

We are a Covenant People We are a Treaty People

Solidarity and Worship for May 28 or June 4, 2017

On June 2, 2017 hundreds of people will converge on Parliament Hill to take part in the *Kitchi Blanket Exercise*. Kitchi means “really big” in *Anishinaabemowin*, the language of the unceded Algonquin territory where our settler capital is located. Together we will walk through over 500 years of colonization, bringing focus to the intergenerational impacts on Indigenous peoples and what it means to be marking Canada 150. Holding large-scale Blanket Exercises on Parliament Hill is the vision of the Indigenous youth-led organization Assembly of Seven Generations (A7G). The Kitchi Blanket Exercise is a partnership between KAIROS and A7G.

Everyone is welcome on June 2 in this act of public witness. However, we know that all of you will not be able to be there and so we are inviting you to engage in a solidarity action and take a special moment on either May 28 or June 4 to bring this focus into your worship service. Remember that June 2 marks the second anniversary of the release of the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Solidarity Action

Community Blanket Making

Make a large blanket to be used in KAIROS Blanket Exercises (KBE) and to educate for reconciliation in 2017 and beyond. You can either keep it—with a commitment to use it in a KBE in your church or community over the next year, or, you can gift it to a KBE kit in your area. Contact Katy Quinn at kquinn@kairoscanada.org to locate the closest kit. In both cases, see if you can dedicate the blanket or the plan/materials in your church on May 28 or June 4, and send us a picture of your community and blanket to info@kairoscanada.org.

Thanks to Henriette Thompson for her assistance in the preparation of this resource.



Replicas of historic wampum belts used to tangibly represent treaty commitments.

How?

- Knit, crochet or quilt 8” x 8” squares. When you have 48 squares, stitch them together into a blanket that measures 48” (4’) by 64” (5’ 4”);
- Make a smaller children’s blanket that represents the residential schools in the KBE script;
- Stitch together different shades of either red, yellow, white or black fabric to make a solid colour blanket for one of the four directions;
- Gather pieces of fabric from members of the congregation and ask your sewing experts to help create a “crazy quilt” style blanket.

Other Considerations:

- Learn from Indigenous peoples in the territory about the Treaty area or traditional lands on which you live. With their direction, incorporate

symbols or words into the design of the blanket.

- Choose a TRC Call to Action or an article from the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* that your community wants to focus on and include a reference to this in the design of the blanket.
- Enlist the help and direction of the textile people in your group (knitters, crocheters, quilters, sewers, etc.) to provide technical and artistic oversight.
- Find a way to engage young and old.

Another Solidarity Option

KAIROS has produced the campaign resource: *Let Justice Roll: Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (see www.kairoscanada.org/UNDRIP). Pages 10-11 describe how to make a Banner to support Indigenous rights.



Worship Suggestions Call to Worship and Covenant Procession

Leader: In the days of Noah and Naamah, God placed a rainbow in the sky as the sign of a covenant of God's love for all the earth.

People: In the colours of the rainbow, we see the sign of God's grace for all creation.

Leader: In the days of Miriam and Moses, the words of God were written on tablets of stone, as the sign of a covenant between God and all of God's people.

People: In the tablets of stone, we see the sign of God's hope for each to live in peace with God and neighbour.

Leader: In the days of the prophet, God promised to place a new covenant in our hearts.

People: As members of the living Body of Christ, we see the sign of God's promise among us.

Covenant procession: Invite three children to process to the front: the first with a container of water; the second with a container of soil; and the third with an appropriate symbol of covenant or treaty (e.g., paper scroll with words of the treaty for the land on which you live, silver chain, photo of a wampum belt) and a copy of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

People: We are a covenant people.

Child 1: The earth and water remind us of our covenants with God and with the land.

People: We are a covenant people.

Child 2: Treaties are our covenants with Indigenous peoples on this land.

People: We are a covenant people.

Child 3: The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* invites us into a new covenant.

The children place the objects on a table.

Leader: Our children and these symbols remind us that we are a covenant people. A treaty people, bound in relationship to our Creator, this land, and the Indigenous peoples who live on this land.

People: In these often forgotten and violated treaties, we hear God's call for justice. We come to listen and to heed God's call.

(Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church, Kitchener, ON. Used with permission.)

