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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.

Cover: "Blending watercolors blue and yellow to create orange and green on canvas" by [Clark Van Der Beken](#)

Generations



Photo: [Photo Boards](#)

Each generation faces unique questions and challenges that it must answer by looking to the past and learning from its elders while reinventing this wisdom to meet the needs of its present circumstance. For the diocese, the question of generations may bring up a mix of feelings, from nostalgia for times when church pews were filled with more congregants, to hopes for the future that new generations may make the tradition their own.

This issue brings together stories of a number of new programs and changes at General Synod which attempt to connect with a new generation while marking how these changes also exist in continuity with the past.

This issue is my last as editor of Rupert's Land News. It has been an honour to serve the communities that comprise the Diocese of Rupert's Land through rich conversation and writing. I eagerly anticipate how the next editor will reinterpret this magazine, drawing in new ideas and building on the old.

We start this month's issue off with an article from the Rev. Theo Robinson on the resolution at General Synod on Pastoral Liturgies for Journeys for Gender Transition and Affirmation. This article explores the context leading up to the resolution and the good news of the Anglican Church of Canada becoming the first in the worldwide communion of Anglican Churches to have a pastoral liturgy for gender transition.

Next, the Rev. Dixie Bird describes the experiences and teachings shared at Sacred Beginnings. Sacred Beginnings is an embryo of Sacred Circle for youth to learn traditional teachings and get involved in the work being done by Indigenous Anglicans and just had its second gathering in May this year.

The Rev. Alan Hayes reflects on the 1963 Anglican Congress in Toronto which was a turning point in Anglican history

and began significant conversations about decolonization and the Anglican Church's relationship with the British empire. A recent conference marking 60 years since this congress has brought forward reflections on what has changed in the Anglican church in the intervening years.

A note from Refugee Coordinator Marlene Smith invites you to the diocese's marking of World Refugee Day on June 23rd at Epiphany Indigenous Church. This day is meant as an invitation to "welcome the stranger" and calls us to explore the relationship between moving towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and supporting those displaced by war abroad.

Robyn Sulkko of the PWRDF youth council announces their 12 month Youth to Youth program which provides opportunities for people ages 12-16 to learn about each other's cultures and build right relationships with each other.

Finally, a parish profile on St. Michael and All Angels' explores how that community's unique Anglo-Catholic worship connects with both retired clergy and congregants in their 20s all looking to worship with all the senses in a context outside of the business of daily life.

I hope you enjoy this month's articles.



MISHA PENSATO

Misha Pensato is the editor of Rupert's Land News

Generations

This is Misha Pensato's last issue of Rupert's Land News as editor; and it was an amazingly positive experience for the Rupert's Land disciples to participate with the editor at events, interviews, and intentional discipleship gatherings. I am particularly grateful for Misha's curiosity, mixed with outstanding editorial skills, that produced a wonderful year for Rupert's Land News.

The Rupert's Land News Advisory Board hopes to hire a new editor soon.

I have begun my contribution to this issue by expressing gratitude, which is a very fitting theme for my writing this day.

We are grateful for the prayers of fellow disciples, ascending to God for good health, relief of burden, sorrow, and loss. We are grateful for a Church that yearns to discern God's acts and his will in responding to faithful prayers, knowing that in the One Body of Christ, we share with one another the deep bonds of affection Jesus has for all disciples. We are grateful for the abundance that God pours upon the earth so that all creation may have life.

Grateful hearts are often the catalyst for people's spiritual formation into following Jesus in their lives. Gratitude seems to pull humans away from dependence, independence, and even codependence, toward interdependence. Jesus draws us toward himself, and thus toward one another to be the continuation of his resurrected life.

Our local context of parish and mission is a microcosm of the universal Church. The Church and Body are called to proclaim the nearness of God's heaven, heal the sick, cast out demons, challenge unjust structures, make new disciples, and do our part to steward in creation the care of this earth. These are acts and postures of thanksgiving and gratitude. This is not because God has given us stuff, but because gratitude is one mode of heavenly language with which we clearly hear God's voice.

