church’s role in running St. Michael’s Residential School in Alert Bay.

The community’s Big House, built in the 1960s, was a major component in the revival of Kwakiutl culture and language. Now an arsonist had burned it to the ground, also destroying the irreplaceable artistic and cultural treasures of a generation of local carvers and painters.

“I am heartbroken,” said one elder. “All the work our old people put into it. It was a place where we gathered to honour each other. It was our pride and joy. Will it be rebuilt?”

“Yes!” came the resounding answer from the Kwakiutl people of Alert Bay and other communities. Although the loss was partly covered by insurance, the people still needed to raise \$400,000 to complete reconstruction.

Hailing it as “an opportunity for every Anglican to be part of this process,” Mavis Gillie and the Aboriginal Neighbours group she chaired (see Story #1, “Aboriginal Neighbours”) sent a letter to all parishes, asking them to respond “as you would if you had suffered such a loss.” The *Diocesan Post* also ran an article.

Throughout the diocese, people came



together to help. Some sent individual donations, others organized salmon bakes and hymn sings. They raised over \$12,000 for their neighbours in Alert Bay.

In a letter published in the *Diocesan Post*, Aboriginal Neighbours wrote: "We are also pleased to pass on to you that the foundations for the new Big House have been laid, the front posts have been carved, and the main beams are now being milled. What a thrill it will be when the beams are raised and the construction is finally completed. It will have been a labour of love, a labour in which Anglicans from the Diocese of British Columbia have played a small but important part."

For more information, contact
Aboriginal Neighbours, Diocese of British Columbia
Mavis Gillie t: 250.479.6866
or Gloria Cope t: 250.758.3296
e: ralglo@island.net

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Several dioceses sent stories of diocesan efforts to directly support Aboriginal communities facing a crisis. For instance, several dioceses (including Edmonton, Ottawa, and Rupert's Land) spoke of their support for urban Aboriginal agencies and programs that provide shelter and support to Aboriginal people facing homelessness or social problems.

Suggested Activity

Are there local or regional agencies (including non-Anglican agencies) that provide supports for Aboriginal peoples and communities in crisis? For instance, many Canadian cities have excellent Aboriginal-run programs that deal with Aboriginal homelessness, addictions, and other crisis needs. Is there one in your region that could be supported by your diocese or parish?

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THE HOUSE OF GOD IS INUIT, TOO

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ACTIVITY: A building that reflects Indigenous culture
PLACE: St. Jude's Cathedral, Iqaluit, Nunavut
DIOCESE: Arctic

One glance at St. Jude's Cathedral in Iqaluit demolishes the hoary myth that Canada's Anglican Church is still a pale reflection of English Anglicanism. Instead of being a traditional stone cathedral with soaring spire, St. Jude's is shaped like an igloo.

Nor do the Inuit influences end there. Inside, the lectern, pulpit and communion rails are all shaped like *qamitiqs* (the Inuit sleds pulled by dog-teams). Wall hangings depict Inuit people and their activities.

St. Jude's is a church that reflects and grows out of the values of the Inuit people in the eastern Arctic, says Bishop Chris Williams, who has spent his entire 42-year ministry in the North. "It's their church and they have always wanted to express themselves through the decorations of the church. The people themselves have always respected the fact that there's many aspects that reflect their own tradition."

The saga of St. Jude's began in the 1960s, when the Anglican population outgrew the existing building. By then the Inuit, who comprised the large majority of local Anglicans, had become active in church decision-making. An igloo-shaped church at first seemed too costly, until enthusiastic Inuit Anglicans collected over \$3,000, and offered to do the hard building work alongside a handful of paid workers, led by master carpenter Peter Markosie. "This may not be what the white men like, but it is the Eskimo's Church," he said.

As consecration day approached in 1972, these dedicated Anglicans went all-out to ensure the cathedral was ready. They would come home from their day jobs as carpenters or in other trades, eat supper, then work at the construction site until midnight. Non-native Anglicans also pitched in.

"I know there was a lot of volunteer labour because I once was passing through



Iqaluit and spent an evening painting the walls,” recalls Bishop Williams with a chuckle.

News of the unique cathedral spread. In 1994, Queen Elizabeth attended a service there. Bishop Williams hailed Markosie from the choir loft where he’d been singing, so he could come down and meet the Queen. “It was serendipitous because he died of a heart attack a couple of months later,” recalls the Bishop.

St. Jude’s reflects its Inuit roots in other ways. Some clergy now wear a church robe cut to resemble a parka. Services are held in both Inuktitut and English. And contrary to Peter Markosie’s fears, non-native Anglicans are very fond of their church.

