

**ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH**  
**June 20, 2021, Indigenous Day of Prayer & Summer Solstice**

Welcome to Worship

Join us for a Zoom Virtual Coffee Time Sunday at 7:00 p.m.

Email [sketchingalong4@gmail.com](mailto:sketchingalong4@gmail.com) to get the Zoom link.

**Prelude**

**Spark**

**Meditative Hymn: MV 141 *We Are All One People (Instrumental)***

1. We are all one people, we all come from one Creation way on high.

We are all one nation under one great sky, you and I.

We are all one people, we are all one colour in her eyes.

2. We are all one people, we all come from one Creation way on high.

We are all one nation under one great sky, you and I.

We are all one people, we are all one colour in his eyes.

3. We are all one people, we are all one nation,

we are all one colour if we try.

**Telling the Story (Sylvia Carscadden)**

On Friday, May 28, we learned about the 215 children who are buried at Kamloops Residential School. On that afternoon, Justice Murray Sinclair spoke to a group from the Antler River Watershed Regional Council UCC, Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council, Horseshoe Falls Regional Council.

He described in his low quiet voice how indigenous people were treated and portrayed as inferior, savages who didn't know right from wrong, how this leads to hurt, and he described his own hurt as a brilliant student who was ignored by his peers at school. He related how the government set up residential schools as "training centres", so indigenous children could be taught to do menial work, but would not be allowed advancement. When indigenous children and youth overcame these limitations, the laws were passed making their participation illegal. Churches ran many of the schools.

Murray Sinclair says:

- churches have a role to educate members about the history of residential schools,
- our churches need to know and be fully immersed in the story of residential school,
- we must not forget the story and we need to advocate for change,
- churches need to be there to be called upon. They need to "show up."

**Acknowledging Traditional Territory**

The land on which this building sits is land that has been walked on, hunted on, and lived on for thousands of years. It is the Traditional land of the Wahnapiatae First Nation and the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek. It is with humility and respect that we give thanks that we are here, in the space where we are in touch with Creator who made it and who made us. May our worship honour the relationships that are celebrated and invited here, and may we always remember the story of this land, the people who live here, and the call to live with respect and thanksgiving.

**Inviting Holy Light**

We light this candle to invite the Great Spirit, our Creator, Into this space to journey with us. We may be challenged, we may feel wounds opening up, but know that we are not alone on this journey... [Light candle in silence]

## **Hymn: VU 308 *Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works***

1. Many and great, O God, are your works, Maker of earth and sky.  
Your hands have set the heavens with stars;  
your fingers spread the mountains and plains.  
Lo, at your word the waters were formed; deep seas obey your voice.
2. Grant unto us communion with you, O star-abiding one.  
Come unto us and dwell with us,  
with you are found the gifts of life.  
Bless us with life that has no end, eternal life with you.

## **Welcome & Announcements**

Welcome to St. Andrew's United Church, a community of faith in Sudbury, Ontario. This is an important day for Christians across this land as this is a day that we give thanks for and reflect on the significance of Indigenous peoples who cared for this land before settlers arrived. We will pray, hear readings, sing, and watch the Sudbury premier of a powerful film produced by the Manitou Intentional Learning Community and The Regional Council Right Relations Team. The readings this morning come from different sources than we are accustomed to, from Indigenous voices, "Speaking My Truth: Reflections on Reconciliation and Residential School," and from "Embers" by Richard Wagamese. So, thank you for joining us on this continued journey towards reconciliation.

If you are joining us for the first time today, thank you and welcome. At the end of the service, there will be information about how to contact us – via email, Facebook, and even by phone. We also have a Virtual Fellowship time tonight at 7 p.m. hosted by Bev and Diane. Information on how to join this evening's fellowship time is included at the end of the service.

## **Readings**

### **Reading 1 (Suzanne Nykilchyk)**

*The first reading is written by David MacDonald, an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada and a former member of Parliament.*

Indian residential schools are among the most shocking and shameful realities in Canadian History. While the earliest schools predate the country of Canada itself, their full intent, impact, and reality virtually came into existence as Canada was being created... More than a hundred of these schools existed for over a century in all parts of the country, yet many people have great difficulty believing they actually existed. From the vantage point of today one is forced to ask: How did this happen? What was in the minds of government officials and church leaders?

Today many people are frustrated in their attempt to make sense of Indian residential schools, land claims struggles, protests, and blockades, as well as a host of Third World conditions that exist for so many First Nations, Métis and Inuit people throughout this country. For some the easiest explanation is to blame the victims...