A long time ago, I was thanked for a gift I had given a downtown community in a way that I did not understand at first. A disciple asked me to provide the gift of music at an event, which I did, and precisely for the time for



Photo: Cloth with Floral Sea Design, 1894, Arthur Silver [The Cleveland Museum of Art](#)

which I agreed. When I had completed my work, I began to pack up my stuff to leave. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a person rushing toward me with their hand extended. I remain ashamed of my thinking "Oh no! This person wants to play my guitar." How utterly ignorant I was. Before I could blink, the person took my hand in both of their's and said, "Thank you SO much! You have no idea what you have done for us today. God Bless You!" I was stunned, embarrassed, and absolutely a mess inside – this was God crashing my self-importance.

As I made my way one city block to my car thinking "Hold on here, I'm the one who is supposed to be doing the blessing," and then the tears literally poured out of my eyes, for the blessing that God so powerfully needed to impart that day. I remain grateful for the angel of God that shook my hand and brought me to tears.. I grateful for that angel's life and the brilliance of God's Son alive in humanity that transforms individuals into the One Body, a resurrected Body that selflessly cares for the whole of creation.



GEOFFREY WOODCROFT

Bishop of Rupert's Land

Transgender Liturgies



Photo: Kyle

A version of this article was first published in [Broadview Magazine](#) on July 13, 2023.

Transphobia has been rearing its ugly head all across North America. People are attacked while trying to use the bathroom. Kids are afraid to go to school for fear of bullying. Politicians are making laws that are forcing teachers to out students to their parents. And in many of these instances of blatant transphobia, the bible is used as a weapon. Sermons are preached from the pulpit defending these transphobic actions by so-called Christians who reject transgender people with claims of “it’s a fad,” “protect the children,” and “God doesn’t make mistakes.” So it makes sense that churches aren’t always seen as places someone can go for a safe haven. It makes sense that an increasing number of transgender people are walking away from church communities and losing faith in God.

No matter that some people are claiming that transgender people are a new thing, transgender and non-binary Christians are now and have always been in the church, including the Anglican Church. What’s new is that we are no longer hiding who we are and we are looking to be seen, loved, and cared for within the church. The Anglican Church of Canada has spent the last 20 years working on

social statements, standing against homophobia and transphobia, and calling for protection of the vulnerable. Unfortunately, there has been more talk than action which makes some transgender people wonder if the church is really listening.

So when, in the fall of 2020, I was contacted by the Reverend Dr. Eileen Scully to join a working group around transgender liturgies, I immediately agreed to be a participant. Over the last few years, I have had the amazing opportunity to work with transgender and non-binary persons, along with a few chosen allies, to be the consultative group to discuss the theological, pastoral, and liturgical lenses as a

way to shape new Anglican liturgical rites and the careful pastoral introduction to them. As we lived across the country, we met over Zoom and had amazing discussions about what parts of liturgy we loved and what we thought was missing. Although there were sporadic conversations about God being gendered as male through the *Book of Alternative Services*, most of the discussion centered on specific rites and prayers that we, as transgender people, are in search of when we are worshipping, and to acknowledge different points of our transition. Through the time that these liturgies were discussed, written, and re-written, it was so amazing to work with a group of people who were just like me. It can feel lonely not knowing if there are any other transgender people in leadership, or even in the church. Not everyone is comfortable advertising their gender identity, so you just don’t know who is out there.

Changing and adding liturgies within the Anglican Church of Canada involves submitting them to the highest governing body of the church for approval. Every three years, the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada meets to discuss matters of national importance, review and approve financial reports, and consider legislation that affects the national church. On occasion, matters of worship and

liturgy are brought to General Synod for review and approval, as was the case at last year's meeting which convened June 27-July 2 in Calgary, AB. Resolution A122, Pastoral Liturgies for Journeys for Gender Transition and Affirmation, was brought to the floor of General Synod by Finn Keesmaat-Walsh (Ontario) and Reverend Marnie Peterson (British Columbia).

Change to "Finn Meesmaat-Walsh was one of the participants I had met and, as I was not able to attend the General Synod in person, I asked them what it was like being on the floor for this resolution. Finn told me that with the 2019 General Synod in mind, where the Synod was considering the motion to change the marriage canon, they were bracing for the worst, convinced that someone would request a vote by orders. (The vote in 2019 was ultimately lost in the order of bishops). No request was made; therefore, a simple vote was taken with a majority overwhelmingly achieved. It was such a different result than the 2019 General Synod that I think we are still in a bit of shock.