For more information, contact
St. Jude’s Anglican Church, Iqaluit
t: 807.979.5595
e: stjude@nunanet.com

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

The beautiful traditional west coast formline art and button blankets of the Haida, Tsimshian, Nisga’a, and Gitksan peoples are prevalent in the worship spaces and church robes in Indigenous Anglican parishes in those communities, reports the Diocese of Caledonia.

Resources

In recent years, some excellent books have been published, exploring the relationship between Aboriginal cultures and Christianity. We particularly recommend *The First Peoples Journal*, a new journal published by the Indigenous Theological Training Institute, and *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada*. See the **Links** section for more information.

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CONNECTING ACROSS CULTURES AND PARISHES

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ACTIVITY: Friendship project
PLACE: Church of the Redeemer,
Toronto, and Six Nations Reserve
DIOCESES: Toronto and Huron

Like the rest of the Anglican Church, the New England Company, founded by the 17th-century English ruler, Oliver Cromwell to “bring Jesus to the Indians,” has undergone a profound change in attitude. Today, it sees its mission as supporting Aboriginal efforts to improve their lives.

So when Toronto Anglican Penelope Holton learned that her brother Bill Rathbone, a member of New England’s board of directors, was coming from England to visit First Nations communities, her ears pricked up. “I had lived in Canada for 34 years but had little knowledge or experience of Native peoples,” she says.

Penelope accompanied Bill to the Ontario First Nations of Tyendinaga and Six Nations. There members told her of their continuing pain over residential schools experiences, and frustration in seeking reconciliation with the Diocese of Huron, which is facing quite a few lawsuits over the issue.

“We heard that they wanted to go to parish communities and tell their story, but few parishes had responded to the offer,” says Penelope.

That face-to-face encounter, along with her anger at how band members had been treated, inspired Penelope to act. As a member of the Christian Education Committee at Toronto’s Church of the Redeemer, she saw an opportunity for Six Nations members to share their experiences with her parish. Archdeacon Jim Boyles had preached at Redeemer about residential schools issues, so the congregation already had some background.

Penelope and the committee invited two active Anglicans from Six Nations, Nina Burnham and Leona Moses, to visit Redeemer last April. After lunch, they spoke to a group of 20 about their



community's concerns – and displayed some of the band members' fine pottery.

Next, 10 Redeemer members spent a Saturday at Six Nations. Besides being fascinated by the band's history at the Woodlands Cultural Centre, they visited the community's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks, and its churches. There was plenty of time to ask questions.

"I was so pleased when Penelope and her brother came into my home," says

Nina. "It's important to let people know how we Native People feel."

"Now we hope to find ways to continue the friendship with Six Nations," adds Penelope. They are discussing more visits, as well as political involvement, which may include Redeemer members writing letters to their MPs in response to concerns by Six Nations members about the federal overhaul of the Indian Act.

For more information contact

The Church of the Redeemer

t: 416.922.4948

e: redeemer@onramp.ca

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Many dioceses sent stories of efforts to create partnerships, friendships, and exchanges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglican groups. The Diocese of Montreal passed a resolution asking all non-Indigenous parishes to consider entering a partnership with an Indigenous parish. The Diocese of Moosonee told the stories of combined Christmas choirs, an annual ecumenical unity service and other events that brought Indigenous and non-Indigenous parishes together. The Diocese of Nova Scotia reported on an exchange which sent three non-Indigenous youth to events and meetings with Indigenous youth. St. John's Cathedral in the Diocese of Saskatoon

told of their partnership and participation with the Key Reserve Anglican parish and its efforts to renovate and restore one of the oldest Aboriginal churches in Saskatchewan. The Diocese of Ottawa reported on a partnership with the Diocese of Caledonia that is currently resulting in a youth exchange between non-Indigenous and Indigenous youth in the two regions.

Suggested Activity

Does your parish have a cross-cultural partner parish in Canada? A partnership could include visits to one another's communities, opportunities to share stories of experiences in the church and society, an annual service or celebration together, or even a one-time visit. If you would be interested in establishing such a partnership and would like suggestions about how to proceed and who to approach, contact the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples t: 416.924.9199 x 626.

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HOW WE FIND HEALING IN SHARED REMEMBRANCE

A NEW AGAPE



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ACTIVITY: Annual Cemetery Memorial Service
DIOCESE: Moosonee

Every summer, usually around the first Sunday in August, they come. They come by plane from up the west coast of James Bay. Many on the east side of the Bay in Quebec take a bus down to Cochrane, then the train to Moosonee. Cree families from both coasts make the journey to Moose Factory at the southern tip of the Bay to participate in a special service.

For years Moose Factory had the only hospital in the region, as well as the only residential school, the Anglican-run Moose Fort school, later renamed Horden Hall after Bishop Horden. All too many people who made that journey down the bay, for treatment in the hospital or to attend the school, for one reason or another never returned. They are buried in the cemetery behind St. Thomas Anglican Church on Moose Factory Island, where the Moose River empties into the southwest corner of the Bay.