I believe however, that if reconciliation is both our goal as well as our intended course of action, we cannot be satisfied with our state of ignorance and inactivity. We must begin by knowing what our real history is, what it means and what it tells us about what we must do now.

### **Reading 2 (Natasha Gerolami)**

*The second reading is another story from the same book, *Speaking our Truth: Reflections on Reconciliation and Residential School*. Richard Wagamese writes his own story. He was a child of the 60's scoop.*

All the members of my family attended residential school. They returned to the land bearing psychological, emotional, spiritual, and physical burdens that haunted them. Even my mother, despite staunch declarations that she had learned good things there (finding Jesus, learning to keep a house, the gospel), carried wounds she could not voice. Each of them had experienced an

institution that tried to scrape the Indian off their insides, and they had come back to the bush and river raw, sore, and aching! The pain they bore was invisible and unspoken. It seeped into their spirit, oozing its poison and blinding them from the incredible healing properties within their Indian ways.

The truth of my life is that I am an intergenerational victim of residential schools. Everything I endured until I found healing was a result of the effects of those schools. I did not hug my mother until I was twenty-five. I did not speak my first Ojibwa word or set foot on my traditional territory until I was twenty-six. I did not know that I had a family, a history a culture, a source for spirituality, a cosmology, or a traditional way of living. I had no awareness that I belonged somewhere. I grew up ashamed of my Native identity and the fact that I knew nothing about it. I was angry that there was no one to tell me who I was or where I had come from.

*Richard Wagamese became a book, film, and music reviewer, general reporter and feature writer for numerous newspapers and journals across Canada. He had a distinguished career in journalism and became the first Indigenous person in Canada to win a National Newspaper Award. He has been listed in Canadian Who's Who. However, two years ago he committed suicide in Western Canada.*

### **Introduction to Video**

The video was a response to the request of Right Reverend Stan McKay who spoke at a MILC gathering and requested that his honoraria go to an event at the Cairn. COVID restrictions forced us to modify how we lived out this request. You will find the Pilgrimage package on our St. Andrew's website, so you can have a deeper understand of your role in bringing reconciliation.

### **“Apology to Action: Reflections on the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary” (Video)**

Please click this link to view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DISy75WEPyQ>

### **Meditative Hymn: VU 229 God of the Sparrow (Instrumental)**

1. God of the sparrow, God of the whale, God of the swirling stars.  
How does the creature say Awe? How does the creature say Praise?
2. God of the earthquake, God of the storm, God of the trumpet blast.  
How does the creature cry Woe? How does the creature cry Save?
3. God of the rainbow, God of the cross, God of the empty grave.  
How does the creature say Grace? How does the creature say Thanks?
4. God of the hungry, God of the sick, God of the prodigal.  
How does the creature say Care? How does the creature say Life?
5. God of the neighbour, God of the foe, God of the pruning hook.  
How does the creature say Love? How does the creature say Peace?
6. God of the ages, God near at hand, God of the loving heart.  
How do your children say Joy? How do your children say Home?

### **Readings**

#### **Reading 3 (Natasha Gerolami)**

IT'S ALL ABOUT OPENING, really. When I open myself to the world and its possibilities – even its hurts – I become whole. But when I choose to close, my life becomes fraught with struggle. Everything I do becomes about shielding myself rather than inviting good energy to fill me. Everything is energy, so I try to let the negative pass through me, rather than holding on to it.

#### **Reading 4 (Natasha Gerolami & Suzanne Nykilchyk)**

ME: You always repeat things three times.

OLD WOMAN: Just the important things.

ME: Why? I hear you the first time.

OLD WOMAN: No. You listen the first time. You hear the second time. And you feel the third time.

ME: I don't get it.

OLD WOMAN: When you listen, you become aware. That's for your head. When you hear, you awaken. That's for your heart. When you feel, it becomes a part of you. That's for your spirit. Three times. It's so you learn to listen with your whole being. That's how you learn.

### **Invitation to the Offering**

Thank you for your generosity to God's Church, locally and globally, and for all you will do this week to make this world kinder, and more generous in spirit and love. If you would like to join me, as you think about what you plan to give, to church, of yourself to God this coming week, we can hold our hands out, offering...

