

“Homeland as Borderland”?
Reflections on Borders, Land,
Justice-Love, and Reconciliation
in the Anglican Church of Canada

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Nearly everyone who is listening to me is a pale face, I suppose. I am not. My skin is not red but that is what my people are called by others. My skin is brown, light brown, but our cheeks have a little flush and that is why we are called red skins. We don't mind that. There is no difference between us, under the skins, that any expert with a carving knife has ever discovered. My home is on the Grand River. Until we sold off a large part, our country extended down to Lake Erie, where, 140 winters ago, we had a little sea-shore of our own and a birch-bark navy. You would call it Canada. We do not. We call the little ten-miles square we have left the "Grand River Country." We have the right to do that. It is ours. We have the written pledge of George III that we should have it forever as against him or his successors and he promised to protect us in it. [...]

To punish us for trying to preserve our rights, the Canadian Government has now pretended to abolish our government by Royal Proclamation, and has pretended to set up a Canadian made government over us, composed of the few traitors among us who are willing to accept pay from Ottawa and do its bidding. [...]

If you are bound to treat us as though we were citizens under your government, then those of your people who are land-hungry will get our farms away from us by hooks and crooks under your property laws and in your courts that we do not understand and do not wish to learn. We would then be homeless and have to drift into your big cities to work for wages, to buy bread, and have to pay rent, as you call it, to live on this earth and to live in little rooms in which we would suffocate. We would then be scattered and lost to each other and lost among so many of you. [...]

This is the story of the Mohawks, the story of the Oneidas, of the Cayuga's — I am a Cayuga, of the Onondagas, the Senecas, and the Tuscaroras. They are the Iroquois. Tell it to those who have not been listening. [...] This story comes straight from Deskaheh, one of the chiefs of the Cayugas. I am the speaker of the Council of the Six Nations, the oldest League of Nations now existing. It was founded by Hiawatha. It is a League which is still alive and intends, as best it can, to defend the rights of the Iroquois to live under their own laws in their own little countries now left to them, to worship their Great Spirit in their own way, and to enjoy the rights which are as surely theirs as the white man's rights are his own.

Levi General (Deskaheh), 10 March 1925¹

The above excerpt is from the final speech of Levi General, hereditary chief of the Cayuga nation, who travelled to the Geneva, Switzerland in 1923 and spent eighteen months petitioning the newly formed League of Nations to acknowledge Six Nations sovereignty over lands along the Grand River deeded to them in the 1784 Haldimand Proclamation, in recognition of lands lost in New York during the American Revolution. In response, the Government of Canada raided Six Nations Confederacy in 1924 and imposed a colonially mandated elected council under Canada's Indian Act. This action violated the Two Row Wampum, in which Six Nations and settler nations were understood to have agreed to live in harmony with each other, and to not

¹ Deskaheh (Levi General), "Deskaheh's Last Speech," in *A Basic Call to Consciousness: The Haudenosaunee Address to the Western World* (Mohawk Nation via Roseveltown, NY: Akwesasne Notes, 1978), 25–33.

interfere in the affairs of each other's nations. Fearful for his safety, and dying of pneumonia, General took refuge on the Tuscarora nation near Rochester, New York, from which he broadcast his final appeal for justice to anyone who would listen.² Nearly a hundred years after his speech, Six Nations have not forgotten his words, "You would call it Canada. We do not. We call the little ten-miles square we have left the 'Grand River Country,'" as made evident in the Caledonia land claim that thrust Six Nations concerns into the national spotlight in 2006. As of December 2017, Six Nations continue to struggle for recognition of the borders of Grand River Country and for acknowledgement of their identity as a sovereign nation within Canada.

An even cursory glance at today's news media makes clear the contention that borders and boundaries matter, and that their perceived purpose is to keep the good guys in and the bad guys out, to demarcate your land from mine, and my country from yours. In recent days Donald Trump has declared Jerusalem the capital of Israel, sparking protests from through the Arab world;³ the Lakota and Nakota nations continue to oppose the operation of the Dakota Access Pipeline across their traditional land;⁴ the Supreme Court of Canada recently ruled that a ski resort can be built on land considered the home of the Grizzly Bear Spirit by the Ktunaxa nation;⁵ and the Six Nations continue to fight for justice in Caledonia.⁶ Christians are torn on the level to which living a faithful Christian life permits accepting borders, and the nation states

² For a more complete history see: Six Nations Lands and Resources, "Six Nations of the Grand River: Land Rights, Financial Justice, Resolutions" (Six Nations of the Grand River, 2015), <http://www.sixnations.ca/SNLands&ResourcesBooklet2015Final.pdf>.