We have an outdoor service in the cemetery. Some bring lawn chairs; others stand or sit on the grass, among the grave markers. We sing hymns that relate to the themes of mourning, praising, and rejoicing. We feel connected to all the saints who have gone before us.

As many as 400 people attend, mostly Cree, although there are some non-Aboriginal participants as well. Sometimes we have a speaker from out of town; last year it was our bishop, Caleb Lawrence.

The service draws many people of all denominations who don't normally come to church, but want to participate in memory of family members buried here. Historically, the Anglican church has offered the service for the community, following Anglican liturgical patterns, but that is gradually opening up too. Last year we had a singer from the Baptist Church in Waskaganish, Quebec. And while we have yet to integrate traditional Cree worship



elements, that's a step we hope to take soon.

The annual cemetery service is a time for many people to make a special journey to the resting place of their loved ones. It

is a time to visit family, often their only opportunity to get together. It is a healing time that can be sad, but that can also be joyful.

For more information contact:
Grace Delaney, Moose Factory
t: 705.658.4811
Cliff Dee, Kashechewan
t: 705-275.4530

Suggested Activity

"Historical reparation" is one of the goals of the *New Agape* commitment passed by General Synod in 2001. The *New Agape* (reproduced in this binder) suggests that a strategy for historical reparation is *memorialization*, or remembering those who have gone before. The cemetery services in the Cree community of Moosonee are one way for Aboriginal communities to do that. Other Aboriginal cultures do not traditionally visit grave sites or only visit at certain times of the year, but memorialize ancestors in other ways through prayer and ritual (and today, in worship).

Some ideas, to memorialize those who have gone before us, include using Anglican book and video resources for discussion (see below). Another way to memorialize is through worship. The

Worship section includes a suggested worship outline for the *New Agape* goal of historical reparation. It could be used in a church service, prayer or Bible study group, or in other settings. A question for reflection might be, *What are the ways in which you remember, through worship and ritual, your ancestors, their faith and culture?*

Resources

The *New Agape* goal of Historical Reparation includes ways to address the consequences of colonialism and the assimilation experience in symbolic and ceremonial ways. See the **New Agape: Historical Reparation** section. Also, see the **Worship** section for suggested worship and liturgy ideas. Helpful Anglican book and video resources include the book, *Beyond Traplines: Does the Church Really Care* and the various Anglican videos which document the history of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, the Anglican residential schools experience, and the Sacred Circles of the past decade. See the **Links** section for more information.



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NOT TO LEARN ABOUT, BUT TO LEARN WITH ONE ANOTHER

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ACTIVITY: Visiting a First Nations Community
PLACE: Chapel Island Mi'kmaq community, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia
DIOCESE: Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

The Mi'kmaq (pronoun-ced *mig-maw*) of Chapel Island First Nation felt like they had already been studied to death. They didn't want another group of students and professors descending on them, even if we were part of a college seminar (from the Atlantic School of Theology) visiting Cape Breton to learn what theological education should mean in our own geographic and political context. As one elder explained it to me: "You have taken the land, you have taken everything; you can't have this too, our cultural knowledge."

But when we clarified the purpose of our visit – our genuine interest to learn, not "about" them, but "from" them, as apprentices – they finally agreed to a short visit. They even included a brief meeting with the chief, Lindsay Marshall. He had 15 minutes, they said, before he was scheduled to leave the community for another meeting.

But when we asked Chief Marshall where his people got the strength to survive, the 15 minutes turned into a couple of hours in a big circle in the band hall, with the students listening intently. Then they brought out tea and food for us, and took us on a tour of the whole reserve. Out on the streets we encountered some young Mi'kmaq people who talked about their hostility towards the Church. But some of our students who came from fishing communities in Newfoundland also found they shared common experiences with the Indigenous fishers of Chapel Island. All in all it turned out to be one of the highlights of our journey to Cape Breton Island.

Chapel Island community leaders who had so generously given of their time asked that this not be a one-time effort, but become the basis of a new relationship. They asked us to return.



For more information contact
Canon Dr. Sue Moxley t: 902.454.0207
e: smoxley@hfx.andara.com

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

One way of visiting between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities is through exchange and partnership programs. The Dioceses of Ottawa and Caledonia have developed one such partnership, enabling them to encourage exchanges between their communities. The Church of the Redeemer in the Diocese of Toronto shared another story of an exchange between their community and Indigenous Anglicans at Six Nations (see story #12, "Connecting Across Cultures and Parishes").