Ultimately, the end result was good news! The Anglican Church of Canada became the first in the worldwide communion to have Pastoral Liturgies for Journeys for Gender Transition and Affirmation. As Primate Linda Nichols stated following the vote, "by approving these liturgies, we are sending a message that the Anglican Church of Canada stands in solidarity with transgender people." These liturgies represent a public affirmation by the Anglican Church that we as transgender and non-binary folk are accepted, welcomed, and loved as the people that we are, and that we are all beloved children of God. According to Dr. Scully, the person who spearheaded the consultation group, "This is historic for our part of the Christian church, in the worldwide Anglican Communion, and is an important moment in the life of the world and a great example of a grassroots movement in the church met with the discernment – in parliamentary process – of the church in a really good way. It's the church waking up and recognizing a need for change in ourselves, a change that's coming as we welcome the gifts of those we've not recognized well or at all in our midst."

Again, the acceptance of these liturgies represents a public affirmation by the Anglican Church that we as transgender and non-binary folk are accepted, welcomed, and loved as the people that we are, and that we are all

beloved children of God. We have moved beyond talking into action by listening to the people who are actually affected by the work, or lack of work, of the task forces that have been set up over the last two decades. Rather than a group of straight cisgender people making decisions, the church is actually listening to the transgender community. Having these liturgies affirmed by the national church is the beginning of creating space for healing the church's relationship with those who left their home church, whether by choice or by force, because they are transgender or non-binary. It is one of many steps towards true and full inclusion of 2SLGBTQIA+ people in the Anglican Church of Canada. This public affirmation could, ultimately, save lives.

Previously, when I came out as transgender to my priest, I feared rejection from her and my parish. I was also scared to come out to my bishop as I thought he would revoke my request to become a priest. If I had seen liturgies such as these being offered, I would have trusted that support would be there for me. In the end, I was one of the lucky ones because support for me never wavered. My priest was pleased to do a renaming ceremony for me. We created it ourselves because these now-authorized liturgies didn't exist at the time.

Someone asked me if I would now go back and use some of these new liturgies on myself, like the Affirmation of Gender Identity, for example. Honestly, I hadn't thought of it. But even if I don't use these liturgies for myself, I am sure glad that they exist now. It shows that the Anglican Church of Canada is making space for me and others like me! And that's the best feeling in the world right now.



THEO ROBINSON

The Reverend Theo Robinson is an Anglican priest serving as a Pastor in the Interlake Regional Shared Ministry with the Lutheran Church of the Manitoba Northwestern Ontario Synod. You can find

him on Facebook ([@revthorobinson](#)) and Instagram ([@theconversepriest](#)), and you can follow his blog at [tjrobinson.blogspot.com](#).

A Disciple's PRAYER BOOK



Images provided by Dixie Bird

DIXIE BIRD

Sacred Beginnings

The second Sacred Beginnings took place from May 6th to May 13th of 2024. After the gathering, RLN's editor interviewed the Rev. Dixie Bird about the experience of this gathering and the mission of Sacred Beginnings. This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Sacred beginnings is like an embryo of Sacred Circle. It's for young Indigenous adults across Turtle Island to come together. At this second annual gathering we delved into the seven traditional teachings.

Our theme this year was Wechetowin, a Cree word that means helping each other. For our first day, we had Humility as our teaching. The clan for that would be the wolf, who brings us the teaching of humility. We tied humility with gospel based discipleship through the *Disciples Prayer Book*.

Vince Solomon went on to teach about Truth the next day. After that was Courage, Love, Respect, Wisdom, and Honesty. The clan for Truth would be the turtle, the bear brings us the teaching of Courage, the eagle brings us the teaching of Love, the bison brings us the teaching of Respect, the beaver brings us teaching of Wisdom, and the sage brings us teaching of Honesty.

Our keynote speaker, Tim Barron Jr., talked about the eighth traditional teaching being Forgiveness. He said it was hard to learn to trust because of how he was brought up and how he was neglected. I could totally relate to what

he was saying, being a residential school survivor. He said he had to learn how to forgive and it started with forgiving himself for holding onto the pain from all of the harms that were done to him.

Bishop Rachel Parker came to be a part of the conversation and was given an hour to speak on our first day. Sacred Beginnings purpose is to bring in different conversations and to help the young adults consider taking on this type of work to be a part of what we're trying to bring together.



A lot of that is through cultural teachings and the traditional way of life. Despite how we were taught to assimilate, the people never gave up on what they believed.