³ Oren Liebermann and James Masters, "Friday Protests over Trump's Jerusalem Decision," *CNN*, December 15, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/12/15/middleeast/jerusalem-protests-friday-intl/index.html>.

⁴ Reuters Staff, "U.S. Judge Orders Oil-Spill Response Plan for Dakota Access Pipeline," *Reuters*, December 4, 2017, <https://www.reuters.com/article/north-dakota-pipeline/u-s-judge-orders-oil-spill-response-plan-for-dakota-access-pipeline-idUSL1N1O40P2>.

⁵ Tonda Maccharles, "Supreme Court Approves B.C. Ski Resort Development on Indigenous Lands," *The Toronto Star*, November 2, 2017, Online edition, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/11/02/supreme-court-approves-bc-ski-resort-development-on-indigenous-lands.html>.

⁶ Julien Gignac, "Bitter Land Dispute Results in Blockade on Six Nations in Caledonia," *The Toronto Star*, August 31, 2017, Online edition, <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/08/30/bitter-land-dispute-results-in-blockade-on-six-nations-in-caledonia.html>.

created by them, as entities compatible with living out the gospel. As Christians we are called to be “in the world, not of the world” (John 17:16), but what implication does this have on our identities as members of churches that exist in specific geographical contexts?

The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*, a generally accepted⁷ framework for Indigenous/settler reconciliation states that Indigenous peoples, “have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied, or other-wise [sic] used or acquired,”⁸ and that “free, prior and informed consent”⁹ must be given prior to relocation or non-Indigenous economic development or occupation of Indigenous traditional lands. Both the Government of Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada (among several Canadian churches) have declared the *UNDRIP* an aspirational framework document for reconciliation in Canada, however, from a settler perspective, the methods of implementing it in the Canadian context seem largely undetermined. In an attempt to ponder some ways forward *vis a vis* land justice and equity among Indigenous and settler populations, in this paper I consider the relationship of borders and boundaries with Christianity as it is lived out in the Canadian context. I ground this work in Michael Nausner’s concept of “homeland as borderland,” adapting Nausner’s framework for the particularity of the Canadian context, specifically around my scholarly work concerning truth and reconciliation and Six Nations of the Grand River. I begin by defining my understanding of the Canadian context and my own historical and scholarly interest in borders, land justice, and Indigenous self-determination, as both an individual and as (God-willing) future clergy in the Anglican Church of Canada.

⁷ John Paul Tasker, “Liberal Government Backs Bill That Demands Full Implementation of UN Indigenous Rights Declaration,” *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*, accessed December 13, 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/wilson-raybould-backs-undrip-bill-1.4412037>.

⁸ The United Nations, “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People” (2007) Article 26.1.

⁹ The United Nations Article 10.

Secondly, I investigate Nausner's concept of "homeland as borderland," pondering what it offers in the Canadian context. Thirdly, I articulate several Indigenous understandings of borders, land, and what it means to be human in wider creation, drawing on the work of George (Tink) Tinker, and Thomas King. Finally, I ponder a way forward, drawing on the work of Paul Hiebert around "bounded" and "centered" sets, asking whether James Henderson's idea of "treaty federalism" might provide a bridge that creates space for both Indigenous and settler voices. For the sake of brevity, and in recognition of the variety of Indigenous voices and opinions in Canada, I limit my investigation of the Canadian colonial context to the contexts with which I am most intimately familiar: the Six Nations of the Grand River near Brantford, Ontario and the Mississaugas of New Credit near Hagersville, Ontario. Further, in recognition of the historical propensity of settler scholarship to attempt to draw neat conclusions and to determine what's right and wrong for Indigenous peoples, I will not attempt to draw any firm conclusions but will instead offer several ways forward.