Suggested Activity

As the writer of this story says, Aboriginal communities can feel visited and studied "to death," with many visitors more interested in learning "about" rather than

"from" Aboriginal communities. It is far better to learn from Indigenous communities themselves about their experiences and concerns than through television or the mainstream media. If you belong to a non-Indigenous parish, think about organizing a visit to an Aboriginal community, and how to make sure the visit is one where you can learn "from" rather than "about" your Aboriginal neighbours.

If you belong to an Indigenous parish, think about ways in which you create an opportunity that encourages visiting non-Indigenous Anglicans to really listen to your story, and before a visit, reflect on what aspects of your culture and experience you are comfortable sharing and what you are not.

Resources

The **Links** section of the binder recommends a video about Mi'kmaq culture: *Songs of the Eskasoni*. Contact the NFB (1-800-267-7710 or www.nfb.ca) for this and other excellent films on different Aboriginal cultures in Canada.

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INFORMATIVE PRESENTATIONS, ENJOYABLE DISCUSSIONS

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ACTIVITY: Monthly First Nations Learning Group

PLACE: St. Simon's parish,
Oakville, Ontario

DIOCESE: Niagara

After Rev. Laverne Jacobs, an Anishinabe Anglican priest from Walpole Island in southwestern Ontario, came to talk at church about First Nations Spirituality, a few of us decided to form an ongoing discussion group. We wanted to provide a shared forum for anyone interested. We usually meet one evening a month, from 7:30 to 9, and focus on the history, issues, and spirituality of First Nations people in Canada.

We began by brainstorming topics. The list included:

- pre-European Aboriginal life and history
- treaties
- the Indian Act
- west coast First Nations experience (due to availability of Bishop John Hannen as guest speaker)
- personal stories from First Nations individuals
- Native spirituality
- reserves/Aboriginal life and social issues today
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

Each meeting focuses on one of the topics, with a different member acting as discussion leader. The leader will do enough research to give us some description and background for the topic. Ellie Johnson of Church House provided a helpful list of people and information (see the **Links** section of this binder).

After the presentation we share observations and opinions. We also share related information any of us has come across in the media, at work, or elsewhere. Members often email news items to one another, or bring photocopies of articles to the gatherings.

The meetings are announced in the parish calendar and Sunday bulletins, and are open to anyone who is interested in attending. Overall attendance has been encouraging and ongoing. It suggests people are enjoying themselves, and that they are giving and receiving enough that they want to continue attending. We take breaks during the year (summer, Lent, etc.) to allow people time for other activities.

SAMPLE SESSION OUTLINE

Treaties

- Origin/purpose
- pre-1763
- Royal Proclamation of 1763
- British North America Act of 1867
- Western Treaties 1 to 11
 - #6: missing "Medicine Chest" clause
 - #7: 1877; #11: 1921
- Inuit

Treaty #7 in Detail

- Historical context/setting
- Tribes involved
- What was relinquished by First Nations?
- What did the treaty provide in return – land, money, clothing, weapons, education, livestock, farm implements, seeds?
- Who signed?
- Depth of understanding?
- Situation/setting as described by Dempsey
- Further discussion:
 - pros and cons of the treaties
 - implications for today and the future



For more information, contact:
St. Simon's Anglican Church, Oakville
t: 905.845.8351

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Many dioceses sent stories about educational events around Aboriginal issues. The Diocese of Edmonton reported on Aboriginal rights talks at local parishes, and on a Lenten series (see story #5, "Listening Before We Speak"). St. John's Cathedral in Saskatoon shared the story of a series on Aboriginal issues, and an event where a youth group from a local Aboriginal high school presented a drama. Other dioceses sent stories which took the form of a visit to a First Nations community. Some dioceses also sent stories that happened on particular Aboriginal justice issues, such as information meetings about the BC Treaty Referendum organized in the Dioceses of Kootenay, New Westminster, and British Columbia.

Suggested Activity

There are many possibilities for organizing an educational forum on Aboriginal issues. You could organize a once-per-month session, like St. Simon's in this story, where one parish member took responsibility for researching and presenting on a topic once a month. You could organize a Lenten or church study group series, over a series of Sundays or weekday evenings. Or you could bring in several Aboriginal guest speakers to talk about their communities, cultures, and concerns. If you are organizing such an event, try to have an Indigenous speaker or speakers. If you can, contact local and regional Aboriginal organizations, including Native Friendship Centres, for suggested speakers; or contact the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples for ideas:

(416) 924-9199 ext. 626. If you can't arrange to have a speaker come in person, another good way of hearing Indigenous peoples' stories and concerns from Indigenous peoples themselves is through videos or internet sites (see below).

