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Publisher | [Bishop Geoffrey Woodcroft](#)

Editor | [Misha Pensato](#)

Accounting | [Joy Valencerina](#)

Advertising | [Angela Rush](#)

Layout & design | cityfolkcreative.ca

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[Editorial offices:](#)

Anglican Lutheran Centre
935 Nesbitt Bay
Winnipeg Manitoba, R3T 1W6

RLN exists to explore issues at the intersections of faith and life. In doing so we solicit and publish a range of opinions, not all of which reflect the official positions of the Diocese.

We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1, 2, and 3 Land, the traditional land of the Anishinaabe, Cree, and Dakota people and the homeland of the Metis Nation. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality which allows us to live, work, and serve God the Creator here.

RLN welcomes story ideas, news items, and other input. If you want to be involved in this media ministry, please [email the editor](#).

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Cover: *St John's Cathedral (Interior - pre-1926), c. 1900-1913*, St John's College Archives.



The Living Past

Photo: [Sarandy Westfall](#)

Recently, an activist friend took me door knocking after she heard the landlords of an apartment complex were evicting all of the tenants of several medium sized apartment complexes. After many years of neglected maintenance, the buildings were to be renovated all at once and the price of each unit raised substantially. We listened to the anger, grief, and confusion of those whose lives were being upended by being priced out of their homes. One man, who had lived in his suite since 1980, seemed totally defeated by the news.

Each of these apartments, deemed run-down and not profitable enough by the rental agency, contained the living history of a person's life. This made me think about how fragile the past is; we are unmoored by circumstance and the most oppressed among us are dispossessed by those with an eye solely for profit. What matters most is often only apparent in retrospect and we forget things that matter deeply to others or even to ourselves.

The past is with us. We are shaped by what has come before. It can feel like there is a division between 'history' and the present, but what we think of as distant 'history' are processes

that have created the world we live in now.

February is Black History Month. This issue of RLN starts off with a message from Wilson Akinwale who was recently elected National Board Chair of the Black Anglicans of Canada and an announcement of an afternoon celebration of Black excellence.

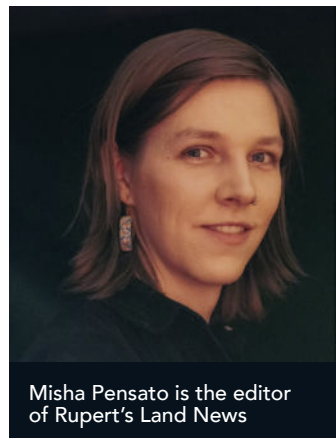
Next, Chris Trott discusses the history of Inuit catechists, many of whom are little known in Anglican history or whose names and lives have not been documented at all. Trott shows how these catechists have and continue to be integral to Indigenous Anglicans.

Diocesan Archivist, Mary Horodyski, writes about the troubling history of the Dynavor 'Indian' hospital which the Diocese of Rupert's Land ran from 1896 to 1939. This article responds to the 59th Call to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission by shedding light on a difficult and little known part of Anglican history and possibly laying groundwork for future, deeper research on the topic. A warning to readers that the history discussed in this article is troubling.

Based on an interview with members of the Committee on the Land Statement, the article "Land Acknowledgement as Confession" explores the work and thinking this committee has undertaken to reassess their parish's land acknowledgement, exploring deeper ways to commit themselves to reconciliation as a collective effort and a call to action.

This issue also includes a Parish Profile on St. Aidan's Anglican exploring some of the deep sense of connection members of this parish have found in their love for God the creator and their commitment to creating little corners of God's glory.

I hope you find learning and enjoyment in reading this month's articles.



Misha Pensato is the editor of Rupert's Land News

Disciples are expressions of Jesus right here and right now

GEOFFREY WOODCROFT

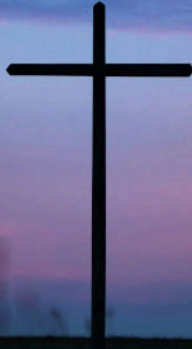


Photo: [Aaron Burden](#)

As Christians continue in the Apostle's fellowship and teaching, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers, the experiences of each disciple informs all of our gatherings. Each experience says something about our relationship with the One whom we follow, from the smell of freshly extinguished beeswax candles, to the familiarity of ancient prayer, to the multi-dimensional effects of change.

