

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025



Orange Shirt Day began in 2013, inspired by the story of Phyllis Webstad from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation, who had her new orange shirt taken away on her first day at residential school. The day, observed annually on September 30, serves as a symbol of hope and healing, honouring Residential School Survivors and their families, and raising awareness about the lasting impacts of the system. Orange Shirt Day also coincides with the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, established by the Canadian government in 2021 to recognize and commemorate the legacy of the schools and the importance of reconciliation.

We will start with our land acknowledgement, in faith it will lead us to “what is next”:

READER: *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 Nations and 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.*

READER: Let's 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

² The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls, Archbishop and Former Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

READER: Today, as we pray for Orange Shirt Day, and Canada's National 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.

There are children buried all over our country, some accounted for, but 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 worthy 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.

Their spirits are saying, "You have heard the truth."

And so, having heard the truth, what now?

READER: We are to continue to listen. Believe it when someone tells us their truth. 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: **"A Child Will Lead Us" Prayer from the United Church of Canada**

Powerful Christ,
we are grateful that you came to us as a child,
you grew out of a community that nurtured, supported, and taught you the way of your ancestors.
You have asked us to do the same:
 to treat every child as we would treat you,
 to love every person as you have loved us.

READER: We are grateful that your power is rooted in love, not force;
 your strength is displayed through community, not might.
You have taught us to work toward a better world where all of creation thrives,
 and where every child matters.

READER: On this Orange Shirt Day, we remember Phyllis Webstad as a child, and the stolen childhood of all the children forcibly raised by church-run institutions, known as residential schools.

³ Lee Spice, Pastoral Relations Minister, Chinook Winds Region, adaptation

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

READER: We lament how these institutions stole from children the opportunity to grow in a safe and loving environment,
stole from Elders the opportunity to share their teachings and wisdom with younger generations; and stole from communities the opportunity to live intergenerationally.

READER: We mourn the children who never made it home,
the communities that were destroyed,
the broken hearts,
the stories never shared, and the shattered relationships.

READER: We ask that you provide comfort to all who are seeking healing and who daily wrestle with the ongoing harmful legacy of these colonial institutions,
strength to all who name how colonial powers have harmed them as peoples and as a nation;
often at great personal cost, and courage to all who are working toward reconciliation.

READER: Christ Child,
As you grew, you reminded us to always welcome and care for children.
We remember your children today.
We lament and acknowledge the sinful ways that colonial powers tried to eradicate Indigenous cultures within Canada, breaking Indigenous families,
removing children from their homes while destroying communities.

READER: And we pray for healing, so that we who live together in this country
can also work together to build a better future where all children are cherished, beloved, and given what they need to thrive. So that we may treat all children as we would treat you, our Beloved.

May it be so.

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

READER: A Prayer to Remember 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.

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

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.

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.

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.

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: A Collect for Orange Shirt Day:

Creator God, Sunk-wi-ya-ti-su and Gitchi Manitou,
Of peace, justice, and concord;

Reader: Open our ears, our eyes, our lungs, and our hearts,
Give us the spirit of condolence.
Instil in us the Good Mind.

Reader: Let us seek your justice in a broken world,
Let us search for understanding in your Creation.

Reader: Help us to be reconciled to you and to each other.
In the self-giving ethic of the Cross,
Let us be emptied of hatred and apathy, greed and selfishness.

Reader: Fill us with the wideness and wildness of your Spirit,
In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, we ask all this⁵.

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

⁴ rememberingthechildren.ca, adaptation

⁵ Anglican Church of Canada

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

READER: Our Psalm is number 19, selected for the National Indigenous Day of Prayer (read responsively by the half verse)

- 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.
In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun.
- ⁵It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,
like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
- ⁶It rises at one end of the heavens
and makes its circuit to the other;
nothing is deprived of its warmth.
- ⁷The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
**The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.**
- ⁸The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.
**The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.**
- ⁹The fear of the LORD is pure,
enduring forever.
**The decrees of the LORD are firm,
and all of them are righteous.**
- ¹⁰They are more precious than gold,
than much pure gold;
**they are sweeter than honey,
than honey from the honeycomb.**
- ¹¹By them your servant is warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.
- ¹²But who can discern their own errors?
Forgive my hidden faults.
- ¹³Keep your servant also from willful sins;
may they not rule over me.
**Then I will be blameless,
innocent of great transgression.**

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

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

LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

ALL: Gracious creator of heaven and earth, your Word has come among us as the true Sun of righteous, and the good news of his birth has gone out to the ends of the world. Open our eyes to the light of your law, that we may be purified from sin and serve you without reproach for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Light and our Life. **AMEN**

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 it.

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**

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

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.

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 peoples⁶.
We ask this through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

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

READER: A Prayer 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.

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.

⁶ Prayers for Indigenous People, The United Church of Canada

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

READER: As you freed you Son's 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 Son⁷.

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

READER: Prayers for Truth, and the courage for 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;

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

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 Indigenous Peoples, their language and culture in Canada's Indian Residential Schools.

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

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

READER: Give us determined hearts – that refuse to stand by when the dignity of 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, of one another's right to a cultural identity: ... as unique peoples, ... as gifts to the human family, ... as your beloved children.

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

⁷ www.anglican.ca/newagape

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

READER:

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.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

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 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.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

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.⁸

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: 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.⁹

We pray this through Jesus Christ, your Son.

Lord, hear our prayer,

ALL: For your mercy is great

⁸ Prayer of repentance and solidarity with Indigenous Peoples following Canada's Truth & Reconciliation Commission

⁹ From the Anglican Church of Canada

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

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.

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

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.

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

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 for our National Indigenous Peoples Day

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.

Creator God,
We look at your world and praise you for the diversity all around us.

St Philip's Prayer Circle
Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day
September 30, 2025

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. Lead us to understand how Indigenous peoples have been and continue to be profoundly harmed by settler people and institutions¹⁰.

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**

READER:

With God's help, let us undertake 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.

ALL: AMEN

¹⁰ Prayer by Dianne Climenhage, MCC Maritimes Regional Representative

St Philip's Prayer Circle

Prayers for our Nation's Orange Shirt Day

September 30, 2025

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. ⁹ Whatever 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

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