Resources

A good book giving an overview of Aboriginal history in Canada is *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*, (3rd edition) by Olive Dickason, or *I Have Lived Here Since the World Began: An Illustrated History of Canada's Native Peoples* by Arthur J. Ray. A book which combines short analysis pieces on Aboriginal issues with first-hand accounts by Aboriginal peoples of their self-determination struggles, and pieces by non-Aboriginal people reflecting on what it means to walk in solidarity with Aboriginal peoples, is *Nation to Nation: Aboriginal Sovereignty and the Future of Canada*, edited by John Bird, Lorraine Land, and Murray MacAdam. See "READ" in the **Links** section for more details.

The National Film Board is a great resource for videos with individual Aboriginal communities' stories. See "WATCH" in the **Links** section for suggested videos and NFB contact information.

The internet is becoming an interesting source of information with many web sites developed by Aboriginal groups themselves to tell their stories, share their concerns, and provide information about their communities. One of our favourite sites is "Bill's Aboriginal Links," which provides links to hundreds of Aboriginal organizations, communities, and groups working with Aboriginal peoples: www.bloorstreet.com/300block/aborl.htm

For more internet ideas, see "LOG ON" in the **Links** section of the binder.



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EXPERIENCING THE HEALING POWER OF MUSIC AND PRAYER

A NEW AGAPE



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ACTIVITY: Annual Gospel Jamboree
LOCATION: Winnipeg
DIOCESE: Keewatin

Winnipeg is not in the Diocese of Keewatin. But it is the nearest major urban centre and a regional transportation hub where the people of Keewatin can most easily gather. That's why Winnipeg has become the venue for twice-yearly "Gospel Jamborees" that have grown out of the Sacred Walk for Healing that Keewatin's then-Bishop Gordon Beardy undertook in the late 1990s (see story #17 "A Bishop Walks the Talk").

Gospel Jamborees are already something of a tradition among Christians of many denominations in First Nations communities across the country. They are informal events, requiring only a place to hold them, and willing participants to join together to sing and play music, and share faith stories and preaching.

Bishop Beardy, himself a survivor of the residential school system and the first Indigenous person to be elected a diocesan bishop, decided in 1997 to walk across his diocese in support of healing and reconciliation. In each community people gathered in the parish or community hall for a Gospel Jamboree. At those gatherings, many people came forward to talk about their abuse experiences, some for the first time ever.

Ever since the bishop began his walk, twice-yearly, diocesan-wide events have been held in Winnipeg. They are uplifting and joyous occasions where friends can meet again, and new friends are made. The events are aired live on Wawatay radio and Bell Express-Vu, and each year the diocese produces a "Trail of Hope" CD from recordings made at the Jamborees.

All proceeds from sale of the recordings go to the Sacred Walk Healing Fund, also established to handle money raised through the walk. The fund:



- provides activities and initiatives to address the needs and aspirations of victims of abuse, to help them better their lives
- supports community-based projects for healing for abuse victims and their families
- creates positive changes in the community and family

- builds new strength and activism at the community level regarding the problems of abuse and violence

The Sacred Walk for Healing fund has helped many individuals and communities. For example, it supported a Catechists School and a gathering at Split Lake to help youth and elders bridge differences.

For more information contact:
 Rev. Larry Beardy or Elizabeth Beardy
 t: 204.342.2247
 e: lijbeardy@hotmail.com

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Many dioceses sent stories of worship gatherings which brought Indigenous and/or non-Indigenous Anglicans to worship together. Some dioceses, such as Caledonia and Athabasca, told the story of how Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglican parishes share in one another's worship services. The Diocese of Moosonee shared the story of a diocesan-wide gathering where Anglicans came together to share the journey of faith.

Suggested Activity

Is there a way that your parish can come together to reflect on the meaning of the *New Agape* in the context of worship? Or

an opportunity for parishes in your diocese to organize a worship gathering together, with prayer and song? Perhaps such an event could be organized as a fundraiser for the Anglican Healing Fund. See the **Worship** section for ideas about appropriate hymns, songs, prayers, and reflections.

Resources

See the **Worship** section, as well the theological and liturgical resources in the **Links** section of the binder. If you would like more information about healing activities that could be assisted by funds raised through a music and prayer gathering, check out the projects funded by the Anglican Healing Fund: <http://www.anglican.ca/ministry/rs/healing/> or the Primates World Relief and Development Fund, which assists Indigenous communities around the world www.pwrdf.org.



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A BISHOP WALKS THE TALK

A NEW AGAPE



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ACTIVITY: Sacred Walk
for Healing

LOCATION: northwestern Ontario,
northern Manitoba

DIOCESE: Keewatin

“If I had heard one more story of abuse and done nothing, it would have been wrong. This is something we all can do, everyone together.”