Framing the Canadian Context

As I sit writing this paper, a year of commemorating the 150th anniversary of the promulgation of the British North America Act (Canada 150) is wrapping up. Despite living within a few hour's drive of many Canada 150 events, I have avoided attending of them – abundantly aware that while many celebrate 150 years of Canadian confederation, for the indigenous peoples of Canada the anniversary brings to mind feelings of pain at 150 years of colonization, broken promises, and stolen lands. Perhaps the passing of time and accumulation of knowledge has jaded me. I remember feeling quite excited for Canada 125 in 1992 and sometimes chuckle when Bobby

Gimby's obnoxiously quirky Expo 67 theme song *Ca-na-da*,¹⁰ which we learned in celebration of Canada 125, pops into my head all these years later:

Ca-na-da, we love thee, Ca-na-da, proud and free,
North, south, east, west, there'll be happy times,
Church bells will ring, ring, ring;
It's the hundredth anniversary of Confederation
Ev'rybody sing together!

These days when I think of Canada, I feel no excitement but instead sadness and anger, tinged with a cautious hope. The façade of “Canada the generous” has been broken as I have become aware of the sociopolitical, religious, and militaristic conquest involved in the creation of the colonial reality commonly called Canada. My heart has broken again and again as I have watched Indigenous peoples repeatedly demand recognition of their inherent land and rights as the original inhabitants of this land; as strong women like Theresa Spence¹¹ and others have stood up and said enough is enough.

No, I do not love Canada. Yet I am aware of the white settler privilege inherent in such a statement. Ultimately, I have the ability to choose to live somewhere other than Canada, while for Indigenous people it would mean abandoning their homeland. What I mean is that I do not love the Canadian state, with its delusions of being the legitimate government of territory stretching from Cape Spear, Newfoundland to Boundary Peak, Yukon, and north to Ellesmere Island. I would just as soon live in *Tkaronto*¹² governed by an Indigenous government as

¹¹ The former chief of Attawapiskat who declared a hunger strike in 2012 in protest of Canadian treaty abuses.

¹² In Kanyen'kéha, the language of the Mohawk nation, *Tkaronto* means “where there are trees in the water.” The oft cited translation of *tkaronto* as “gathering place” has been challenged by scholars in favour of the above given definition. Controversy aside, the use of *Tkaronto* by Indigenous nations and allies has increased in the first decades of the 21st century, especially as part of renaming projects such as Ogimaa Mikana. For further information see: <http://ogimaamikana.tumblr.com>

colonially-governed Toronto; though I regularly experience and struggle with the myriad ways “Toronto the Good” reifies white privilege and is setup to benefit people like me.

I do not love Canada, but I am in love with the people who live here, both Indigenous and settler, and with the natural beauty and abundance gifted by the Creator to these lands. I struggle with the level of ignorance I experience in conversation with every day Canadians about the realities of the abuses committed in residential schools, of the ways the Indian Act continues to unjustly assert government authority over the lives of Indigenous peoples, and the ways that Canadian land being *terra nullius* pre-contact continues to inform our national myths. I suppose individual Canadians aren't to blame; until recently our education systems haven't taught the truth about settler history with Indigenous peoples. As an employee of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, I am abundantly familiar with the Canadian obsession with all things United States, as evidenced by almost constant “breaking news” updates on CBC News Network about the minutiae of American political life. I experience the ways in which this clouds Canadian discourses and limits our ability to see our own complicity in the oppression of Indigenous nations and the continued illegal occupation of Indigenous land. Though, to be fair, I have begun to see glimpses of our national narratives being challenged by movements like Idle No More, the Calls to Action of Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and a number of particularly well produced documentaries by the CBC and National Film Board.

I do not love Canada and yet the trajectory of my life and ministry is intimately bound up in both its history and future. To borrow a phrase from Thomas King, I am a “hopeful pessimist”¹³ – I write with the assumption that my scholarship will not change the world, nor fundamentally alter prevailing Canadian colonial structures, yet ever hopeful that in some small

¹³ Thomas King, “A Million Porcupines Crying in the Dark,” in *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*, CBC Massey Lectures (Toronto: Anasi, 2003), 92.

way it will contribute to the growing body of literature and storytelling happening in twenty-first century Canada that actively challenges Canada's (colonial) national narratives and strives for truth and reconciliation among all the peoples of this land. In her work entitled "Why Are We Here? A Meditation on Canada," Mary Jo Leddy writes, "It makes all the difference in the world whether we see this country for granted or see it as a gift."¹⁴ If I am honest, I struggle to see a gift amid the colonial structures of Canada, but write from a place of *wanting* to love Canada, the only home I have ever known.

