

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers in Support of our Nation's Day for Truth & Reconciliation
September 14, 2023



The eagle to represent First Nations, the narwhal to represent Inuit, the beaded flower to represent Métis

St. Philip's Land Acknowledgement: *As we begin this Prayer Circle, we acknowledge that we gather on the unceded territory of the Mississauga people, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Haudonosaunee, Algonquin and Huron Wendat People. May we honour the Indigenous stewards of this land, and work to grow in right relationship with all Indigenous peoples. We recognize that our Creator God moves us forward together in healing, respect, and unity for future generations.*

Let take a moment to centre our hearts.

At the heart of our faith is the life of Jesus who said, ***'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.'*** ***And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.*** (Mark 10"14b-16) The neglect of the dignity of children, whom Jesus welcomed and protected, calls for repentance in action.²

READER:

Today, as we pray for our Nation's Day of Truth & Reconciliation, we mourn the deaths of the First Nations, Inuit and Metis children who died in Residential Schools. We lament those whose lives and death are known to God alone.

For we know there are more.

² The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls, Archbishop and Primate

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There are children buried all over our country, some accounted for, but many, many hastily interred, with no recognition, no admissions of guilt, no notice to next of kin, no notice of common humanity, no respect for their little bodies – not enough to call hospitals or doctors, so not enough for recognition.

READER: And alongside these silent burials are the broken childhoods of so many more. Many are among us, newly traumatized by the “revelations” that they’ve known for years. Many, like my father, have gone to their graves with unutterable secrets.

Their spirits are saying, “You have heard the truth.”

And so, having heard the truth, what now?

READER: Continue to listen. Believe it when someone tells you. Reach out and support Indigenous organizations. Seek to understand systemic racism and to break the chokehold it has on our ways of life. Resist rationalizing. Review the apologies. Read the Calls to Action and take action. Shed the tears, yes. Wear the orange shirt, yes. But when the tears have dried, will this have changed you? Changed us?

The past is now, for all time exists at once.

And we still pray for the children.³

Lord, hear our prayer, **ALL: For your mercy is great**

READER: Remembering the Children

God of our Ancestors,

who holds the spirits of our grandmothers and grandfathers and the spirits of our grandchildren,

Remembering the Children,

we now pledge ourselves to speak the Truth,

and with our hearts and our souls

to act upon the Truth we have heard

 of the injustices lived, of the sufferings inflicted,

 of the tears cried,

 of the misguided intentions imposed,

 and of the power of prejudice and racism

which were allowed to smother the sounds and laughter of the forgotten children.

READER: Hear our cries of lament

for what was allowed to happen, and for what will never be.

In speaking and hearing and acting upon the Truth

may we as individuals and as a nation

meet the hope of a new beginning.

³ Lee Spice, Pastoral Relations Minister, Chinook Winds Region

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READER: Great Creator God
who desires that all creation live in harmony and peace,
Remembering the Children
we dare to dream of a Path of Reconciliation
where apology from the heart leads to healing of the heart
and the chance of restoring the circle,
 where justice walks with all,
 where respect leads to true partnership,
 where the power to change comes from each heart.

Hear our prayer of hope, and guide this country of Canada on a new and different path⁴.
Lord, hear our prayer, **ALL: For your mercy is great**

READER: The Collect for the National Indigenous Day of Prayer

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.

READER: 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.

Lord, hear our prayer, **ALL: For your mercy is great**

READER: Our Psalm is number 19, selected for the National Indigenous Day of Prayer

¹The heavens declare the glory of God;
 the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

²Day after day they pour forth speech;
 night after night they reveal knowledge.

³They have no speech, they use no words;
 no sound is heard from them.

⁴Yet their voice[Ⓜ] goes out into all the earth,
 their words to the ends of the world.

⁴ rememberingthechildren.ca

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In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.

⁵ It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.

⁶ It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is deprived of its warmth.

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
**The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.**

⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.
**The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.**

⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever.
**The decrees of the LORD are firm,
and all of them are righteous.**

¹⁰ They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold;
**they are sweeter than honey,
than honey from the honeycomb.**

¹¹ By them your servant is warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.

¹² But who can discern their own errors?
Forgive my hidden faults.

¹³ Keep your servant also from willful sins;
may they not rule over me.
**Then I will be blameless,
innocent of great transgression.**

¹⁴ May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart
be pleasing in your sight,
LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

READER: A reading from the Gospel of John: The Word Became Flesh

All: Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome^[a] it.