Bishop Gordon Beardy

In 1997, then-Bishop Gordon Beardy of Keewatin – the Church’s first Aboriginal diocesan bishop – walked 3,000 km from remote Sachigo Lake First Nation in northwestern Ontario over winter roads, skidoo trails, and major highways to the Cree community of Bird in northern Manitoba. He was accompanied for varying stretches by supporters from 25 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities throughout the region.

Bishop Beardy, himself a survivor of the residential school system, undertook the walk as a spiritual and communal ministry of solidarity with survivors of abuse. His aim was to raise awareness of his people’s suffering due to residential schools, and the continuing abuse; to encourage them in their own healing processes; and to raise money for healing. When the bishop arrived in a community, people would gather in the parish or community hall to sing gospel songs, share stories of their faith journeys, and listen to Bishop Beardy speak about his walk (see story #16, “Experiencing the Healing Power of Music and Prayer”). Many came forward to talk about the trauma of their residential schools experiences, some for the very first time. Priests and other trained counselors were always on hand for those who needed more acute help.

The next year, Bishop Beardy took the concept beyond his diocese and gave it a political twist when he walked from Lac Seul, northwestern Ontario, to Ottawa to raise the profile of the issue in the wider society, and to bring his concerns before then-Indian Affairs Minister Jane Stewart. He also met with Nelson Mandela.

“This experience of walking together and sharing the laughter and the fatigue and the fellowship has made me feel as if there is hope again,” said a residential school survivor, one of many who joined the bishop during his walk. “I want us to



work together in our communities to make things better. Now I believe we can do it.”

Bishop Beardy’s walk was a down-to-earth response to suffering and a powerful example of visionary leadership that

had a profound effect on him as well as on the communities through which he journeyed. The walk also raised money for Keewatin Diocese’s Sacred Healing Fund.

For more information contact:
Rev. Larry Barry or Elizabeth Beardy
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e: lijbeardy@hotmail.com

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Dioceses reported on different ways in which parish and diocesan groups were finding ways to support residential schools healing. For instance, the Diocese of Rupert’s Land helped to organize a Healing Day at the Forks, a popular outdoor gathering place in downtown Winnipeg. The Diocese of Montreal reported on its support for Waskesun House, an agency that works with residential schools survivors. Some dioceses, such as Nova Scotia/PEI and Ontario set up residential schools working groups or task forces to assist the diocese in its response.

Suggested Activity

There are many creative ways to raise awareness and funds for residential schools healing. Your parish supports the Healing Fund through Anglican Appeal. There are also other opportunities when you can tie Healing Fund support to church education and information programs on residential schools. For instance, some congregations take a special collection for the Healing Fund each year when they commemorate National Aboriginal Day (June 21). Other possibilities may be holding an event with a guest speaker or guest music, to raise both awareness and funding for healing.

Resources

See the **Links** section for ideas about appropriate books, videos and other resources on residential schools.

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IN THE CIRCLE, TALKING CAN BE HEALING

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ACTIVITY: Cross-cultural Talking
Circles

PLACE: Gold River, Victoria and
Nanaimo, B.C.

DIOCESE: British Columbia

In the right circumstances, talking circles can and do become healing circles. Three were held recently with the help of B.C. Diocese's Aboriginal Neighbours group.

The first took place at St. Peter and St. Paul in Gold River, on Aboriginal Day, 2000. "I decided to organize the event when I realized many of the First Nations people living on the reserve just outside of town had attended residential school," says the Rev. Karen Knaus Fast. "With the support of Aboriginal Neighbours (see story #1, "Aboriginal Neighbours"), I got in touch with a local Indigenous teacher about having a sharing circle. She contacted her people, the Mowachaht/Muchalaht of the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation.

"After we advertised in the community, 18 people came together, eight of them Indigenous. We made a circle of chairs in our sanctuary, and opened with prayers led by me and by the First Nations participants in their own language. Then they spoke, one by one and sometimes at great length, of their experience – shame, punishment, fear, hate, self-hate, and so on – until we had heard all they wanted to say. It was hard work for them. Their previous healing work made it possible for them to meet with us. Healing did happen: we listened, and the First Nations people were validated. We had our picture taken for the newspapers. All smiles."

St. John the Divine in Victoria hosted several similar talking circles that also generated awareness of the terrible impact of residential schools. Aboriginal Neighbours also helped the Provincial Residential Schools Project (now the Indian Residential School Survivors Society) to facilitate ecumenical healing/listening circles in Nanaimo and Victoria. It was the first time some of the First Nations people there had shared their

stories of abuse and pain.

Aboriginal Neighbours grew out of a 1996 British Columbia Diocesan Synod resolution to educate and mend relationships between cultures. The 15-member group also publishes regularly in the *Diocesan Post* and helps raise awareness around issues like the 2002 referendum.