Situating Myself in the Canadian Context

I grew up in Kitchener, Ontario on Block 2 of the Haldimand Tract. The Haldimand Tract (what Levi General calls Grand River Country) contains all land along the banks of the Grand River "six miles deep" from its source to its mouth, given to Six Nations in 1784 in recognition of land lost during the America War of Independence. In 1796, Six Nations agreed to sell four blocks of land (Blocks 1 to 4) on the condition that a continual revenue stream dedicated to the "perpetual care and maintenance" of the Six Nations be established.¹⁵ However, the majority of funds from the Six Nations trust fund were been squandered by various colonial governments to build roads in York, to construct buildings at McGill University, and for other colonial projects, and Six Nations attempts to receive restitution remain active in the twenty-first century.¹⁶ It was this systemic mitigation of Six Nations sovereignty, the imposition of the Indian Act and the squandering of Six Nations funds which Levi General railed against in his 1925 speech. My own family history is bound up in the history of the Six Nations of the Grand River.

¹⁴ Mary Jo Leddy, "Why Are We Here? A Meditation on Canada" (Unpublished Draft, n.d.).

¹⁵ The text of the Haldimand Treaty (1784) and a detailed narrative of what happened to it can be found in: Six Nations Lands and Resources, "Land Rights: A Global Solution for the Six Nations of the Grand River" (Six Nations of the Grand River, 2015), <http://www.sixnations.ca/SNGlobalSolutionsBookletFinal.pdf>.

¹⁶ Six Nations Lands and Resources, "Six Nations of the Grand River: Land Rights, Financial Justice, Resolutions."

In late 1802, my great-great-great-great-great grandfather, Samuel Bricker, having purchased a plot of land on Block 2, travelled from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to farm the land (Image A) and forge a new life. While in York to register the land deed in January 1803, Bricker became aware that Richard Beasley, the land agent who had been selling parcels of land on Block 2, was not in sole possession of the land and that a \$20,000 mortgage was owed against the property. Samuel Bricker travelled to Pennsylvania in 1804 to secure funding from Mennonite friends and family who had remained behind, leading to the formation of the German Company Tract, which enabled Mennonite settlement of what would eventually become part of Waterloo County (now Waterloo Region),¹⁷ land on which my childhood home, church, and school sit.

I acknowledge that I am not personally responsible for the historical actions of my ancestor over two hundred years ago, however this familial connection to my scholarship has, over time, increased my desire to be part of working toward land justice and reconciliation with Six Nations.

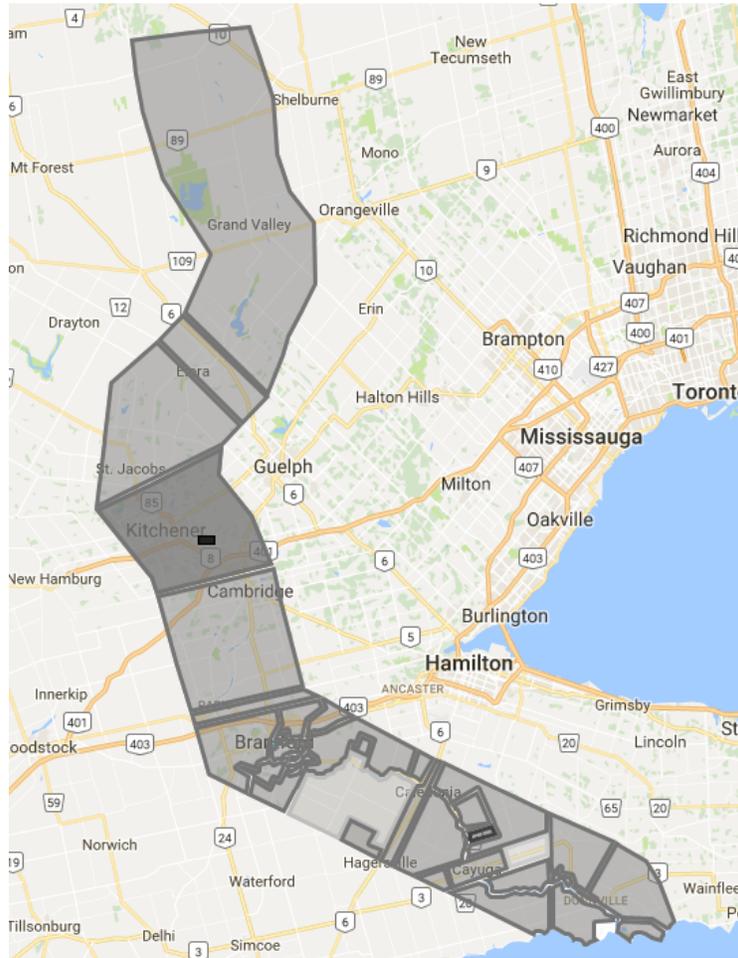
Situating Anglicanism in Canadian Context