Recalling Jesus sending 70 of his disciples to the places he himself wanted to go, Luke teaches the Church that:

"The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!' [Jesus] said to them, 'I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'"
Luke 10:17-20

In this passage, Luke shows us that Jesus is received by the world through our actions. Our words and our actions are the centre of our engagement with Christ who is the head of the Body.

The regular gathering of disciples every Sunday provides safe opportunities for disciples to freely share their/our witness to what God is doing in the world. The Body sets aside these

opportunities for fellowship and teaching; they are pregnant with potential for the life-long learning of each disciple. Fellowship offers opportunity for disciples to know the presence of Christ in our midst more robustly. This type of sharing requires courageous disciples to speak and humble disciples to listen.

It is not uncommon at funeral receptions to hear people speak of the loving commitment of the deceased. Participants share things previously unknown to family, unknown to neighbours, or unknown to the Church. Often, people are surprised and gratified: the stories show a picture of Christ that they themselves had not recognized before.

At the funeral reception for a parishioner named John, we learned that he spent every weekday afternoon playing with sick kids at the hospital until the last week of his life. No one knew that before, and no one knew that John had lost a four year old child some 70 years earlier. John's first child was born with Leukemia. Back in those days, this meant the infant was whisked away to a sterile hospital room with NO visitation. It was thought that it would be too difficult for the child and parents to struggle and grieve. John, however, journeyed from Northern Ontario to the Children's Hospital every weekend for four years. He would sit behind glass watching his dear child grow knowing that he would die. His daughter told us that story, and we all cried and gave thanks – if only we had known.

We need fellowship: that safe opportunity and environment to become excited about what God is doing in our presence and indeed, through us. Let us continue in the Apostle's fellowship and teaching, so that we might honour Christ in our midst. Perhaps you and I just need to start the conversation anew.



Geoffrey Woodcroft,
Bishop of Rupert's Land

A message from the
Rev. Wilson Akinwale,
National Board Chair of
Black Anglicans of Canada

The national theme for this year's Black History Month is "Black Excellence: A Heritage to Celebrate; a Future to Build." As we are all looking forward to another year in the celebration of Black History Month, this February, on behalf of Black Anglicans in the Diocese of Rupert's Land, I send our committee's message to everyone in the Diocese to pray along with us, engage in

conversations in celebrating Black excellence, and for us all to keep telling our success stories and heritage as we join hands in building a future together that supports our shared ministry in the Diocese of Rupert's Land.

Our annual Black Celebration Service will be held on Sunday, April 28 at the Parish of St. Luke at 2 p.m.



**Black Anglicans of the Diocese of Rupert's Land &
The Right Reverend Geoffrey Woodcroft
Bishop of the Diocese of Rupert's Land**

Invite you to

An Afternoon of Black Celebration
BLACK
EXCELLENCE

A HERITAGE TO CELEBRATE; A FUTURE TO BUILD

**SUN 28TH
APRIL 2024**

2PM

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130 NASSAU ST N, WINNIPEG, MB**

For More Information please contact

The Reverend Wilson Akinwale: **2049984239** | Zilla Jones: **2042294949** | Patsy Gant: **2042758174**



Who are the other Naullaqs out there?

CHRIS TROTT

Photo: [Daiwei Lu](#)

Modern scholarship in history has taught us that we not only have to critically examine documents from the past, we must also ask ‘What is being left out? What is being erased?’ The study of women’s history, for example, has shown that 51% of the world’s population has largely been left out of traditional historical narratives.

I first confronted such a historical absence on a pilgrimage I made with my friend Jaco Ishulutaq to Ummanarjuaq (Blacklead Island) in Cumberland Sound where the first Anglican mission to the Inuit on Baffin Island was established in 1894. When the mission closed in 1906, two local Inuit catechists, Tulugarjuaq and Killapik, were left in charge. Tulugarjuaq remained in Cumberland Sound and continued to teach and preach, while Killapik moved to Kimmirut (Lake Harbour) to help with the new mission there and later moved on to Salliq (Southampton Island).

When Jaco and I stopped at Qimmiqsuut, the site where Inuit had lived before and after the mission on Ummanarjuaq, we went to the remains of the house of Naullaq to reflect and pray. Jaco told me that Naullaq had been the catechist and had led the community in bible study and worship once the white missionaries had left.

