

# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

JUNE IS NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH IN CANADA.

HERE ARE 5 IDEAS TO HELP YOU LEARN ABOUT AND CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE & CULTURE.

## LEARN ABOUT TREATY SIX AND THE HISTORY OF THE MÉTIS NATION



Did you know that Treaty Six includes 29 First Nations in Saskatchewan, 18 in Alberta, and 2 in Manitoba? Or that Treaty Six was originally signed at Fort Carlton, SK? Did you know that the Métis flag is the oldest national flag in Canada, in part representing the unity of two cultures? Or that the Métis Nation includes over 80,000 people in Saskatchewan?

Each week in our services we acknowledge that we gather on Treaty Six Territory and the Traditional Homeland of the Métis. That's a good place to start, but that acknowledgement represents rights and responsibilities that require the work of understanding and action as we recognize the vast contributions and stories of Indigenous people.

You can find a huge list of learning resources by visiting the Office of the Treaty Commissioner at [otc.ca](http://otc.ca), [metisnationsk.com](http://metisnationsk.com), or [beaconnectr.org](http://beaconnectr.org).

## ENGAGE IN A DECOLONIZATION PRACTICE

Decolonization is the active work of undoing colonial narratives and impacts by challenging our assumptions and privileged patterns of living. When we recognize the harms imposed by colonialism and neocolonialism we can begin to move into reconciling space that honours all people. Try using journal prompts or workbooks such as **Decolonize First** ([decolonizingpractices.org](http://decolonizingpractices.org)) to start a conversation with yourself or a group of friends or family.

You might also try looking back at the news stories so far this year and considering how the Holy Spirit might be inviting you to seek justice, mercy, humility, and dignity in issues like the Wet'suwet'en protests, COVID-19 relief in LaLoche & Beauval/English River, and the MMIWG Action Plan through your words, actions, and prayers.



## SPEND SOME TIME PRAYING THROUGH UNDRIP & THE TRC CALLS TO ACTION



The last several years have given some very clear recommendations on uplifting and empowering Indigenous communities in Canada through the Calls to Action in the Truth & Reconciliation Commission Report (TRC), to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Check out resources like [Lifting Hearts off the Ground: Declaring Indigenous Rights in Poetry](#), or a devotional guide through the TRC Calls to action developed by Healing at the Wounded Place ([redclover.ca/resources](http://redclover.ca/resources)) to help you pray about how you might begin to implement those recommendations and rights.

Pray for local leaders in the Saskatoon Tribal Council and for community organizations like the Indian & Metis Friendship Centre, White Buffalo Youth Lodge, CUMFI, & Okihtcitawak Patrol Group. Invite others to pray and talk with you about what you're learning.

## TRY A NEW SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

In a 2016 interview Dr. Christena Cleveland detailed some steps Christians can take to be more prepared to engage in advocacy through spiritual & contemplative practices. If you are feeling overwhelmed by the long history of colonial injustice in Canada, we encourage you to spend time through the month trying some (or all) of her suggested practices:

- **Lament** - name or list situations or attitudes you've encountered that harm First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. Spend time considering how God's heart breaks over injustice in each of these situations and structures.
- **Naming the Attributes of God** - Be reminded of who God is: creative, just, merciful, loving, listening, wise, generous, challenging. Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you that those attributes are directed to all people and to show you how to embrace those attributes and extend them to others.
- **Praying for others as yourself** - Take some time to express gratitude for the freedoms you've enjoyed in life. As you note them, consider where those elements are lacking for Indigenous communities and pray that imbalances would shift to open up spaces of abundance, dignity, and blessing for others, and personal repentance for your own complicity in attitudes of injustice even where it might cost you privilege. Quite literally pray for others what you have for yourself.
- **Identify & Shift Attitudes** - Reflect honestly on your attitudes toward Indigenous populations when you are in situations of perceived distress, then reflect on the attitudes you really want to embrace moving forward. Identify 3 spiritual practices that would support your movement into these new attitudes.



## CELEBRATE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY ON JUNE 21ST AND BEYOND

Due to the current pandemic, public gatherings such as the Walk for Reconciliation are cancelled for this year, but that doesn't need to stop you from taking time to celebrate the beauty and diversity of Indigenous cultures from home.



- Learn something new about traditional foods, games, dance, medicines, or art.
- Listen to the Métis anthem or learn some words of greeting in Michif, Cree, or Denesuline. Recognize the importance and challenges of keeping languages alive and consider your own use of language.
- Seek out books, music, film, and poetry from Indigenous voices. You can find several great Read for Reconciliation book lists for adults, teens, and kids on the Saskatoon Public Library website ([saskatoonlibrary.ca/reconciliation](http://saskatoonlibrary.ca/reconciliation)).
- If you're looking for more kid-friendly resources, try this activity guide: ([rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013251/1534874002459](http://rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100013251/1534874002459))
- As restrictions lift throughout the Province, watch for the reopening of places like Wanuskewin, Fort Carleton, and Batoche, and for the rescheduling of Round Dances and more in the Saskatoon community. Make a point of checking in with these great resources and communities and supporting the important work they do.

### THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST AND THERE IS ALWAYS MORE TO BE DONE.

We would love to hear more ideas of how you're paying attention to issues of reconciliation and decolonization as followers of Christ. If you have any questions or suggestions you'd like to see added to this resource please let us know by emailing [info@ebap.ca](mailto:info@ebap.ca). And if you're looking for additional resources & suggestions, check out [www.beaconnectr.org](http://www.beaconnectr.org).