Anglican involvement in Canada has roots at the very core of Canadian colonial existence. The history of Anglicans in Canada is well documented elsewhere so I will not rehearse it here, suffice to say that Anglican identity in Canada (as elsewhere) thrives on the existence of clearly defined geographic borders and boundaries which are slow to change.¹⁸ The first General Synod met in Toronto in 1893 on the proviso that it would not undermine the

¹⁷ This narrative is recounted in greater detail in Ezra E. Eby, *A Biographical History of Waterloo Township and Other Townships of the County*, vol. 1 (Berlin, Ontario, 1895), 26–30.

¹⁸ The Anglican Church of Canada maintains an ecclesiastical province of Rupert's Land, although Rupert's Land itself ceased to exist in 1870.

Image A - The Haldimand Tract¹⁹
(Bricker Farm noted in black)



authority of individual bishops to exercise jurisdiction within their respective dioceses.²⁰ More recently, in 2017, a priest elected as bishop of the Diocese of Caledonia in British Columbia was refused episcopal consecration when it came to light that he had exercised ministry in the United States on behalf of the Anglican Province of Rwanda, without the permission of the American Episcopal Church.²¹ The issue of excessive reliance on clearly defined borders (and the ways this

¹⁹ Original map data from Alex Hundert, “Map of the Haldimand Tract” (Solidarity with Six Nations, May 14, 2012), <https://6nsolidarity.wordpress.com/2012/05/14/new-interactive-map-haldimand-tract/> (additional of Bricker farm my own).

²⁰ Diocese of Niagara, “General Synod,” accessed December 13, 2017, <https://niagaraanglican.ca/synod/general>.

²¹ Tali Folkins, “Worley Will Not Serve as Bishop of Caledonia, Rules Provincial HoB,” *The Anglican Journal*, May 15, 2017, Online edition, <http://www.anglicanjournal.com/articles/worley-will-not-serve-as-bishop-of-caledonia-rules-provincial-hob/>.

antagonizes relationships with Indigenous Anglicans who do not share the same understandings of borders) was flagged in the 1969 report *Beyond Traplines*, which sought to articulate a framework for a renewed relationship between Indigenous and settler Anglicans in the wake of revelations of systematic abuse, starvation, and forced assimilation as part of the residential schools system. It argues that church structures should be reorganized around “broad geographical and functional areas”²² and should move away from localized boundaries.

However, despite the revelations of *Beyond Traplines* borders and boundaries continue to be important in Anglican ecclesiology, as expressed in the above anecdote about the bishop-elect’s dismissal. In ways similar to increased awareness of national myths in wider Canadian society, Anglicanism, too, has become aware of the reality that many of our parish buildings sit on contested land and that Anglicanism has much for which to repent. This has come to fruition through initiatives like the KAIROS blanket exercise, and through the inclusion of Indigenous traditional land statements in parish bulletins and at diocesan events. However, we have barely begun to assess the impact an Anglican focus on geographical borders has on engaging in ministry and mission in places where borders are not always clean cut, where borders are contested, such as Six Nations, or where parish buildings have been built on stolen Indigenous land. We have officially repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery, but have only begun pondering the ways that engaging in mission on “stolen land” impacts our ability as the Anglican Church of Canada to preach the liberating good news of Jesus Christ. In the context of contested borders and land claims might there be an alternate way of conceiving of borders and boundaries that moves the Church away from “us versus them” colonial thinking to a system that acknowledges historical injustices yet refuses to reify arbitrary divisions?

²² Charles E Hendry, *Beyond Traplines: Does the Church Really Care? : Towards an Assessment of the Work of the Anglican Church of Canada with Canada’s Native Peoples* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1998), 91.

