

GATHERING PRAYER

Creator, we give you thanks for all you are and all you bring to us for our visit within your creation. In Jesus, you place the Gospel in the Centre of this Sacred Circle through all of which all creation is related. You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life. Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we grow in your spirit, for you are God, now and forever. Amen.

THE VISION

We, the Indigenous Anglicans of Canada, proclaim our self-determination and seek to improve the quality of the spiritual, emotional, physical and mental life for all Indigenous Anglicans. We especially promote healing from our historical trauma that stems from Canadian colonization and oppression. We strive to live this out in community where we seek God's healing for our lives and of God's reconciling love for us, our community and within Creation. We want to walk together as a fully Indigenous expression and self-determining Christian community which respects the teachings (which are anchored and connected to Scripture) and practices of our local Elders.

To work toward healing, reconciliation, decolonization, individual and systemic racism, we strive to be followers of Jesus through Gospel Based Discipleship. At the centre of our vision of ministry is the good news found and proclaimed in Christ. Jesus is the cornerstone and centre of our personal and collective life. Through Jesus we receive, proclaim, and live the Word made flesh in Indigenous communities, families, and lifeways so that the circle of wholeness and just, equitable and right relationships can be restored.

OUR FOUNDATION – THE COVENANT OF 1994

A Covenant and our Journey of Spiritual Renewal

We, the indigenous partners in Canada of the Anglican communion respectfully affirm our place in God's Creation and in God's Love, manifest through the Grace of Jesus Christ. In specific, we address the Anglican Canadians with whom we are in direct communion.

We have shared a journey of close to three centuries in which we have been:

- I. denied our place in God's Creation
- II. denied our rights as Children of God
- III. treated as less than equal, and
- IV. subjected to abuse, culturally, physically, emotionally, sexually and spiritually.

The result, in our communities, homes and daily lives, has been and continues to be:

- broken homes and lives;
- sexual and family violence;
- high recidivism and incarceration rates;
- high chemical abuse;
- loss of spiritual fulfillment;
- loss of cultures, languages and traditions; and
- poor stewardship of Mother Earth.

Because the National church's canons, structure and policies have not always responded to our needs nor heard our voice, we now claim our place and responsibility as equal partners in a new shared journey of healing, moving towards wholeness and justice.

We acknowledge that God is calling us to a prayerful dialogue towards self-determination for us, the Indigenous People, within the Anglican Communion in Canada. Through this new relationship we can better respond to the challenges facing us in a relevant and meaningful way.

As faithful people of God, guided by the Holy Spirit, we invite you, the Anglican Communion of Canada to covenant with us, the Indigenous Anglicans of Canada, in our vision of a new and enriched journey.



A COVENANT

We, representatives of the Indigenous people of the Anglican Church of Canada, meeting in Winnipeg from the 23 to 26 of April, 1994, pledge ourselves to this covenant for the sake of our people and in trust of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ:

Under the guidance of God's Spirit we agree to do all we can to call our people into unity in a new, self-determining community within The Anglican Church of Canada.

To this end, we extend the hand of partnership to all those who will help us build a truly Anglican Indigenous Church in Canada.

May God bless this new vision and give us grace to accomplish it.
Amen.

Donna Bombony
Vernon Wapahong
Oliver Eem
Rev. Lily Bell
Auekay McKay Misgaxi
Ti Samahan
Daniel Ayuleh
Sas Ntita
Murray Murt
Aina Durr-Lamm
John T. Auekay
Mark Royal
Lillian Wesel

Laura Jans
Barbara Harmon
Lil. Prairie
Wilfred S. S. Brown
Morris Fiddler
Rev. Margaret Waterbury
Arthur M. S. S. S.
Gladys Cook

[see original signature page, Appendix 1]

OUR RULE OF LIFE

Creator God we acknowledge and give thanks that:

In Jesus we know we belong to a Sacred Circle with the Gospel and Baptismal Covenant in the Center

In this Sacred Circle:

- We are all related.
- We live a compassionate and generous life.
- We respect all life, traditions, and resources.
- We commit ourselves to spiritual growth, discipleship, and consensus

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. To regularly engage the Gospel
2. To take seriously our own spiritual formation
3. To nurture and foster the spiritual formation of others.
4. To live the Baptismal Covenant
5. To live as a community of disciples
6. To foster reconciliation, healing, and vision
7. To pray and worship regularly
8. To respect the spiritual traditions, values, and customs of our many peoples.
9. To take full responsibility for our local ministries

OTHER ELEMENTS OF OUR FOUNDATION

I. Our Foundation of Faith

- A. The foundation of our faith is Jesus Christ, who we confess is the Messiah and the Son of the Living God.
- B. Our faith is built upon our living experience of Jesus, both as the personal Saviour of each of us, individually, and the Saviour of our People, communally. Jesus is saving us from those who would annihilate us, promising us restoration, freedom, and peace. It is our joyful task to follow Jesus as disciples and see his death and resurrection give our various peoples humanity, life, and hope, renewing the face of the Land towards the return of Jesus, bringing with him a New Heaven and a New Earth.

