



ST. JUDE'S
ANGLICAN CHURCH
OAKVILLE, ONTARIO

May 29, 2026
Pentecost Ember Day

Dear friends,

I am writing with an update about—and invitation to support—an exciting new initiative, the **Indigenous Gathering Space opening soon at Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre in Oakville.**

As you might know, St. Jude's has worked over a number of years alongside Oakville community partners to renew our treaty relationship with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN). The lands where we gather at St. Jude's have been governed by Treaty 22, an agreement between the Crown and the MCFN, since 1820. We seek to recall this sacred bond in our land acknowledgments while honouring Indigenous knowledge and building Indigenous partnerships on an ongoing basis.

Oakville Community Foundation (OCF), convenor of the Debwewin Oakville Truth Project, is spearheading and coordinating this new space, guided by MCFN elders, local knowledge-keepers and Indigenous-led consultations. St. Jude's, a member of its Debwewin Ally Leadership Council, and other local Council representatives recognize that this Oakville-based lodge will be a significant step forward in solidifying our MCFN partnership.

Wendy Rinella, OCF President, has kindly written to our parish with some details about the new initiative and ways to support it:

First let me begin by thanking you for supporting the sacred plants at the new Indigenous gathering space in Oakville. (Sponsored through a special donation by Nancy Coombs, St. Jude's Debwewin Ally Leadership Council representative, on behalf of St. Jude's).

The new Indigenous Gathering space will include both indoor gathering space, as well as outdoor gardens and use of the adjacent fire pit. A local dedicated and safe gathering space has been a request from the local Indigenous community & Treaty partners since 2019 outlined in our Community Conversations report. Earlier this year MCFN O'Gimma Kwe (Chief) Margaret Sault advised me of her full support and interest in hosting an MCFN Council meeting, as well as off-reserve member meetings at the site.

MCFN Elder Peter Schuler has led the Indigenous consultations on use, access, & governance and he has also inspired the design of the space. We have been fortunate to receive many corporate in-kind donations to realize Elder Peter's vision of a Lodge.

160 William Street, Oakville, Ontario L6J 1C5 | (905) 844-3972 | stjudeschurch.net

However, we are in need of ongoing support for basic operations (rent, insurance, wifi, cleaning, smudging items, fire wood, kitchen basics etc.) and activities at the space.

Currently community members have discussed cultural programming like beading and drum-making, language lessons and ceremonies, as well as a safe space for youth to gather together. We also see opportunities for community events welcoming all neighbours to join in local Indigenous celebrations.

We would greatly appreciate any on-going support from St. Jude's or its parishioners. We are recognizing donors contributing over \$1,000 on the donor plaque that would be unveiled on June 18th. There are many ways to give support, the easiest being recurring or annual donations to the Foundation's Truth & Reconciliation Fund:

<https://www.theocf.org/funds/oakville-truth-reconciliation-fund>.

Miigwetch, thank you for your support and interest as it would not be possible without local allies like St. Jude's Church and supportive neighbours.

As grateful treaty people, and followers of Jesus, let us cultivate peace, justice, and respect in all our relations. **I invite you to be part of this historic milestone by adding your support to the new Indigenous Gathering Space in Oakville.** Together, we might fulfill the promise of our living land acknowledgement.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Anderson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

(The Reverend Canon Dr.) David J. Anderson
Rector