



## Sacred Circle 10

### *Returning Home: Remembering the Lost*

Universal. Divine. Sacred.

The Circle has no beginning and no end, and it is how we meet as Indigenous Anglicans from across Canada. Our meetings are called Sacred Circles and they are where we gather to discern the path that the Creator has called us to follow.

We gather to pray, to read the Gospel, to listen to one another and to work together within the tenets of traditional Indigenous Law. This Law enables large groups of people, from diverse regions and backgrounds to collectively manage themselves and to make decisions through a model of consensus.

This practice is part of our history.

The first National Sacred Circle was held in 1988 in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan. This landmark event became the catalyst for a journey toward the establishment of a fully self-determining Indigenous Anglican Church in Canada. Since 1988, eight additional Sacred Circles have been held.

Our numbers have grown, our Leadership has multiplied and despite the loss of many of our beloved Elders, our resolve has never wavered. The Call is strong and it grows stronger as we seek to embrace the Spirit that beckons us onward.

The appointment of Mark MacDonald as the first National Indigenous Bishop in 2007 meant that our voice could no longer be ignored by the wider church. Mark was bestowed the title of Archbishop in 2019 in a historic vote by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada. Mark is the Presiding Pastoral Elder at the Sacred Circle, as is our tradition.

As we stand at the precipice of the 10th Sacred Circle, in a time of profound grief and devastating losses for our people, we are reminded of this prayer shared by our Elder, the Rev. Canon Laverne Jacobs:

"Show to the Indigenous Peoples of Canada your will for us in the life of the church. Give to us eyes to see the Sacred way you have provided for us. Teach us to walk in the footsteps of your son, Chief of Chiefs. May our hearts beat as one with yours."

The tenth Sacred Circle will be a virtual meeting beginning with the Lighting of the Sacred Fire on the evening of Wednesday July 14th, and ending with the extinguishing of the Sacred Fire on Saturday, July 17th. The theme of this Sacred Circle is "Returning Home: Remembering the Lost".