For more information contact:

Canon Harold Munn t: 250.383.7169
e: harold.munn@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca
Rev. Karen Knaus Fast t: 250.383.7169
e: karen.fast@stjohnthedivine.bc.ca

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

A number of dioceses, including Rupert's Land and Huron, sent stories of talking circles or sacred circles which brought together Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans to share their stories. Others sent stories of other forums which brought together Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and which became opportunities for healing, such as shared worship services (Athabasca, Caledonia, and Moosonee), story telling evenings (Huron), and inter-community exchanges and visits (Nova Scotia/PEI, Toronto, and Huron).

Suggested Activity

If you are planning a sacred circle, Harold Munn suggests, the non-Aboriginal group needs to develop trust with the Aboriginal community first. We would add some additional suggestions: try to collaborate as much as possible with local Aboriginal groups and organizations in planning and facilitating the circle process. Particularly, try to find ways to involve Aboriginal elders in the leadership of the circle gathering. If the circle discussion topic is particularly volatile (or in other circumstances where it is possible) ask an elder to start the circle with appropriate ceremonies and comments. Try to create a respectful, non-judgmental, and sacred space. Consider including time for informal fellowship, singing, and play.

Resources

A good video story of a sacred circle which brought Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans together is *Walking a New Vision: The Fourth Sacred Circle*, which documents the sacred circle gathering that took place in Port Elgin in the Diocese of Huron. See the **Links** section for more information.

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ALL ABOARD THE BLANKET TRAIN

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ACTIVITY: Aboriginal and Church Activists Bring Their Concerns to Ottawa
PLACE & DIOCESE: All dioceses

On June 21, 2001, the Aboriginal Rights Coalition (ARC), the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI), now both part of Kairos, and community activists from across the country came together at the Supreme Court of Canada to symbolically reverse the process of dispossessing aboriginal peoples from the land. In a twist on the “blanket exercise,” (being used in communities across the country) which dramatizes the forced separation of Aboriginal peoples from their home through the folding up of blankets, symbolizing the seizure of their lands, we rolled out blankets, symbolizing our commitment to restoring right relations with Aboriginal peoples.

The blanket train was part of a Jubilee campaign to encourage the federal government to establish an independent commission to implement Aboriginal land, treaty, and inherent rights. In addition to the blanket exercises and the blanket train, thousands of Canadians signed petitions in support of such a commission.

Anglican communities across the country participated in the blanket train, gathering blankets, holding blanket train events, organizing rallies when the train rumbled through their communities on its way across the country. Some Anglicans even hopped the train for parts of the trip. As Aboriginal rights supporters rallied at the Supreme Court, coming from the North, South, East, and West, we were welcomed by a local representative on behalf of the Algonquian Nation. Aboriginal and Church activists from across Canada called on the Canadian government to establish the new commission.

The gathering was also blessed by the presence of a Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund delegation visiting from the Philippines. Joan Carling, Secretary-General of the Cordillera People’s Alliance, offered a solidarity



message, helping all those gathered to make a connection between the Canadian and global contexts, as well as to see our struggle against the oppression of indigenous peoples as part of a worldwide struggle against social, economic, and cultural domination.

For more information contact:

The Indigenous Justice Desk of the Anglican Church:

Chris Hiller (on maternity leave until January 2003) t: 416.924.9199 x 239

Millie Poplar (until January 2003)

t: 613.235.7734

NEW AGAPE SIGHTINGS

Many dioceses sent stories of their participation in the blanket train. The Diocese of Rupert's Land, for instance, shared the story of a special event they organized at the Forks in downtown Winnipeg, to meet the train and deliver blankets.

Suggested Activity

Is there a regional ecumenical or Aboriginal rights support group near you, working on Indigenous rights issues, which your parish or diocese could support? Check the **Links** section for more information.

Resources

See the **Links** sections for information about Kairos/Aboriginal Rights Committee (ARC) (formerly the Aboriginal Rights Coalition) which is the national ecumenical coalition with whom the Anglican Church works on Indigenous rights issues in Canada. The **Links** section also contains information about regional groups affiliated with ARC.

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IN TOUCH WITH OUR ROOTS

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ACTIVITY: Storytelling Evenings
PLACE: St. Thomas Anglican
Church, Chippewas of the
Thames/Muncey
(west of London, Ontario)
DIOCESE: Huron

“When you enter a story,” says the Rev. Gaye Whippey, “you enter a different world, but one you can relate to from your own experience. You can walk around in a story; begin to see universal truths; delight in the characters.”