We also talked about suicide prevention with Dorothy Patterson and her husband, John Patterson. They spoke



about their personal story of loss they endured through the suicide of their son. It was triggering for some who had to step out because it was something that they were not ready to listen to. That happens because it's a part of our reality.

After that we toned it down with moccasin making. The point is for Sacred Beginnings to bring that type of culture back where we are able to just be who we are and put our hands on an activity. The essence of what we're doing teaches us patience, it teaches us

communication, it teaches us to listen, it teaches us to use all of our five senses.

On that second day, we learned how to drum from Tim Barron and his crew, Jeremy, Glenn, and Errol. The idea was to get us to learn how to sing, how to beat the drum and use our senses, our hands, our ears, our eyes, our heart, our mind and just flow. We were able to get that feeling of being in sync with one another, sharing that moment of our ancestors being there. With some of the young adults, you can feel the ancestors through their voices as they sing. All of us had a chance to lead. The beauty of it was we could make mistakes, we could laugh.

At that point, we gave the young adults a day break because a lot of the stuff that they were learning was very intense. That's the thing about Sacred Beginnings, people know there's a responsibility to be mindful of connecting with one another. We had a good day off and we got to eat at an Indigenous restaurant.

One of the most sacred parts about Sacred Beginnings is the fire. A lot of times the fire keepers were from Tim's group, which is called Four Sacred Hearts in Winnipeg. They would work out days and times for the hours that they looked after the fire. A lot of us like myself, the facilitators, the coordinators, the speakers and the young adults would actually go to the sacred fire and speak and talk and engage not only with the spirit of the fire, but also with the fire keepers. It was kind of like a healing service because you went there with something that was on your mind and on your heart and the firekeepers would share their personal journey related to what we were talking about. I myself would go to the sacred fire to smudge every morning before I went to the meeting so that I could clear my mind and make light of the day of what we had to work on.

We continued with our third day with Bishop Larry Beardy. He talked about the meaning of respect and he also spoke about the oral traditions of stories. That is the richness of what the young adults learn through Sacred Beginnings, it's about those oral traditions and it's about having our own Indigenous Bishops talk about these things that they know and that we get to be a part of the narrative in relation to what we've learned through our grandparents or even maybe something that the young adults have never heard of and that they could take home and share.

We had the opportunity to work with Su McLeod who works for PWRDF. She led us in a trust-building exercise and we asked what it would look like to eventually have a youth council and how do we make that happen if that is what Sacred Beginnings wants to become.

From that day, we would have evening games which really helped because being Indigenous, we never had those evening games to end off the day with happiness and tiredness and just letting out.

We had a couple people get their spirit names and their clan names. The expression they would show after they were done with that ceremony was almost of enlightenment. They would go outside by the drum and do the ceremony, while some of us would be inside still doing our moccasins and when they come into the building there is this different look about them. For them to trust in us enough to share their names was beautiful because for them that experience was something that they can live out and have that sense of pride of who they are in terms of traditional culture.



In the afternoon, one of the facilitators went out and did prep for survival on the land. That morning myself and the fire keepers had a different fire going so that we could cook outside. On the inside, we had the other facilitators help prep the food, and then the person that presented taught us how to prepare the food with tinfoil and butter to go over the fire.

When we went out onto the land, there was this frog that came to be a part of Sacred Beginnings as it hopped towards the fire. The teaching was that the frog is the chief and so it was really symbolic because at our first Sacred Beginnings, there was a turtle that came close. It was like the turtle and the frog had come to be a part of Sacred Beginnings, to say that something good is happening here. That was very reassuring, knowing the meaning and the significance behind that.

Then we went back into the building and we worked with our emotions on paper. It was called ghost writing. We had to pick a light marker, maybe a yellow one or an orange one, and talk about what it is that's bothering us, what it is that's kind of hurting us at this time in our lives. Then we switched the paper around and talked about how we're going to mend that.

Then we put a white paste glue called gecko over it, let it dry off, and then we used stencils, a little dabber, and paint over it to create this wonderful artwork. It was a really good piece to do during Sacred Beginnings because every day we would have a circle check-in at the end of the day and we turned that into something specific with journaling and ghost writing. A lot of people were able to share that piece of themselves and how calm it made them feel.

That continued to our last day, on which we had Eucharist. The teaching for that day was honesty. We did the service in the building and it was quite something to share the gospel.