Who was Naullaq? There is no reference to him in the missionary accounts of the region, although along with Jaco, other Inuit remember him, and there turns out to be one letter from him to Edmund Peck, the first Anglican missionary Inuit and founder of the Cumberland Sound mission, in the archives. For someone who clearly spent a very long time (from 1906 until at least the 1950s) as a catechist in Cumberland Sound and is dearly remembered by Inuit, why has he dropped out of the historical record? And why do we not hear of him as one of the core catechists who upheld the Gospel message when there were no missionaries?

Panoramic view of the entrance of Blacklead Island, 1903.



Photo: Library and Archives Canada

I cannot answer that question, but it did alert me to the problem. As I began to expand my studies in the history of Anglican missions with Indigenous peoples in Canada, I kept asking myself the question, "Who are the other Naullaqs out there?" One of the great mysteries of mission history in Canada is why the Gospel spread so rapidly among certain groups of people and not among others. The answer has become clear: it was the work of forgotten and unnamed catechists, like Naullaq, that spread the word of the Gospel far beyond the reach of the non-Indigenous missionaries.

According to the official Native Church Policy of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the intention of their work was to raise up local churches and local clergy among Indigenous people to take over the preaching of the Word so that the non-Indigenous missionaries/clergy could move on to new fields of work. The policy never really seemed to work, and the CMS continually complained that their missionaries seemed to get "stuck" in certain missions. The problem was that the mission society was being compared to the English parish church led by ordained clergy. If that is the model, then, indeed, the policy was a failure.

In the nineteenth-century history of our ecclesiastical province and diocese, the names of ordained Indigenous clergy are fairly well known: Henry Budd, James Settee, Robert McDonald, and Edward Ahenakew. Some, like Thomas Vincent are known for feats like walking all the way from Fort Albany to the Red River Settlement to get ordained!

Then we get into the hazier ground of catechists, defined in Roman Catholic Canon Law as: "lay members of the Christian faithful, duly instructed and outstanding in Christian life, who devote themselves to setting forth the teaching of the Gospel and organizing liturgies and works of charity under the direction of a missionary." Some may have heard of Charles Pratt, who served in the Qu'Appelle Valley because of the writings of his historian and descendant Winona Stevenson. But what of Henry Turner, who worked with James Settee,

or John Hope, who worked in Battleford, Saskatchewan? Most Indigenous Anglican communities are still led by catechists, but do we know who they are, and do we pray for them regularly in our cycles of prayer?

Even less well-known are teachers like Joseph Cook, who taught with Rev. Cochrane in the 1840s at Cook Creek, or James Vincent, who taught school at Fort Albany. My favourites, of course, are those laypeople who usually took a few courses at St John's College and then went on to preach the Gospel while they worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. These include Gary Spogan, James Hope, Kenneth McDonald, and John Umpherville.

Since I have started looking into Indigenous Anglicans who preached the Gospel in the nineteenth century, I have compiled a list of 29 men. Every time I speak to this subject, or write a column like this, I add more names and memories.

It does not take a sharp eye to notice that there are no women on this list. I am sure that there were as many women teaching and preaching the Gospel on a day-to-day basis as there were men, but they have been erased completely from historical memory.

What does bringing to light these erasures tell the modern church? Not just that those who are officially sanctioned by the church are called to spread the Gospel, but all faithful Christians do so. And, if the history of Rupert's Land in the nineteenth-century is anything to go by, they are very good at doing this work, reaching into corners of the world where the church otherwise might not go.



Christopher Trott has now retired as Warden of St John's College and as Associate Professor in Indigenous Studies at the University of Manitoba. He is now a volunteer at the Assiniboine Park Zoo and continues to teach one course a term at the University.

Dynevor 'Indian' Hospital

MARY HORODYSKI

Photo: [Scott Evans](#)

Many people today are unaware that Canada operated, and in many ways continues to operate, a racially segregated health care system. The Diocese of Rupert's Land played a role in this long and complicated history by running Dynevor Hospital from 1896 to 1939. This hospital accepted patients from First Nations communities in Manitoba, northwestern Ontario, and western Canada, as well as students from Indian Residential Schools in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and part of Ontario. The diocese's archival records show that, when these children died, some of them were buried in the adjacent Anglican cemetery.