- C. We hold dear and believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We believe and declare that they are the Word of God and that they contain all things necessary to salvation.
- D. We believe, teach, and proclaim the creed of our baptism, The Apostles' Creed, and we believe, teach, and proclaim the Nicene Creed as the standard of our faith. We urge every community to translate these into their own languages.
- E. We adopt the doctrine, discipline, and worship that is shared in the values, principles, ideals, and practices of the Anglican Communion as exemplified in the Book of Common Prayer of 1962, the Book of Alternative Services of 1983, and the various forms of the Book of Common Prayer that have been developed among our Peoples through local authority. Our life as Sacred Circle is dedicated to this practice and teaching, and we see it as an essential part of the making of disciples.

We encourage our various Peoples to develop their own liturgies and prayer books in their local languages, each as may be best for their ministry. We are committed to the Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Alternative Services, as they preserve so much of the ancient pattern of the Early Church and are, at the same time, so agreeable to our ancient Indigenous patterns of prayer, offering, and worship. The various versions of the Book of Common Prayer that have guided our people in the past, along with the Book of Alternative Services, provide a beginning point and a model as we shape the liturgies and life of the Peoples of the Sacred Circle.

- F. We do not claim sovereignty or authority over the foundation of our faith. It is a gift that we receive with humility, gratitude, and reverence. We believe that it is our Sacred duty to interpret this foundation of faith and live it faithfully in the languages and ways of our Peoples from now until Christ returns. We do, however, claim sovereignty and authority over any changes, deletions, or additions to this foundation. Under the judgement and mercy of God, we declare that this is our task, and ours alone, to oversee and guard this foundation for the Sacred Circle.
- G. Our faith is revealed and understood only through loving practice. This foundation is something we live through our Baptismal Covenant. Traditional teachings of our Indigenous Elders are a dear part of the life and culture in which the Word becomes flesh. The traditional teachings and values of our various peoples help us to see the depths

of God's Word. The wisdom of the past is something that we must have to proclaim God's Word to our families, to all Nations and Peoples, and to all of Creation.

II. Our Relation to the Land and Each Other in Christ

Our individual Nations are built on relationships where everyone within the nation and all things throughout the Land and Waters are treated as relatives. We now become a Sacred Circle, through Christ, where our relationship to the Land and Waters and our way of being Nations is a guide and pattern for our discipleship, fellowship, and unity.

III. Where Two or Three are Gathered

In the past, we were told that spiritual authority came from somewhere else, from across the waters. We were told that we must become like someone else to have that authority. Today, we know that authority comes from the presence of the Risen Christ (Matthew 18:20), wherever two or three are gathered in his Name. Upon this power and authority, the Sacred Circle is founded. Wherever two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, he is there, the Sacred Circle is there and all that is needed to provide hope and healing is there.

IV. Gospel Based Discipleship

Gospel Based Discipleship (GBD), as it is found in a basic way in the Disciple's Prayer Book, has been a foundational and on-going guide to the Sacred Circle. We commend it to the generations to follow, not as a lifeless ritual, but as a constantly renewed, locally rediscovered, and sacred revealing practice of those who follow the good walk.

V. Worship

Those who live in a Sacred Circle of Gospel Based Discipleship, will find themselves, as Jesus himself said, drawn to worship the Great Mystery in Spirit and in Truth. First, like the ancestors they offer prayers in Morning and Evening. As Jesus is lifted-up by them, he draws others and they flower into a community that give thanks to God in the ceremony Jesus asked us to offer until he comes again: The Lord's Supper, the Holy Communion, the Holy Eucharist, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, the Sacred Feast.

VI. Ministry

The Creator calls each one of us to use gifts and talents to walk a good path with a good mind; to fulfill our baptismal covenant. There are some that the hand of the Creator is on, and we recognize them as leaders. There are also those that are chosen to lead, through the Holy Spirit, by the community. Every baptized person has a ministry. Jesus raised and equipped followers to be disciples. Discipleship is the root of our ministry as Indigenous Christians.

VII. Of our Duty to God and Each Other

We seek to understand each other, to build relationships and a community of faith — a community that lives into the baptismal covenant “*to strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being*”. We seek to celebrate our ministries and to honor the struggles that we need to reconcile.

We seek to learn from each other, to value our cultures and our traditions, to feel what has been hurt through losses in our history together and continue to promote healing and reconciliation for all. (From Road to Warm Springs document, September 2018)¹

¹ <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/The-Road-to-Warm-Springs.pdf>