After we did evaluations, we were able to write on a whiteboard what we would like to see for Sacred Beginnings in the future.

It's about opening that gift to the young adults in terms of the Christian way of doing this work and then also the culture and the tradition that was lost and giving it back to the young adults.

On day seven we did a ceremony. In the beginning, Tim Bear Jr. would do the lighting of the fire and the lightning

of the pipe at sunrise and we had to have tobacco ties with red cloth and we had to carry them with us for those seven days. All the emotions that we had within us was put into that tobacco tie and at the end of day seven, we would say our prayer and then let all of what it was that we had with us that we didn't need to take back with us be put into the fire to understand that we needed to let that part of ourselves go.

We made a feast for the ancestors that left before us and fed it to the fire. We don't put anything else in the sacred fire, aside from what the fire keeper expects from us. We closed off with a song and shut out the fire.

The next day when we left, we brought out water from our communities. We planted an apple tree the year before at the first Sacred Beginnings and offered tobacco with the prayer. Then we watered the tree from the areas where we'd come from to feed the tree and to remember that we grow.

The Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples co-chair, Murray Still, talked about how the apple tree is going to grow and how we've grown from last year into where we are today. The other co-chair, RJ Tailfeather, talked about how when we go somewhere, we take our spirit with us. When we leave our home, we're there with our spirit. And when we bring our spirit back when we walk back into our home, we have good feelings and good thoughts and leave all the negatives where it was that we were. A lot of us carry heaviness in our lives and we never allow ourselves to express that. So that's part of the significance of having Sacred Beginnings.

The Unexpected Turn at the Anglican Congress of 1963

ALAN L. HAYES

The Anglican Congress of 1963 brought a thousand Anglicans from all over the world together in Toronto and turned out to be important for reasons no one expected.

The primary purpose of congress was just to get Anglicans from all over the world into one place at one time so that they could learn from each other, build personal relationships, experience the breadth of Anglican Christianity, and worship together.

A second purpose was to hear and discuss presentations and panel discussions on Anglican mission. The organizers interpreted mission as responding to the needs and challenges of the modern world, such as secular ideologies, inter-faith encounter, and social problems. The “modern world” in view was mostly a first-world one, unfortunately.

These parts of the conference were being planned by 1960. But they were overshadowed by something that, even a few weeks before the Congress began, no one was anticipating.

It was a document, presented to the Congress by the primates of the national churches of the Anglican Communion, entitled “Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ.” (It came to be abbreviated “MRI”). It was a history-making vision for the future of the Anglican Communion.

The context for the MRI statement was the decolonization of the British Empire. At the end of World War II, most of the “younger” churches of the Anglican Communion — which I think was code for “non-white” churches — were still overseen by the Church of England. Typically, their bishops were British graduates of British universities, and many of their clergy were British, and they relied on the Church of England for funding.

Through the 1950s, that was changing quickly. The former British colonies in Africa and elsewhere were gaining independence. And according to a pattern that had been established when the United States became independent from Britain, and later with Canada and other

The 1963 Toronto Anglican Congress, held at Maple Leaf Gardens



Photo: Canadian Churchman/General Synod Archives

self-governing colonies, an independent country had to have an independent Anglican Church.

From 1950 to 1960, three new Anglican provinces were created in Africa, as well as the archbishopric of Jerusalem and a council of Anglican churches in southeast Asia.

Decolonization challenged the Anglican Communion. Structures of authority had to be redesigned. Ministry personnel needed to be recruited and trained locally, not imported from Britain or the USA. Worship needed to be adapted to local cultures. Funding arrangements needed to be rethought.

Meeting at Huron College in London, Ontario, just before the Anglican Congress convened in Toronto, the Anglican primates, missionary executives, and staff members realized that they needed to bring the need for change to the attention of the wider Anglican world.

The powerful MRI statement was circulated to the Anglican Congress. It raised lots of discussion there. Afterwards, delegates took it back to their home countries for further discussion.

Even now it looks prophetic, even radical. It began by declaring that “the ideas, the pictures we have of one another and of our common life in Christ, are utterly obsolete and irrelevant to our actual situation.” They urged a radical re-evaluation of mission in the light of the gospel, as well as for resources and personnel to pursue it.

How often have you read a formal document officially endorsed by presiding bishops that was so blunt and candid in saying “we’ve been doing everything wrong”? It definitely seized people’s attention.