Learning about the history of racially segregated health care and its relationship to Indian Residential Schools helps to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call for Action 59: "We call upon church parties to the Settlement Agreement to develop ongoing education strategies to ensure that their respective congregations learn about their church's role in colonization, the history and legacy of residential schools, and why apologies to former residential

school students, their families, and communities were necessary."

Dynevor hospital began in a stone house formerly used by Archdeacon Abraham Cowley in the parish of St. Peter's on the St. Peter's reserve, a few miles north of Selkirk. After Cowley's death in 1887, Archdeacon Robert Phair proposed that the house be made into a hospital for First Nations people. A board was formed and funding was raised from the Women's Auxiliary of several dioceses, including Rupert's Land, Ottawa, Toronto, Quebec, and Montreal, as well as through personal donations. In 1896, the hospital was ready to be opened and it received grants from the Canadian government and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. The name 'Dynevor' was bestowed on the hospital in honour of Cowley's childhood friend, Francis William Rice, 5th Baron Dynevor who was later Vicar of Fairford, Gloucestershire. Eventually, the name 'Dynevor' was adopted by the entire parish.

Even with only a few beds available, patients came to the hospital from communities as distant as Norway House or further, due to

the lack of sufficient facilities or supplies near their home communities. Medical treatment was also supplied to many 'out-patients,' that is, First Nations people who did not stay for treatment within the hospital or who were treated in their own homes. Services were also provided to the elderly as required, some of whom stayed at the hospital.

In its early years, Dynevor was run almost entirely by volunteers—including surgical services provided by a Selkirk hospital doctor—and was dependent on donations for beds, food, and other necessities. As Archdeacon Phair wrote in 1896, "If the women of Canada do not give [the hospital] a place close to their hearts, I do not see how it is to be carried on." It took almost two years after the hospital opened before a furnace was installed.

Despite the precarious conditions, First Nations people preferred to attend Dynevor rather than a "large city hospital" according to an 1899 article in the *Winnipeg Tribune*. Part of this preference may have been because, in the early years at least, a First Nations nurse was on staff and medical attention, or translation, often could be provided in Cree and Anishinaabemowin. Visiting clergy and members of the hospital committee were often also able to converse in these languages. Additionally, Chief William Asham of the St. Peter's Band, was a member of the hospital committee.

Discharged patients were often provided with donated clothing although they were sometimes required to perform labour to

receive the clothes. Not surprisingly, the hospital also provided the Dioceses with "an opportunity to present Christianity" to the patients.

The heavy workload of operating the facility took its toll on the volunteer staff and after a few years the medical superintendent was forced to leave because of poor health. The deaconess nurse, Miss Lockhart, was advised to take a rest leave and many reports were given of her remaining at work even though her "health has quite broken down." Despite the best efforts of the volunteers and private donors, the Woman's Auxiliary noted in 1900 that the stone house "was never designed for a Hospital, and is inconvenient in every way imaginable."

In 1905, the hospital was still without a resident doctor and successive nurses acted as superintendent. Most of the patients in attendance were being treated for tuberculosis.

In 1908, the Woman's Auxiliary took control of the hospital's administration. The Canadian government provided only a small amount of funding per year and expenses were such a constant issue for the hospital that the hospital nearly closed in 1910. Despite these difficulties, the number of patients Dynevor saw were significant: a 1911 report in the *Winnipeg Tribune* said that 1,290 patients had been treated outside of the hospital and 64 patients had been admitted during the year.

A 1915 report from Woman's Auxiliary member Gertrude C. Code said that the government was willing to provide additional funding if the hospital built a separate ward or building for patients with tuberculosis. At the time, Code reported that patients with tuberculosis were of necessity placed in the same wards as others. The separate ward was built in 1916 and over the next decade, the hospital continued to progress with the installation of electricity, laundry machinery, and a more convenient water supply. Nonetheless, even with hospital improvements, many patients died and were buried in St Peter's/ Dynevor cemetery across the river.

By 1933, the hospital had 48 beds, some of which had been donated by various parishes. At



Photo: Photographer Unknown

Dynevor, St Peter fonds (OW.021)

this time, it seems the hospital was better established and included outbuildings and land for both hay and livestock to help with self-sufficiency in food. The sale of the hospital to the government of Canada in 1939, included 340 acres of land as well as the buildings.

