

Saturday, July 24th 2021

To our wonderful First Met children, youth, young adults, families, & community,

We are not alone, we live in
God's world.

We believe in God: who has created and
is creating, who has
come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new
who works in us and others by the
Spirit.
We trust in God.



New friends Ethan and Josh at Camp Pringle

We cherish each minute with our children, and hold in our hearts all families whose children were taken. We promise to listen and learn.

The latest update:

“The United Church of Canada was an active participant in a system that ripped Indigenous families apart by forcibly removing the children from their homes,” says the church’s Moderator, Right Rev Dr. Richard Bott. “We have written to Indigenous leaders of the communities where 13 United Church-run residential schools were located, and in the case of the other two, communities whose children were taken there. We have let them know that we have made funds available so that the work of bringing home the children does not solely rest on their shoulders. We played a critical role in this and we as a church need to be more action focused in our commitment to reconciliation.”

A special meeting of the General Council Executive on July 20th, 2021 approved three million dollars to fund this work, which also includes archival research and providing communities access to documents.

The United Church turned over all its existing records to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Commission and continues to send records that come to light. The General Secretary, Rev. Michael Blair, notes, “Our history as settlers is a ‘we can fix this’ attitude. Clearly, we have been very wrong. We need to listen before we act, and support communities as they define their needs.”

<https://united-church.ca/news/resources-bring-children-home>

This week we offer an additional verse of the **Memorial Prayer for the Children of this Land**, a prayer offered by **Indigenous Ministries** for the memorial register honouring children who died at residential schools (TRC Call to Action 72). Each week we will include an additional verse.

Great and Heavenly Spirit,
God of compassion, healing and comfort,
We lift up in prayer the sacred lives of the children, some now known to us, all known to you, who died in residential schools.
We lift up in prayer the sacred lives of the children who went missing from these schools and whose fates are unknown to those who held them most dear.
We grieve the loss of so many thousands of these little ones, and we grieve especially their loss so far away from home.
We grieve the loss of youth with so much potential. These were children of this place, children of our land. The loss of their giftedness is our collective loss.
We lament how long their families have had to live with unanswered questions.

Hear our prayers:

for those who were not informed of their children's deaths at all, or on a timely basis;
for those who were not told of where their daughters and sons had been buried;
for those who have long hoped that a child who went missing somehow survived and had a good life—
even as they may have also feared the worst.



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[Only one more First Met family weekend camp!](#)

**Goldstream Goldminer Group Campground**

<https://bcparks.ca/explore/parkpgs/goldstream/>

**Free** for First Met families. Hot water, outdoor lights and electricity!

August 27 to 29 1 pm Friday to 11 am Monday

RVSP. Campfire (propane) and snacks provided!

Last Sunday **Kathy McMillan** taught us how to make Indian Tacos, with fry bread (Bannock), chili, lettuce, tomatoes, sour cream and cheese.



They were soooooo delicious!

Kathy also performed a smudging ceremony, and we received her gift with gratitude for the cleansing, healing and comfort provided. Kathy talked to the children about smudging and how it can be like the prayers they say at church and at home. They were fascinated by the eagle feather!



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First Met birthdays!



No birthdays this month, so grab your **best buddies** and share a summertime treat!

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Our First Met Kids first annual food drive  
is a success!



The First Met Kids and their families delivered flyers earlier this week, and returned today to pick up bags of donated groceries.

Good work everyone!!



Our thanks to Sarah Murray, Executive Director of the North Park Neighbourhood Association and her wonderful crew of volunteers, who will deliver the donations to our church neighbours.



Ethan, Juanita and William hauling grocery donations to the church.





Free photos courtesy of Unsplash and Dreamstime, with our thanks.

~Micia Kanstrup

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