And as a result, some things did change in the Anglican Communion.

The most conspicuous new initiative, which was instituted a few years later, was the “Partners in Mission” program, which replaced the pattern where “have-not” churches received funding for programs that the “have” churches thought they needed. Partnership meant collegial decision-making and the understanding that, in God’s eyes, all churches, even if they aren’t wealthy, are “have” in the gifts and wisdom that they bring to the table.

But, needless to say, colonial ideas and familiar power structures weren’t wiped out by the MRI document. The struggle with neo-colonialism continued, and goes on today.

As far as I can tell, for instance, not a single Canadian Anglican leader in 1963 had a clue that MRI was applicable in Canada itself, in relation to settler and Indigenous peoples. I’m not sure that it’s a majority opinion even today.

Now, not only was the MRI document important. The consultative process that produced it was important. The Church of England and the Episcopal Church would no longer assume that they could make decisions for churches in Africa, Asia, or South America. The meetings at Huron College showed the benefit and the necessity of open channels of communication across the Anglican Communion, facilitated by a full-time international staff.

The Huron meetings were organized by the first full-time executive officer for the Anglican Communion, who had been appointed in 1959. That was Stephen Bayne, a bishop of the Episcopal Church. His intimate knowledge of the Anglican Communion, and his communications networks, were invaluable. His visionary and efficient leadership demonstrated that Anglican unity requires supportive structures.

The position of executive officer for the Anglican Communion became permanent. And in 1968 the Anglican Communion Office and the Anglican Consultative Council were created to give greater support to consultation.

I’ve concentrated here on some of the visionary and institutional results of the Anglican Congress of 1963, but I want to close by returning to the fact that its primary purpose was really just to get global Anglicans together to talk. And that it did very well.

The worship was particularly memorable. The Congress began with a mammoth service attended by 17,000 people

in Maple Leaf Gardens and broadcast by CBC; the archbishop of Canterbury presided.

There are some folks still around in 2024 who were there in 1963. For many it was a life-changing experience that dramatically broadened the horizons of their minds and hearts in their appreciation of Christianity throughout the world.

You can get a taste of that excitement in the short video about it that was created at the time, which Youtube has at youtu.be/a9MBetjL_bU.

As for the presentations and panel discussions? With some exceptions, they haven’t stood the test of time very well. You’ll find, for example, some delegates from the southern U.S.A. defending racial segregation, and the Cold War looms fairly large.

The presentations were published in a volume edited by Prof. Eugene Fairweather of Trinity College that you can find at the “Internet Archive.” Prof. Fairweather candidly compared the documents of the Anglican Congress to the documents of the Second Vatican Council that was happening at the same time. Most of the Anglican texts looked banal by comparison.

But the MRI document remains (or should remain!) a guidepost for the Anglican Communion.

And who can say how much the relationships that were formed at the Anglican Congress of 1963 contributed to other inspirations, relationships, insights, ministries, and mission in the following years? In invisible ways that will never be humanly known, it surely helped build Christ’s Church.

A group of scholars, clergy, and others are meeting in Toronto in April 2024 for a sixty-year review of the Anglican Congress of 1963. No doubt they’ll find some hidden nuggets of information about what happened there and why it was important. There’s more about the conference and some links to interesting resources at mriat60.wordpress.com.



ALAN L. HAYES

Alan L. Hayes is professor emeritus of the history of Christianity at Wycliffe College in the University of Toronto, and a priest in the diocese of Niagara.



Photo: [Miko Guziuk](#)

Refugee Sunday – Moving Towards Reconciliation

MARLENE SMITH

The Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH) Association, of which the Diocese of Rupert's Land is a member, is committed to upholding the values, principles, and calls to action that came out of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In this community of faith, we try to live out the Third Mark of Mission – Responding to Human need by Loving Service, and “Welcome the Stranger”. In doing the mission of re-settling the oppressed and vulnerable refugees of the world, we also seek to inform ourselves of the past, acknowledging the wrongs that were done to Canada's First Peoples. As we welcome newcomers to this country - their new home - we recognize that they too should know about the history of Canada as we all learn of the past, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation and learning to live in community. We take this journey of building safe, healthy, and inclusive communities by building relationships, and seeking to live in peace, understanding, and harmony with each other while respecting our individual beliefs.