When the government reopened the hospital, the Sanatorium Board of Manitoba was contracted to run the facility. The focus was solely on treating tuberculosis in First Nations and Inuit patients. By this time, according to historian Maureen Lux, Canada had found that they could provide care in a racially-segregated 'Indian' hospital for about half the cost that local governments allowed for the care of non-Indigenous patients. One such cost-saving measure included refusing to send the body of a deceased patient back to their home community unless the family, if they were even informed of the death, paid the expense, or unless the expense of transporting the body was less than the cost of burial.



Photo: Photographer Unknown

Dynevor, St Peter fonds (OW.021)

While most of the patients in Dynevor continued to come from First Nations communities, Inuit patients began arriving in the 1950s. The hospital was closed in 1957 as rates of tuberculosis declined, and the remaining 20 patients were transferred to Brandon.

To date, the complicated history of Dynevor hospital, and especially of its early years, has not been fulsomely described in any known publication. Because of the various ownerships and administrations of the hospital, the relevant archival records are scattered throughout the

Archives of Manitoba, Library and Archives Canada, the City of Winnipeg Archives, and the archives of the Diocese of Rupert's Land. Compounding the difficulty of finding the archival records are restrictions placed by provincial and federal privacy legislation on access to records held within public institutions that are about individuals' health.

These access restrictions apply even when Indigenous researchers and communities are seeking information about the history of racially segregated health care, or seeking information about family members who were sent to hospitals and who never returned home. Although the church is not a body that legally falls under provincial or federal privacy laws, the general policy at the diocese has been to follow the lead of the government policies as best practice, while also recognizing the United Nations Joint-Orontlicher Principles that specify that Indigenous Peoples have the right to know what happened to their missing loved ones.

The records held at the diocesan archives do not tell the full story of Dynevor and much of the brief sketch written here comes from newspaper accounts and other publications. The records at the diocese for the hospital primarily include burial registers, records of services books, some Woman's Auxiliary records, and a few photographs.

Although the diocese has burial registers indicating who was buried at the St. Peter's/ Dynevor cemetery, archival records relating to the actual burial plot locations are very incomplete. It has been suggested that between 4,000 and 6,000 people have been buried at the cemetery and that at least 3,000 of these people are Indigenous. However, grave markings or documentation currently exist for only a fraction of this number. The loss of documentation about grave sites is mainly due to fires and flooding that obliterated wooden crosses or other markers, although we cannot know for certain that all graves had originally been identified.

During the past few years, the archives of the Diocese of Rupert's Land have cooperated

with researchers, primarily the Manitoba Indigenous Tuberculosis History Project (MITHP), to provide access to the archival records that we hold related to Dynevor hospital. MITHP is an Indigenous-led project run by Dr. Mary Jane Logan McCallum, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Indigenous People, History and Archives at the University of Winnipeg. An important aspect of the project is the work done to help Indigenous families discover what happened to loved ones who did not return home from hospitals and tuberculosis sanatoriums.

Further research must be facilitated for knowledge of this history to be better developed. For the diocesan archives, this means that our records must be well described so as to be discoverable, conditions must be adequate to prevent further deterioration of the records, and access policies must be adapted to facilitate Indigenous-led research. It is important that all this work be done in collaboration with the needs and desires of Indigenous researchers and communities.

With the knowledge that Indian Residential School children and former patients are buried in St Peter's/Dynevor cemetery comes the opportunity for the Diocese to actively share with affected Indigenous communities all information that we have about their family members so that these communities may lead in how to honour these children and loved ones.

Suggested resources for further reading:

[Manitoba Indigenous Tuberculosis History Project](#)

Care for the 'Racially Careless'

Indian Hospitals in the Canadian West, 1920-1950s," Maureen K. Lux, The Canadian Historical Review, September 2010

<https://gladue.usask.ca/sites/gladue1.usask.ca/files/gladue//resource187-2ce4041f.pdf>

<https://gladue.usask.ca/sites/gladue1.usask.ca/files/gladue//resource187-2ce4041f.pdf/>

'The only Indian hospital in the Northwest.' Dynevor Indian Hospital, 1896 – 1957

compiled by Chris Willmore

<https://archive.org/details/dynevor>

Colonial tuberculosis legacies and the Dynevor Indian Hospital (1908–1934)

Madeleine Mant, Sylvia Abonyi, and Paul Hackett, *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Feb 21, 2023