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READER: There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

READER: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

This is the Gospel of Christ,

All: Praise be to you Lord Jesus Christ

READER: A Prayer for Healing

God of Faith, and Faithful God, Heal us, Heavenly One, heal us.

Heal our children, heal our youth, heal our brothers, sisters, and cousins of blood and of community, heal our friends and heal our loved ones.

Heal First Nations, heal cities, heal the provinces, heal our nation and the nations of the world.

READER: We pray today for health and well-being. For strength and for perseverance to live the lives to which we have been called.

We suffer with those who suffer. We grieve with those who grieve.

We feel the anger of those who are angry at injustice.

We find it difficult to hope knowing others despair and doubt that their futures and their loved one's futures will be better.

READER: Pour out your Spirit of healing upon the people of this place. We need you. Send us hope.

Help us to pray unceasingly in the power and knowledge that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

You have told us not to worry about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, to make our requests known to you.

Help us to be gentle with one another in times of trouble.

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READER: Help us always and unceasingly to put our trust in you.

Help us to be not afraid.

Help us to walk out from behind our closed doors to serve others as disciples of Christ in the presence and power of your Holy Spirit.

Give us confidence and hearts so full of love for justice that we will not cease to work for the good of others, and for healing and for reconciliation between all peoples⁵.

We ask this through our Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ.

Lord, hear our prayer, **ALL: For your mercy is great**

READER: Prayers for Justice

As Christians, our work for justice and reconciliation is grounded in Scripture and in our common worship life. We need to pray constantly for God's healing touch in our lives and in the broken relationships between Indigenous and the newcomer peoples. And we need to reflect on the gift of reconciliation we have from God through Jesus Christ.⁶

READER: So we pray: Gracious God,

your Word spoken through the Prophets became the voice that proclaimed your justice and healing in Nazareth;

through Jesus you invited all creation into your reconciling love.

READER: As you freed his followers from their fear of the risks of discipleship, so move within us in your love with the strength, the compassion and courage to give of ourselves to the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to us.

We pray this through Jesus Christ, your Son.

Lord, hear our prayer, **ALL: For your mercy is great**

READER: Prayers for Truth and Reconciliation

O God, Great Spirit and Creator,

We praise you for your gifts that surround us – For the gift of the land that gives us food, shelter and water;

For the gift of the sun that gives warmth and light to all that grows;

For the gifts of the moon and stars which you have arranged for your glory;

READER: For the gifts of language and culture, through which your peoples praise you, and share the most deeply held values you have engraved on their hearts.

Come upon us, O Divine Healer and open our eyes – To the injustices brought against our Indigenous Peoples, their language and culture in Canada's Indian Residential Schools.

⁵ Prayers for Indigenous People, The United Church of Canada

⁶ www.anglican.ca/newagape

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Give us repentant hearts – That ache with sorrow for their violence against First Nations families and their children.

READER: Give us determined hearts – That refuse to stand by when the dignity of our Indigenous brothers and sisters is trampled.

Give us healing hearts – That beat with the drum of Jesus' Gospel, to defend and honour our Indigenous neighbour, their language and way of life.

Give us flaming hearts – That burn with love for you, who come to us ... in every human face ... in every language and culture ... in every gift of creation.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER:

Make us stewards – Of one another's dignity,

Of one another's safety,

Of one another's lands,

READER: Of one another's right to a cultural identity: ... as unique peoples, ... as gifts to the human family, ... as your beloved children.

Pour out your healing love on all who suffered in Canada's Indian Residential Schools;

- on bodies, minds and spirits wounded through abuse,

- on hearts wounded through separation and disdain,

- on families wounded through trauma and anguish that still torment over the course of generations.

READER: Jesus – gentle Saviour, forgiving and humble of heart, Good Shepherd, Divine Healer, Great Lover of all peoples:

We offer you our sorrow for the wrongs committed Against our First Nations' children in Canada's Indian Residential Schools.

We offer you our desire to walk with our First Nations brothers and sisters;

To journey with them on the path of truth, healing and reconciliation,

READER: As we share this earthly pilgrimage to our heavenly homeland,

Where every tear will be wiped away and every sorrow will be turned to joy.

Give us one heart and one mind to walk forward together along this path In the love and strength of your Spirit, In truth, reconciliation and peace.

We make this prayer in the power of your Most Holy Name.⁷

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER:

Holy One, Creator of all that is, seen and unseen, of story and of song,

of heartbeat and of tears of bodies, souls, voices and all relations:

⁷ Prayer of repentance and solidarity with Indigenous Peoples following Canada's Truth & Reconciliation Commission

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you are the God of all truth and the way of all reconciliation.