World Refugee Day, declared by the United Nations, is June 20th – the international day to honour people who have been forced to flee their home country to escape conflict and persecution. It celebrates refugees' strength and courage as they

seek safety and opportunities for social inclusion to build a better life.

In an attempt to build relationships with Indigenous Peoples, the Diocese will celebrate **Refugee Sunday at Epiphany Indigenous Anglican Church on Sunday, June 23rd, at 7p.m.** Parishes are invited to attend, joining with our Indigenous family to welcome and celebrate with newcomers.

Please bring a non-perishable food item for the pantry at Epiphany Indigenous Anglican Church, 370 McKenzie St, Winnipeg.

Donations to support refugee sponsorships in the Diocese may be made to the Diocese of Rupert's Land – Refugee Fund.

CONTACT MARLENE AT REFUGEE@RUPERTSLAND.CA FOR MORE INFO.

MARLENE SMITH

Marlene Smith is the Refugee Coordinator of the Diocese of Rupert's Land.

PWRDF Youth Council

ROBYN SULKKO

Photo: Papaioannou Kostas

The PWRDF Youth Council is excited to be working on the development of a project entitled Youth to Youth: Walking in a Good Way, which seeks to provide an opportunity for youth ages 12-16 to learn and engage together on the land and through each other's cultures. Developed by youth, for youth, we will be guided by our hopes in building Right Relationship with each other and Right Relationship with the Land, using the Land acknowledgement to help inform the process. This program is in response to TRC Calls to Action 48, 59, and 60.

This program will take place over the course of 12 months, and we have confirmed five dioceses throughout each ecclesiastical province to participate in a pilot, to help refine the content.

The program will take youth through sessions that explore topics like land, waterways, plants, medicines, animals, language, art, and other cultural practices. These sessions will be adaptable to the various places and contexts in which the program will be implemented. One of the goals of the program is for youth to understand the story of the land on which they live and the stories of the people who have lived on this land and stewarded it.

This program will offer hands-on and immersive opportunities for youth to build relationships with each other and with local Indigenous communities. This may look like going out onto the land to learn Indigenous place names, traditional stories about the land, and to learn about traditional uses of native plants and animals. It could also look like exchanging cultural practices, like playing each other's games, or making each other's traditional crafts. Part of the program also includes identifying the Indigenous communities on the land, and reaching out to build preexisting relationships or to forge new ones based on integrity, respect, and solidarity. There are countless options, and we are looking forward to seeing the ways that each diocese will adapt the program, the ways they will respond to the

interests of their youth, and what relationships will result from these actions.

We are excited about the potential for this project to model Right Relationship and loving reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations within and outside of the church. This idea sprouted from the vision of our youth, and with the support of PWRDF and our Indigenous advisors, this idea could inspire all generations to engage in similar processes. We, as young people, are modeling a loving and just future for the church.

What some of the folks participating in the pilot are saying:

The Youth to Youth Program developing through the PWRDF Youth Council is not only important, but imperative; it is the only way. In the Diocese of Brandon, the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are real and there is a hunger to walk forward in a good way. This IS the good way: young people coming together to learn about themselves and their own heritage, and then sharing that with other youth. Those lessons will then be taken back to their communities and shared with those they love - the elders, their peers, and their siblings. What they have learned will spark memories and conversation, renewing and healing as we move forward as it always should have been, and now must be.

- The Rev. Cheryl Kukurudz Diocese of Brandon

The treaty of this territory is the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, and so I'm hopeful that participation in Youth to Youth will help young people in our diocese make meaningful connections to this land, and to deepen peace and friendship between settler and Indigenous youth so that we all live more fully as treaty people in this place.

- Allie Colp, Diocese of Nova Scotia and PEI



ROBYN SULKKO

Robyn is the Programs and Partnership liaison for the PWRDF Youth Council, where she shares her passions for equity and justice. Robyn recently moved back to the Diocese of Algoma from Ottawa. She acknowledges Thunder Bay is built on the traditional territory of the Anishinabek, which includes the Ojibwa of Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson-Superior Treaty of 1850. You are most likely to find Robyn at the lake, a folk festival or Tim Hortons.

Parish Profile: St. Michael and All Angels'

INTERVIEW WITH THE REV. LAUREN

RLN: When was the parish founded?