<https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.221284>

<https://www.cmaj.ca/content/195/7/E278/>

The Three Sisters

William Osborne and Margaret Anne Lindsay, *At the Forks: Where Indigenous and Human Rights Intersect*, July 27, 2021

<https://ojs.lib.umanitoba.ca/index.php/forks/article/view/918/930>

<https://ojs.lib.umanitoba.ca/index.php/forks/article/view/918/930>

<https://ojs.lib.umanitoba.ca/index.php/forks/article/view/918/930>

<https://ojs.lib.umanitoba.ca/index.php/forks/article/view/918/930>

Indian Hospitals in Canada

Maureen Lux, *The Canadian Encyclopedia*

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indian-hospitals-in-canada>



Mary Horodyski (M.A., M.A.) is the archivist at the Diocese of Rupert's Land. She thanks Dr. Anne Lindsay and Dr. Joyce Clouston for their review of this article. Any errors or misinterpretations are her own.

Land Acknowledgement as Confession

RLN

Photo: [Keith Chan](#)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1

Peter Flynn points to this opening line of the Gospel of John to emphasize the connection between the word and embodied, Christ-like action in the world. At St. George's Anglican, The Committee on the Land Statement, of which Peter Flynn is a member, is wrestling with this question as they reassess their parish's land acknowledgement.

The statement that currently exists at St. George's was written in the early days after the launch of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report in 2015. It includes fairly standard language expressing gratitude for Indigenous peoples' stewardship of the land and their hospitality to settlers. The trouble with this statement for Flynn is the emphasis on gratitude ignores the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's argument and extensive evidence that Indigenous peoples were dispossessed of their lands and subjected to cultural genocide. "It should have been distressing from the beginning," Flynn says, "it's a feel-good and self-deceiving statement."

Another member of the committee who preferred to remain anonymous emphatically

asked, "At what point do you make a statement and say 'we will not tolerate this' at what point does silence make us complicit?"

St. George's Anglican



Photo: RLN

This concern over the fatuousness of the statement led to the formation of a committee to discuss how it might be altered to confront the past and present of colonialism more honestly. The committee has an understanding that whatever they develop may be changed in the future as both they and the Anglican church as a whole grow to more deeply understand the reality and ongoing impacts of colonialism.

The committee decided to rewrite the statement as a confession rather than an acknowledgement as a way to both admit the Church's complicity and to incorporate reconciliation as a value into their confession of faith. The confessional nature of the statement also makes it possible for it to be incorporated into liturgy. This way it can be chanted every Sunday instead of just read at the beginning of service or printed on pamphlets and written materials.

For Flynn, the purpose of confession is to ask "what does the church have to say now?" Given that both the church and the Canadian state's complicity in cultural genocide of Indigenous peoples, the mere admission of responsibility is not enough; this confession is also a call to action.

Furthermore, Flynn describes that the confessional nature of the statement means "The church cannot [make apologies] from the point of view of us being God and saying "we were fine"—we weren't. We're saying we come into this equally in need of reconciliation."

The text as currently proposed by the committee on the land statement reads:

We confess that we live, work and worship on Treaty One land, traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Cree, and Dakota peoples and Homeland of the Red River Metis. As our nation emerges from an era of deliberate suppression of Indigenous culture, community, and economy by way of the Indian Act and the Residential School system, we as members of God's family recognise the sins and wounds of the past and commit to the work of restitution and restoration in a spirit of truth and reconciliation.

