

We acknowledge that the land and water we live on is gifted to all from God-Creator who cares for all Creation. We are Treaty People with our Creator. As Canadian citizens, we are also Treaty People with First Nations peoples from coast to coast to coast. As people of the Nith Valley Ministry Area, there are no Reserves in our Area, nor significant clusters of First Nations Peoples remaining to reside here so we are thankful that the [Six Nations of the Grand River](#) have been so generous in teaching us.

In the 1970's our Church organization financed an initial excavation of the Attawondaron (Neutral) Iroquoian Village near New Dundee (Moyer Site, ca 1500. We understand this was their homeland at the time of the Reformation and it was used at times by many nations over the generations. We live on land impacted by at least three treaties: [Treaty 3, the 1792 Between the Lakes Purchase](#) extending the earlier Haldimand Purchase of 1784 from the Mississaugas (Wilmot Township, 1784), [Treaty 27 ½ with the Ojibwa and Chippewa \(Oxford County, 1825\)](#), [Treaty 29 with the Chippewas of Kettle and Stoney Point](#) (Perth County, 1818-1827). In the re-development of Highway 7 & 8 local Municipalities have acknowledged that many First Nations have stakeholder interests in the Area we call home.

We are not typical Canadian settlers. In 1792 John Graves Simcoe, first Governor of the newly created Upper Canada, travelled with First Nations guides on the Thames River into our area. Simcoe envisioned a British North America defended by English-speaking former soldiers protecting the nation from American invasion. But our ancestors were not English-speaking soldiers, they were German-speaking farmers recruited to break and till the land they were assured was empty and fairly purchased.

Our ancestors did not understand the [loyalty of the Haudenosaunee](#) to the [British in the American Revolution](#),

(American War of Independence), nor of the Ojibwa and other nations to Upper Canada in the [War of 1812](#). Our ancestors did not understand the land was home to Original Peoples who suffered displacements and decimations by war, the spread of diseases, and disappearance of wildlife populations and medicines. We suspect the displacement and pain of the First Nations would remind them of their own pain in being forced out of their homelands.

Our relatives had been promised that their language, culture and religion would be respected in Upper Canada, they were not. By 1837 there was a rebellion against religious uniformity. Our ancestors fought off pressure to assimilate and prejudice even to facing interment in WWI. We believe it would hurt them in a uniquely painful way to learn of the policies of aggressive assimilation perpetrated against First Nations peoples, particularly the children. We have been shocked to discover the truth of Canada's participation in the losses of Indigenous Peoples.

Our congregation at Woodstock is close to both the Mount Elgin and Mohawk Indian Residential Schools run by the Methodists and Anglicans. We have become committed to learning about Indian Residential Schools and their legacy of trauma. We are bringing our young people into reconciliation conversations so there can be lasting change between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. We know that we have much to learn and unlearn.

## Resources Available at

[luthersynodseminary.com](http://luthersynodseminary.com)

[http://luthersynodseminary.com/2016\\_treaties\\_histories\\_of\\_the\\_land\\_and\\_peoples](http://luthersynodseminary.com/2016_treaties_histories_of_the_land_and_peoples)

History of the Land and Peoples Resource for each congregation organized by Ministry Area

Interim Acknowledgement of Treaty Territory by Ministry Area

Reflection for 2016-2018 for use with Ministry Areas and Confederacy Neighbours

[http://luthersynodseminary.com/my\\_life\\_indigenou\\_s\\_rights/mapping\\_lutherans\\_and\\_first\\_nations](http://luthersynodseminary.com/my_life_indigenou_s_rights/mapping_lutherans_and_first_nations)

Ministry Area Maps with First Nation Contact Info Updated with Residential School Data

Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory by Ministry Area

### **Coming in 2017:**

500 Year timeline of ELCIC and First Nation History in Canada

## *Nith Valley Ministry Area*

### *Interim Acknowledgement of Treaty Territory*

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*The treaties that apply most directly to the land we live on are Treaty No. 3 Between the Lakes and Crawford Purchase land with Mississauga nations, and Treaty 29 the Huron Tract with Chippewas nations. In the re-development of Highway 7 & 8 local Municipalities have acknowledged that many First Nations have stakeholder interests in the area between the Great Lakes that we call home.*