



Anglican Church of Canada



Indigenous Ministries
Anglican Church in Canada



Evangelical Lutheran Church
in Canada

National Indigenous Peoples Day - June 21, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ

The ongoing public health restrictions mean that this year's celebration of *National Indigenous Peoples Day* will be less about gathering and more about building up relationships in new and creative ways.

The Government of Canada describes this as *a day for all to recognize and celebrate the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.*¹ We give thanks for these heritages, cultures and contributions. We honour Stewards of the Land and Defenders of the Water.

This is a day to re-affirm our churches' commitments to ending racism: discrimination and racism against Indigenous Peoples, anti-Black racism and all other forms of racism in Canada. This month, both Anglican bishops and the Lutheran Conference of Bishops made statements that commit the church to calling out racism as sinful and deadly, acknowledging the place of racism and colonialism in the Canadian context, and doing the work of dismantling the systems that oppress.² We pray for the Spirit to prod us forward.

This is a day to re-affirm the commitment of our churches to the work of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. The way to reconciliation is a long path; there remains much to do, much to hear, much to feel and much to change. We pray for the Spirit's guidance and support for healing journeys.

This is a day to celebrate the gifts and witness of Indigenous Ministries. We commend to you the *Rule of Life* from *Gospel Based Discipleship*:³

Creator God, we acknowledge and give thanks that:

In Jesus we know we belong to a Sacred Circle with the Gospel and Baptismal Covenant in the centre.

In this Sacred Circle:

¹ www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013718/1534874583157

² See www.anglican.ca/news/our-own-house-is-not-in-order-bishops-issue-statement-on-confronting-racism/30026802/ and <https://elcic.ca/news.cfm?article=570>. The second half of this sentence is adapted from these statements.

³ www.anglican.ca/im/introgbd/

*We are all related;
We live a compassionate and generous life;
We respect all life, traditions, and resources.
We commit ourselves to spiritual growth, discipleship, and consensus.*

These words of prayer and wisdom are a gift to the whole church as we seek to deepen our discipleship; to endure and adapt to the impacts of COVID-19; and to become the community of respect, equity, justice and peace that God calls us to be. *Meegwetch!*

This is a day to read the Gospel. Jesus says, “So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.” (Matthew 10:31, NRSV)

We hear in these words:

A call to face our fears, whatever they may be;
A call to honour the dignity of each one and the value of every one;
A call to notice birds and nature with open hearts for the Creator’s wisdom;
The assurance that God is with us in all that we face.

For resources, please visit <https://www.anglican.ca/im/nidp/>

What opportunities do you see in your context? What actions reflect the next step on your spiritual journey?

Yours in Christ,



The Rev. Susan C. Johnson
National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



The Most Rev. Mark MacDonald
National Anglican Indigenous Archbishop, Anglican Church of Canada



The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls
Primate, Anglican Church of Canada