

# MINISTER'S Message

June 18, 2019

## Truth and Reconciliation ...

33 years ago, the United Church of Canada offered its first apology to Canada's Indigenous people, for its involvement in the brokenness caused by the church's participation in the residential school system. The Right Rev. Bob Smith, Moderator at the time, offered that first apology. In 1988, Mrs. Edith Momnook, representing the All Native Circle Conference, responded to that apology, asking the church to live into its words, with sincere actions.

In 1998, The Right Rev. Bill Phipps, Moderator, issued a second apology, clearly naming "the dishonouring of the struggles of First Nations peoples and the richness of your gifts". (The Right Rev. Bill Phipps, General Council Executive, 1998, The United Church of Canada).

You can learn more about the apologies, and Indigenous Relationships on the United Church of Canada website, <https://www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/reconciliation-and-indigenous-justice>

For the last 3 years, I have been a member of the Olds Indigenous Connections Team. We were formerly known as the National Indigenous Peoples' Day Planning Team, however the work we share takes us beyond just that one day a year. We did, indeed begin with the vision of Deborah Trehearne, to create a celebration during the 150<sup>th</sup> year of Canada's Confederation. That first event, one day, was a great success – with several



hundred school children participating, as well as members of the community at large. People from several communities in southern Alberta came together to resource the day.

Last year was equally successful, with the event growing from a single day to an evening and a full day following. This year promises to be just as good! We have over 900 children planning to attend all or part of the day, on June 18. The evening prior, we are showing the film "Indian Horse" at the TransCanada Theatre. You can find more information about our events by searching for "Olds Indigenous Connections" on Facebook, or on the Town of Olds site, <https://www.olds.ca/news-events/municipal-events-calendar/national-indigenous-peoples-day>

I share this with you, and encourage you to attend, to learn, to grow in understanding with me. It has been an honour working with the team, and engaging in activities and events that help build awareness among all ages. For me, being part of a church that is committed to reconciliation and building good relationships is important. We are all treaty people – the treaties were agreements between the Indigenous Nations of our country and the settlers of our country. The agreements were/are about sharing the resources and richness of the lands we inhabit, such that all can live well.

Our history is such that we have not honoured the intent of the treaties. We need to seek justice, we need to be a part of new stories, of relationships built upon truth and justice, upon listening – heart to heart - and understanding one another.

Please, join us, and look for other ways to build right relationships – not just this week – but every day. For the Spirit of Truth and Justice, the Spirit of Christ calls us to do so.

In peace,

*Rev. Tammy Allan*

*Olds-Sundre Pastoral Charge of the United Church*