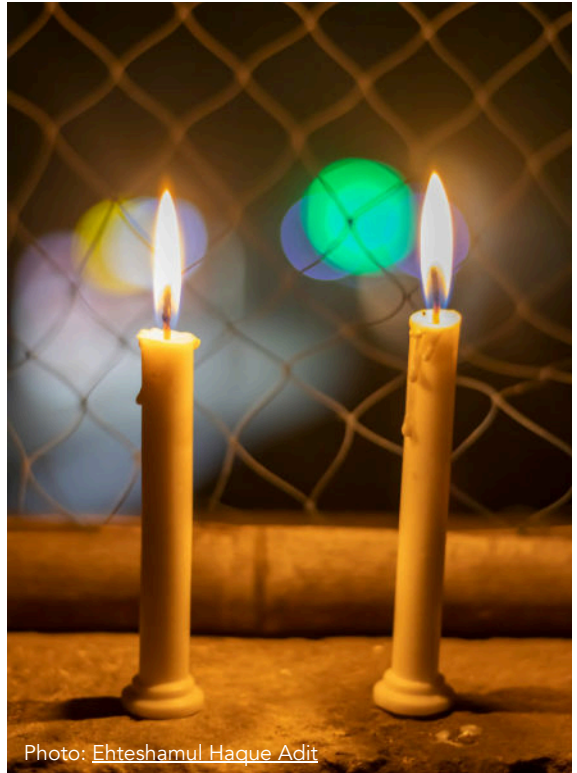


Photo: Ehteshamul Haque Adit

It felt important for Flynn and others on the committee that the Indian Act and Residential School system were named as primary mechanisms of dispossession and colonization as a way to foreclose the common misunderstanding that colonialism was an unfortunate accident. Furthermore, he hopes the confession will spark deeper reflection on difficult questions like "Has the Anglican church set up and implemented a reasonable action plan for what it can usefully do to advance any of these acts of restoration and reconciliation? What can it reasonably do [in addition to] advocacy?"

The committee discussed previous formal apologies for the Anglican Church's role in residential schools such as [Archbishop Michael Peers' 1993 statement](#). Flynn explains his view that while statements such as Peers' are important, one individual, even one in a position of authority, cannot speak for a whole institution and that a deeper commitment to change requires collective action. "We all have to be engaged in the process, we can't say, 'we will reconcile ourselves with you,'" says the anonymous committee member.

“A Corner of God’s Glory”

RLN

Photo: [Allec Gomes](#)

Interview with Les, Ruth, and Lynne

RLN: Could you tell me about the name of your parish?

Lynne: St. Aidan was known as “the Saint of Surprising Gentleness.” He was a seventh century missionary who came from Ireland. He was a missionary to England primarily in Northumbria, which is the area closest to the Scottish Borders on the east side.

RLN: How does your community understand this place?

Les: This was a church plant from St. James Parish in 1929. The basement we’re sitting in is actually the first part of the church to be built because during that time all they could afford to do was dig the hole and worship here. It took ten years to raise the money to build the building that is now above the basement.

Lynne: Those 10 years were during the Great Depression, so it was very difficult to raise money. But there was a need for an Anglican Church in this old part of River Heights.

RLN: How would you describe your church community to a stranger?

Les: When my wife and I first arrived in 1998, we could just feel the presence of the Lord moving

and working among the people here. We felt it in the way that the word was preached, the way the Bible was revered, the way that the people welcomed us. We wanted to be a part of that, so we stayed.

Ruth: I came in here seeking a home church, and I found it because the Spirit of the Lord directed me. The Holy Spirit spoke through the speakers at the pulpit and through the fellowship I found in the congregation.

It’s a church family. We use the word “family” generously because we often see our church family more often than we see our families. Everyone wants to belong, and the Holy Spirit will give you that sense of belonging and connectivity to others.

Lynne: I was teaching up in Lynn Lake and when I would come down [to Winnipeg] and was looking for a church, a friend of mine said, “My brother is the minister at St. Aidan’s. Why don’t you try it?” When I came in, the thing that just held me here was that wonderful Prayer of Humble Access, where it says, “[the Lord’s] property is always to have mercy.” When I heard that, I just thought, “I can stay here forever!”

St. Aidan’s Anglican Church



Photo: RLN

RLN: Who is a part of your church community?

Les: We have such a wide demographic. We have young families, we have mature Christians, and we have everybody in between. We’ve got people from various economic backgrounds,

various educational backgrounds, and various ethnic backgrounds.

There are so many people from many different places who come here: Nigeria, Japan, Korea, and Afghanistan. And they're all spiritually fed here.

Ruth: We have small groups that nurture each other on a more intimate basis. Some meet once a month, some meet twice, and some meet every week. When you've got 120 people in a congregation on Sunday, you can meet their needs from a teaching perspective. But for us to grow and start to model Jesus Christ's teachings, we need to be able to share with each other in a more face-to-face setting as well as in the wider community.

RLN: Could you talk about the relationship that your parish has with Leaf Rapids?

