

The Anglican Church of Canada



L'Église anglicane du Canada

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“Journeying Together in Partnership”

As National Aboriginal Day, June 21st is marked across the country there will be many gatherings and feasts. People will assemble in community centres, city squares, and on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Sacred fires will be kindled and the seven sacred—love, respect, humility, truth, honesty, courage and wisdom—will be celebrated. Stories will be told, and prayers will be offered in the four directions.

Walking with Indigenous Peoples is a high priority for our church. This summer marks the 20th anniversary of the apology offered by then-Primate Archbishop Michael Peers in which he expressed how sorry we are for our part in the sad legacy of the Indian Residential Schools in Canada, from our complicity with a federal government policy of assimilation of the First Nations Peoples of this land, to the abuse of children in the schools. At that time Michael said “I know that words without actions are empty.” He set our church on the course of a long journey of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and to that journey we remain deeply committed.

Through the Anglican Healing Fund our Church has supported almost 500 community based projects across Canada, with grants totalling almost \$5 million. I say this not to boast but to give an example of our commitment to action. As Esther Wesley, Co-ordinator of the Healing Fund says, “Healing is happening in many places”.

Our church is fully engaged in supporting the mandate of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission—to hear, record and preserve the story of the residential schools. Good numbers of Anglicans continue to attend the community, regional, and national events. With other churches we are assisting with travel costs for survivors to attend these gatherings, and the birthday celebration—now a highlight at each national event. Together we are making gestures of reconciliation and hope for new relations between aboriginal peoples and all others who call this land home.

At General Synod in 2010 our church repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery and endorsed the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We are endeavouring to honour the desires of Indigenous Peoples for self-determination

Living the Marks of Mission

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with respect to leaderships in ministry and structures for the church that are in keeping with aboriginal ways. We now have a Canon for National Indigenous Ministries, enshrining into the fabric of our church the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (ACIP) and the triennial gathering of the Sacred Circle.

We give continued thanks for the ministry of the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, Mark MacDonald. We rejoice with dioceses that have taken steps in creating area missions, electing indigenous bishops, and the birthing of a new diocese in Northern Ontario.

The year 2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the Covenant -- A Journey of Spiritual Renewal. There will be much to celebrate and much to look forward to in our commitment to journey together in re-shaping our church in ways that reflect mutual respect, support, and encouragement in the service of the Gospel.

National Aboriginal Day is a call to repentance and renewal, healing and hope, the new love and the new life to which Christ calls us.

To mark this day I encourage use of the Propers for National Aboriginal Day adopted by General Synod in 2010. www.anglican.ca/nadpprobers

I ask your prayers for Bishop Mark MacDonald; for the Rev. Ginny Doctor, the Co-ordinator for Indigenous Ministries, Archdeacon Sidney Black and the Rev. Norman Casey, co-chairs of ACIP, and for all bishops, priests, deacons, lay readers and catechists serving among Indigenous Peoples in northern communities and in the downtown core of many of Canada's largest cities. Pray for steadfastness in our commitments to "journey together in partnership."

Collect of the Day

Creator God,
from you every family in heaven and 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