Bible reading suggestions

Leviticus 25 (about “anniversary” years – sabbatical and Jubilee)
Psalm 95: 4-7 (call to worship, obedience)
Lamentations 5: 1-5 (exile, lament)
Jeremiah 31: 15; 17 (God promises Rachel that her children will return to their land)
Jeremiah 31: 31-34 (a new covenant)
Micah 6: 8 (what God requires)
Luke 4 (Jesus proclaims Jubilee)

Hymns and Songs

Many and Great, O God, Are Your Works (407 CP, 837 ELW, 80 SFAGP)
This is the Day (40 SFAGP, 592 CBW, 78 BP)
Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness (396 ELW, 375 VU)
Here I Am, Lord (520 CBW, 509 VU, 395 H, 592 BP)
She Flies On (380 VU, 656 CP)
Called By Earth and Sky (135 MV)
What Does the Lord Require of You (701 VU, 409 H) Or Bind us Together, Peace is Flowing like a River, and other common songs.
(Common Praise CP, Evangelical Lutheran Worship ELW, More Voices MV, Songs for a Gospel People SFAGP, Voices United VU, Catholic Book of Worship III CBW, Hymnal: A Worship Book H, The Book of Praise BP)

Sermon or Education Time

- Show *Reserve 107*, a film that speaks about the relationship between the Young Chippewyan Band and the peoples of Laird, Saskatchewan around land and broken covenants (33 min).
<https://www.reserve107thefilm.com/>
- Read a poem or reflection or show a video, such as those found on page 4.
- Read the reflection on the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, page 3 in *Let Justice Roll: Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*
www.kairoscanada.org/UNDRIP

Prayers

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 which all of 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.

(Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples)

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 centre.

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.

(Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples)

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving spirit may move every human heart; that the barriers dividing us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; and that, with our divisions healed, we might live in justice and peace.

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship)

O God, Creator, where you are, we are standing on holy ground.

Open our eyes to see you, open our ears to hear you, open our hearts to recognize the sacred, and open our minds to honour our neighbour. Amen.

(Pastor Fran Schmidt, Kairos Lutheran Faith Community, Saskatchewan)

Creator, you have given all peoples one common origin.

It is your will that they be gathered together as one family in yourself.

Fill the hearts of humankind with the fire of your love and with the desire to ensure justice for all.

By sharing the good things you give us, may we secure an equality for all our brothers and sisters throughout the world. May there be an end to division, strife and war. May there be a dawning of a truly human

society built on love and peace.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord.
(Prayer for Justice #1
<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=722>)

Reflections

Where earth is property, where is covenant?

How can we understand each other across cultural differences?
Some say the earth is the Lord's, but it is destined to be private property.
Some say the earth is "our mother," and yet we take from the earth without offering thanksgiving.

The earth is sacred and land is our life, but we continue to exploit and destroy.
Will we find ways to respectfully discuss the relationship between individual and community rights? Can we maintain covenant treaty relationships for "as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the rivers flow"?

In a generation of exploitation of resources and accelerated materialism we are polluting the earth. We have been invited to plan for seven generations. What will the inheritance be for those who are yet to come? ("When earth is property, where is covenant?" by Stan McKay (Cree) from *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry* (2013), ed. Steve Heinrichs)

A Reflection

The day I first stepped onto this land, the wind was strong. The pine trees bending to the constant pressure over the years. A spirit of peace. A sense of the sacred, holy, other of this place palpable with each breath.
And we, standing on holy ground long before I knew the full story of this place.
Holy ground, sacred to the Young Chippewayan who identify a burial ground here.
Land that is sacred, too, to the generations of Lutherans who worshiped on this land, and whose ancestors are also buried here.
Sacred because God, the Creator, is fully known and present here. (From "Standing on Holy

Ground" by Pastor Fran Schmidt
<https://devotionalwonderings.wordpress.com/2017/03/13/holy-ground/>)

Video Resources

The following videos and text appeared in "Gathered on the Land," a Lent 2017 online resource by Sherry Coman, Devotional Project Curator for Lutherans Connect.

<http://lcgatheredontheland.blogspot.ca/2017/03/day-2.html> Video of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation woman telling stories to her daughter of her parents' life.

<http://lcgatheredontheland.blogspot.ca/2017/03/day-6.html> Pauline Gordon's (Inuk) experience of residential schools and her journey to self-acceptance.

<http://lcgatheredontheland.blogspot.ca/2017/03/day-7.html> Video clip of Hanaifa, a Muslim student in Yellowknife. Thought-provoking intersections.

<http://lcgatheredontheland.blogspot.ca/2017/03/day-22-22.html> "Am I Next?" a video that was created as a college media project by Hannah Saunders, a Delaware/Mohawk woman from the Six Nations of the Grand River. In her story, the media and political voices on the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women are contrasted with the personal voices closer to her own experience.

<http://lcgatheredontheland.blogspot.ca/2017/03/day-30.html> This reflection includes an excerpt from the writing of Lucy Maud Montgomery who longed for Abegweit -- the land of the Abegweit and Lennox Island First Nations. The reflection can generate discussion about shared love for the (stolen) land. Given the proximity to Confederation Trail and to where the Dominion of Canada was formed on July 1, 1867 in Charlottetown, discuss and reflect on the exclusion of Indigenous leaders from that event.