### **Prayers of Dedication and Community**

It is our privilege, Creating One, to share from our individual bounties. On these plates and in these bodies are our gifts to the world: money, commitment, and thanksgiving. Thank you from the bottom of our collective hearts for all the blessings, but help us to work towards justice and reconciliation...

Creator God, Great Spirit, whose compassion has been known in our lives more times than we can count, we open our hearts and souls to the needs of this world. On this Indigenous Sunday, we acknowledge the great injustices perpetrated against those who lived on and cared for this land long before our ancestors arrived. We pray that with compassion and determination we will continue to be open to the huge impact of hearing the stories of trauma from Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, and the suppression of Indigenous culture.

Source of Life, you call us to relationships rooted in equality and respect. This day we covenant to be more aware of the racism that the Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit people of this country experience. We commit ourselves to raise our voices when we hear prejudiced comments, to guide others in the sacred direction of celebrating diversity that is Your gift to humanity.

Creator God, bless us, help us – whether we identify as settlers or Indigenous – help us in our healing. Help us to feel your grace as a summer breeze on our face on a hot summer's day. As our former Moderator Jordan Cantwell said, the path to reconciliation starts with our own healing, our own liberation from the bondage of stereotypes and colonial ways of thinking when we think about the First Peoples. Surround us in your love, God.

In the quiet of our hearts and through the witness of our beings we pray thanks for Your accompaniment on the journey toward individual and communal wisdom and understanding. Let us who are the Church stand in solidarity and true to Jesus' call to reconcile with sisters and brothers. God, hear our prayers and guide our actions... and we pray using Jesus' words...

### **The Prayer Jesus Taught**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

### **Closing Hymn: MV 169 *When Hands Reach Out Beyond Divides***

1. When hands reach out beyond divides and hope is truly found,  
each chain of hate will fall away and bells of peace shall sound,  
and bells of peace, of peace shall sound, and bells of peace shall sound,  
each chain of hate will fall away and bells of peace shall sound.

2. When fear no longer guides our steps and days of war are done,  
God's dream for all shall live anew; our hearts will heal as one,  
our hearts will heal, will heal as one, our hearts will heal as one,  
God's dream for all shall live anew; our hearts will heal as one.

3. When race and creed blind us no more, a neighbour's face we'll see,  
and we shall dance the whole world round, for love will set us free,  
for love, yes love will set us free, for love will set us free,  
and we shall dance the whole world round, for love will set us free.

## **Blessing**

Let us go into another week, into National Indigenous Peoples' Day, hearing the words of the Honourable Murray Sinclair:

*Churches, you have a role to educate yourselves about the history of residential schools.*

**We are Treaty people – guided by the Creator we will learn.**

*Murray Sinclair calls not to just hear the history, but to be “fully immersed” so that we never forget.*  
**Walking in the presence of Christ, we will earnestly seek, hear, listen, and ultimately to feel the history and our part in it as a colonizing church.**

He warns us to resist the temptation is to “fix” people, but instead to rebuild relationships.

*Finally, he says: Understand, advocate, support, and show up when called upon.*

**Holy Spirit guide us, grant us courage to do our personal work and our collective pray and work for Reconciliation. Amen.**

## **Postlude**

---

**All quotations from the Hon. Murray Sinclair** were made when he spoke to the Antler River Watershed Regional Council UCC, Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council, Horseshoe Falls Regional Council.

**Acknowledging Traditional Territory** written by Peter Chynoweth. *Gathering* Pentecost 1, 2021, p. 37. Used with permission.

**Readings 1 and 2** from *Speaking My Truth: Reflections on Reconciliation and Residential School*. ©2012 Aboriginal Healing Foundation. David MacDonald pp. 78-80 (read by Suzanne Nykilchyk) and Richard Wagamese pp. 154 & 157 (read by Natasha Gerolami).

**Reading 3 and 4** from *EMBERS: One Ojibway's Meditations*. Richard Wagamese, © 2016. Douglas and McIntyre Ltd.

**Apology to Action: Reflections on the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** video created by Manitou Intentional Learning Community, Canadian Shield Regional Council Right Relations Resource Team, 2021.

**Blessing** adapted from the words of the Hon. Murray Sinclair.

Thank you to Natasha Gerolami and Suzanne Nykilchyk, our Readers today. Thank you to Eric Pukara and James Warner-Smith for providing musical leadership. Thank you to Jennifer Bruneau, Suzanne Nykilchyk, and Alison Warner-Smith for assisting with the selections of the graphics for the worship service PowerPoint presentation.

---