READER: Uphold with your love and compassion all who open their lives in the sacred sharing of their stories

breathe in us the grace to trust in your loving forgiveness,

that we may face our histories with courage;

touch us through the holy gift of story

READER: that those who speak and those who listen may behold your own redeeming presence;

guide us with holy wisdom to enter through the gates of remorse

that our feet may walk gently and firmly on the way of justice and healing.⁸

We pray this through Jesus Christ, your Son.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER: Lead us to repent when we as settlers deny Indigenous peoples respect, dignity and fullness of life.

Help us to listen compassionately, to speak humbly and to act justly.

READER: Help us to seek the peace, justice and reconciliation you desire among all your children.

Dear Lord, thank you for your mercy and grace.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER: A prayer for Historical Reparation

Loving God, Creator of all, maker and redeemer of history,

you hold the pains and joys of our past, our present, our future;

you open us to the gifts of time and the possibilities of new beginnings,

and offer us the confidence to face our sin and loss with hope.

READER: Breathe in us the grace to trust in your loving forgiveness,

that we may face our histories with courage.

Guide us by your Holy Spirit in our walk of repentance,

as we turn to embrace the new life you have given to us.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER: Creator God, from you every family in heaven and on 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.

⁸ From the Anglican Church of Canada

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READER: 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.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER: A Prayer of Indigenous Peoples, Refugees, Immigrants, & Pilgrims

Triune God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
we come before you as many parts of a single body.
people drawn from every tribe,
every nation, every language;
some indigenous—peoples of the land;
some refugees, immigrants, pilgrims—people on the move;
some hosts, some guests, some both hosts and guests;
all of us searching for an eternal place where we can belong.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER:

Creator, forgive us.
The earth is yours and everything that is in it.
But we forget.
In our arrogance we think we own it.
In our greed we think we can steal it.
In our ignorance we worship it.
In our thoughtlessness we destroy it.
We forget that you created the earth to bring praise and joy to you.
That you gave it as a gift,
for us to steward,
for us to enjoy,
for us to see more clearly your beauty and your majesty.

Jesus, save us.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER:

We wait for your kingdom.
We long for your throne.
We hunger for your reconciliation,
for that day where people from every tribe and every tongue
will gather around you and sing your praises.

Holy Spirit, teach us.

Help us to remember

that the body is made up of many parts,
each one unique and every one necessary.

Teach us to embrace the discomfort that comes from our diversity

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and to celebrate the fact that we are unified, not through our sameness,
but through the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lord, hear our prayer, **ALL: For your mercy is great**

READER:

Triune God, we love you.
Your creation is beautiful.
Your salvation is merciful.
And your wisdom is beyond compare.

We pray all this in Jesus's name⁹.

Lord, hear our prayer, **ALL: For your mercy is great**

**READER: Our Final Exhortations are from Paul's letter to the Philippians,
beginning at Chapter 4**

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

READER: Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice.

And the God of peace will be with you.

ALL: AMEN

READER: A Prayer for our National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21

As people of faith we are committed to addressing the legacy of harm done to Indigenous Peoples by churches and governments, and to forging right relationships.¹⁰

Creator God,
We look at your world and praise you for the diversity all around us.
Thank you for the gift of relationships; our connection with people, animals and the land.
Help us, Lord, to see differences and diversity as strengths.

READER: Help us to listen and understand; to meet one another with wonder and anticipation.
Help us to love as you love, without expectation or exception.

READER: Reveal to us your way of reconciliation and guide us into right relationships with all living things.

⁹ findingsolace.org

¹⁰ Prayer by Dianne Climenhage, MCC Maritimes Regional Representative

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Lead us to understand how Indigenous peoples have been and continue to be profoundly harmed by settler people and institutions.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

READER:

Lead us to repent when we as settlers deny Indigenous peoples respect, dignity and fullness of life.

Help us to listen compassionately, to speak humbly and to act justly.

Help us to seek the peace, justice and reconciliation you desire among all your children.

Thank you for your mercy and grace.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

TOGETHER LET US PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,

for ever and ever,

AMEN

READER:

With God's help, let us undertake to the 215 Pledge, being an action plan for the lost Children, who died in Canada's residential schools, that is focused around the 5 stages of grief:

READER: Deny – The narrative that suggests this was an isolated event

READER: Anger – Should be embraced to build momentum for justice

READER: Negotiate – The search for undocumented grave sites across Canada

READER: Depression – Reunite families with the remains of loved ones

READER: Accept – The experiences of all who have been affected by residential schools

READER: And now, we go into the world, changed forever, and energized to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respecting the dignity of every human being.

AMEN