LS: We've been here for over a hundred years since 1904. We started as a mission from All Saints. From my understanding at the time, Holy Trinity was the main downtown church and there were parishioners who felt like they were too low-church. So they started All Saints where they have high church leanings, but it still wasn't quite high enough for some. So then St. Michael and All Angels was made.

RLN: Could you tell me what being an Anglo-Catholic parish means?

LS: We haven't turned so far away from Roman Catholic rituals, vestments, and practices as other Anglicans have. For example, most of our service is chanted. The days we celebrate would be closer to a Catholic calendar.

Recently, we celebrated the feast of Corpus Christi and we actually had a monstrance with the Blessed Sacrament inside so that way we could adore Christ as present to us in the Eucharist and then be blessed by him. Having a monstrance and adoring Christ in the sacrament is not something that you would find in many other Anglican churches. We have tried to keep a lot of the good stuff from the Catholic Church instead of shunning all of it.

Another example is at the back of the sanctuary, we have a Mary shrine with candles. It's not that we're lighting candles to bless Mary. It's that you might say a prayer for someone and then ask Mary to intercede on your behalf. We hold Mary in a place of honor, just as Jesus did.

RLN: Who comes to your parish?

LS: As with any church, there's a core group that has been here for like 40 years. They might not have been baptized here, but their children were baptized here and they're still here.

We have a lot of retired clergy who attend. I think a big part of that is once you retire from a parish, you can't really go back for a while. You have to give the new priest space. So this becomes a comfortable place to land even though it might be very different from the type of liturgy they used to lead. We



also have retired United Church and Presbyterian clergy that come here.

We have some people in their 20s. On Sunday we might have 25 people and of those 25, maybe three or four of them are in their 20s. But for 20 year olds coming to church, that's a pretty big deal. In my conversations with them I've learned they are drawn to Anglo-Catholic style worship because it feels different from everyday life. We say here that you worship with all your senses and that's a very different experience from work or other places.

RLN: What does worship look like at your parish?

LS: We celebrate East facing for mass. For those not used to it, it might seem as though the priest is facing away from you for much of the service, and that can be jarring. As a priest, I appreciate it because we are actually all praying in the same direction.

Something that Father Arthur Klassen, who was a priest here for many years, told Father Jamie Howison, who then told me, when elevating the cup during Eucharist, Arthur would see the congregation reflected in the chalice. And so every time when I do that, I can see them and it's that reminder that I'm not up here in my own little chapel. We're really all praying together.

RLN: What are your hopes for the future of your parish?

LS: We are in the process of selling our building, but we will continue to worship here. A lot of our conversations are around what kind of things we want to make sure stay exactly as they are and try to work that out with the new owner, and what things can change. Finances are very tight, and we are running a large deficit budget. Having the cost of the building off of our backs and the heating and the snow removal and all that stuff opens us up to more time to dream about what we can do for our neighborhood. I think it's really forward thinking of the congregation.

Every Tuesday we do a service at the nearby convalescent home. I believe it was Father Arthur started that and we're trying to lean into more of the things that take us outside of the building.

Doreen, our archivist, has made archive books of the parish's history. They're not quite scrapbooks because they don't have patterned paper or washi tape but they have pictures and bulletins from the parish's history. Eventually, when we finalize the sale of the building, there'll be pages for the history of the sale and some of the new things happening in the building too.

RLN: Are there other connections your parish is hoping to make?

LS: We have a connection with the Earl Grey School and Earl Grey Community Center. One of our very dedicated parishioners, Tanis Thiessen, has been the one that's been that main connection. Last summer she approached the vestry with, "the school doesn't have air conditioners, it's really hot. Will the vestry approve me going and buying popsicles and taking them over there frozen for the kids



to enjoy?" Or she might tell us they need craft supplies at the community center and we collect it. So far it's been her bringing service opportunities to us. We're trying to find ways that the rest of us can be involved in building those relationships and finding more opportunities to serve our neighbors at these two places.

RLN: What is your parish's schedule of services?

In the past, there was mass here every day and regular evensong. Times were different then, plus COVID shook up everybody.

Every week we have a Sunday 10:30 a.m. sung mass that's in here in the church with incense. On Tuesdays we have a BCP mass at the Convalescent Home down the street. And in May we started our Thursday noon mass. We chose Thursday because we know many other Anglican churches do Wednesdays if they have a midweek service. We have evensong or special feast day masses often, and we try to post about those on [Facebook](#) and [our website](#).