Lynne: In 2017, a missionary from LAMP (Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots) was attending our parish. Our Missions Coordinator talked with him about how we could get involved, and we began preparing to go to Leaf Rapids in 2020. But then Covid struck, and we had to wait. With LAMP, there's a five-year commitment that's required not just from the team, but from the church itself. During the Covid interim, we were able to gather warm clothes and hygiene supplies to help them cope with the pandemic.

Finally, we were able to travel to the community for four days in the summer of 2022 to start building relationships. This went so well that a couple of the ladies returned in November to minister to the women there. Our third full trip was last summer in 2023, and then again two of the ladies went up in November. We are currently planning another trip this summer.

There have been real friendships established. When they come to Winnipeg, we have them over for supper and otherwise keep in touch. It's a beautiful win-win.

RLN: What does worship look like at St. Aidan's?



Photo: RLN

Les, Lynne, and Ruth in the basement of St. Aidan's

Les: We have several different worship styles. On the first Sunday of the month, we've got a traditional Holy Communion service, which is a little lengthier and rather formal. On the second Sunday, we have a Worship Service, and its emphasis is simply on worshiping the Lord. On the third Sunday, we have a Holy Communion service in a more contemporary style. On the fourth Sunday, we have a Good News Service which is intended to meet the needs of newcomers to the faith; there's less emphasis on liturgy and more on the Gospel. When there is a fifth Sunday in a month, it'll be a Real Lives service where we invite people to give a testimony about what God looks like in their lives beyond Sunday.

Ruth: It boils down to relationships. That's what's important. Once you develop that, you see how God is working through you, guiding and teaching you and others. You're learning from others and you're teaching others as well and it's very much about relationships in Jesus Christ.

Lynne: I think that also very much informs our outreach. We have a little garden outside, some herb boxes so when our neighbours pass by, they're invited to pick the herbs. There's a community cupboard, a little free library, and places to come and sit. Just little things that say, "Here's a corner of God's glory."

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Diocesan News Roundup

Requests for Prayer

The Rev. Deacon Lynn McDonald of Dryden Ontario is struggling with some health concerns and it would be most appreciated if you could add her to your prayers.

The Rev. Bryan Rivers, now of the diocese of New Westminster, is seriously ill and has asked for prayers. Bryan continues to be a blessing from his hospital bed as he continues his chaplaincy work. Many of us will remember Bryan from his time in our diocese including his ministry at St. Aidan's, Winnipeg and St. Paul, Fort Garry. Please keep Bryan, his wife Karen and their family and friends in your prayers.

The Very Rev. Paul Johnson has announced his retirement as the Dean of the Cathedral church of St. John, effective August 31st, 2024. We are grateful for the ministry and witness of Dean Paul, one who has navigated challenges, prayed, and wept with others, and found joy in what God is doing. We pray for Dean Paul, his family, the cathedral community and wish him to be blessed in his new ministry.



Find your home away from home this fall at St John's Residence at the University of Manitoba. Apply today!

Wechetowin Stuffing and Smudging Gathering

Epiphany Indigenous (370 McKenzie Street)
WEDNESDAY, FEB 28TH, 7:00 P.M.

Wechetowin is a Cree word for "People Helping People" a grassroots organization, formed in 2006 by the Rupert's Land Aboriginal Circle of Elders. Moving forward into 2024, we continue the work envisioned by our Indigenous Elders as we work together, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people supporting each other.

A Day of Prayer and Fasting for Israel/ Gaza and Ukraine

FRIDAY, FEB 16TH, ALL DAY

ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson and ACC Primate and Archbishop Linda Nicholls invite you to a day of prayer and fasting on Friday, February 16, 2024. To conclude the day, join Bishop Susan Johnson and Archbishop Linda Nicholls in a 30-minute prayer service on [Facebook Live](#) at 6:00 p.m. Central Time.

Upcoming Issues:

In **March**, we enter Lent with an issue on **Faithful Service** exploring how Anglicans express their faith in Jesus through the work of caring for others.

In **April**, we enter spring with an issue on **Transitions**. From unpredictable seasonal changes, to birth, death, and new eras of life, transitions bring out uncertainty and fear while also creating the possibility for joy to enter in.

Call for submissions:

Rupert's Land News is always looking for writers and artists! If you'd like to write for RLN or submit artwork, please send an email with your name and the topics on which you'd like to write, or samples of your artwork to rlnews@rupertsland.ca

You can also send me an email if there are any themes or topics you'd like to see in future issues of RLN.

- Misha Pensato, editor