It’s part of the Anishnabe tradition that when Mother Earth is resting beneath a protective mantle of snow, that’s the time when the people gather to tell one another stories. So for three years now – “usually in February when the snow is on the ground” – the two adjacent communities where Rev. Whippey ministers, which include both Chippewa (also known as Ojibway or Anishnabe) and Delaware First Nations, have been hosting annual storytelling gatherings. Held in the church (once in the community resource centre with help from the librarian), the sessions feature stories from local elders, from people from other communities, from Rev. Whippey herself, and even from the children, who sometimes make up their stories on the spot.

“The first thing we wanted to do was to put the people in touch with their roots, with the stories the elders shared many years ago,” says Whippey. Those kinds of gatherings and that kind of sharing “hadn’t happened in many years.”

Personal stories come out as well, she adds. “We have had very intimate sharing from people’s lives. It’s almost a testimony, or a witness to what they have learned from their experiences.” Rev. Whippey has even been known to retell a biblical story or two herself.

“We want to show respect for the spiritual traditions of the elders,” says Whippey, adding that in ministering in this community she has “discovered that Jesus’s way and the traditional ways are not so far apart.”

The evenings are advertised ahead of time in the community, with the message



that everyone is welcome, no matter their age, race, or affiliation. People are invited to bring their own stories along, or just come and listen.

It's important to create a warm, inviting atmosphere that encourages people to relax and share, Whippey adds. She lights the church with candles for the occasion, and always opens with prayer. "I want to emphasize a sense of community, and of how important story is to our lives, and of how our own life story relates to the story." It also helps to have a strong storyteller lined up to get the evening started.

The evenings have been a wonderful experience for all who participate, says Whippey. "It's a joy to see that kind of sharing happening."

For more information contact:

The Rev. Gaye Whippey

t: 519.657.8841

e: whippeygf@netscape.net

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CELEBRATING SURVIVAL, LOOKING FOR A NEW TOMORROW

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ACTIVITY:
First Nations Day
Celebration, 2002
PLACE:
Chippewa of the Thames
First Nation, Ontario
DIOCESE:
Huron

The June 21 summer solstice is National Aboriginal Day, and First Nations Anglicans and friends from across Huron Diocese celebrated it in 2002 with a kaleidoscopic blend of colour, drumming, dancing, singing, and reading of God's word, at the Chippewa of the Thames First Nation community centre.

Rt. Rev. Carol Gallagher, the first Indigenous woman bishop in the worldwide Anglican Communion, was special guest and celebrant at this gathering hosted by the Lenni Lenape, Algonkian and Iroquoian Council (LAIC) on the Sunday before the solstice. LAIC represents the diocese's six Indigenous Anglican parishes.

"On June 21, we will celebrate our ability to survive wars, overseas contact, and many kinds of abuse," said Chippewa of the Thames Chief Joe Miskokomon in opening the gathering. "We will not go away. We are looking for a new tomorrow."

Attending priests brought greetings from the Bishop of Huron, and joined First Nations children to lead Bishop Gallagher around the circle of 200 participants to the beat of the Six Nations Big Train Drum. At the altar, covered with a handmade star quilt from Bkejwanong (Walpole Island First Nation), elders smudged with traditional medicines (tobacco, cedar, sage, and sweetgrass), and offered a prayer for purification.

The "good news of our Gospel is that God has made a covenant with all the people, and the Cherokee and the Chippewa and all First Nations people," Bishop Carol said in her sermon. Speaking of her recent election as assistant bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia, she said one first thought was, "Maybe I don't belong here. Native people often think that." Indigenous people have a lot of grief and problems but "we know



the words of Scripture are true. The Spirit of God is among us. The Creator is at home here.” She ended with a song in Cherokee that her great-great-great grandmother sang as she walked the Trail of Tears. We recognized the strains of “Amazing Grace.”

Worship included prayers to the Four Directions, Ojibwe hymns to guitar accompaniment, a nine-year-old hoop dancer, and the Eucharist. Olive Elm ended by explaining the Iroquoian ceremony of giving thanks as the strawberry plant heralds the coming of spring and new life on Mother Earth. Then Six Nations parishioners joined her in distributing strawberries, which we ate as we shared the peace with “the gift of God’s friendship.”

Suggested Activity

Many Anglican communities sent stories of events, activities or worship services on the annual First Nations Day Celebration (June 21 each year). First Nations Day could be a good “moment” to bring in a guest speaker (such as someone from the Anglican Council of Indigenous People), remember Anglican Aboriginal communities during your prayer or worship time, or to plan a cross-cultural event which brings together a non-Aboriginal parish with an Indigenous Anglican parish or a local Aboriginal community.

Suggested Resources

An Aboriginal Friendship Centre or Aboriginal tribal or community organization in your region could suggest suitable speakers for First Nations Day. The Anglican Council of Indigenous People (see “Network” in the **Links** section of the binder) could suggest an Indigenous Anglican speaker.

For more information contact:

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