Michael Nausner: Homeland as Borderland

Writing in response to the 9/11 attacks in the United States, Michael Nausner posits the relationship between borders and boundaries, religion, and American imperialism as expressed in the relationship between “homeland” and “foreign land.” He argues that the location of Christian (or any religious) practice is relevant for the practice itself, but that there is nothing nature about the connection between religiosity and space.²³ The space where Christianity is practiced matters, but there is nothing inherent in the relationship between Christianity and geographic space. Dolores Hayden notes that space assists in constructing identity, and that landscapes are the “storehouses” of social memories that construct communal identities.²⁴ In a typical Canadian Anglican parish this is experienced as true in the ways that parish identity is often strongly tied to the history of the building and the location of the building itself. For example, my former parish on Block 2 of the Haldimand Tract draws a strong sense of identity from its historic 1844 stone building built on the bank of the Grand River in downtown Galt (Cambridge). While running a community meal program from the parish hall, the parish is very protective of its worship space, to such an extent that it locks its doors when the meal program is active! “You’re welcome to come eat, just don’t touch our fancy things with your grubby hands. Your place is in the parish hall, our place is in the sanctuary since we know none of us will steal anything” seems to be the troublesome defining narrative.

In formulating a Christian response to homeland/foreign land (us vs. them) dynamics, Nausner asks, “How far can those of us who call ourselves Christian allow ourselves to get

²³ Michael Nausner, “Homeland as Borderland: Territories of Christian Subjectivity,” in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, ed. Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 121 [Emphasis original].

²⁴ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1995), 9.

trapped in a polarization between our own homeland and other people's foreign land?"²⁵ While there are certainly many differences between American and Canadian contexts, especially as articulated by Northrop Frye and Margaret Atwood in their investigations of the Canadian garrison mentality and survivalism in contrast to American tropes of domination and conquest, Nausner's question still seems relevant in the Canadian context. For all intents and purposes, much of Canada is "foreign land" in that it has never been surrendered by Indigenous nations by way of a treaty or other agreement.

Drawing on the work of Homi Bhabha, Nausner argues that borders and boundaries are never structures that neatly divide one thing from another, but are instead sites of "negotiation and hybridity."²⁶ For Bhabhi boundaries are the space where the fates of multiple territories relate with each other, "where cultural differences 'contingently' and conflictual touch."²⁷ Bhabha problematizes the stability of territory conceived as an unambiguous space neatly and securely enclosed by boundaries, but instead argues boundaries are "complex places of exchange" in which the goal is not to neatly divide land but instead spaces to construct meaning, and where differences and commonalities are valued and negotiated.²⁸ Nausner sees this reflected in the life of Jesus, who in the Gospel of Mark is portrayed as always journeying, and transcending national and imperial boundaries in his ministry throughout Galilee, Caesarea Philippi, the Decapolis, and Jerusalem, each of which were ruled by different governing authorities.²⁹ Nausner is clear that he's not arguing against Christian locatedness (as expressed

²⁵ While Nausner is writing about geographic homeland and foreign land dynamics, his question seems pertinent to "us vs. them" dynamics such as those expressed about my home parish. Both types of boundaries and borders are socially constructed to keep specific people in and to exclude others.

²⁶ Nausner, "Homeland as Borderland: Territories of Christian Subjectivity," 123.

²⁷ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge Classics (London ; New York: Routledge, 2004), 207.

²⁸ Bhabha as summarized in Nausner, "Homeland as Borderland: Territories of Christian Subjectivity," 124.

²⁹ Nausner, 130.

previously, territory matters), but rather against “both a simple transgression/transcendence of boundaries *and* an easy conflation of Christian subjectivity with the bounded turf on which [he] stand[s].”³⁰ Instead, for Nausner, it is Christ and Christ’s presence that transcend place, while the Christian community is called to settle for the “more modest notion of negotiating at boundaries.”³¹

This all too short engagement with Nausner’s work makes clear that a faithful Christian ethic cannot assume inherent connections between its geographical and territorial location, but rather that these connections must be “negotiated”³² at the border. In the Canadian context, this means both acknowledging the negotiatedness³³ of the history of the land by way of treaties and also the ways that land and borders continue to be negotiated in the present day. Having problematized any notion of an implicit connection between Christianity and clearly defined “us vs. them,” “homeland vs. foreign land” borders, in the following section I explore Indigenous understandings of land and borders.

Indigenous Understandings of Land and Creation

George (Tink) Tinker argues that early European missionaries “confused the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the gospel of european³⁴ cultural values and social structures,”³⁵ and that Western societies are fundamentally concerned with historical, and narratives in which God is

³⁰ Nausner, 131 [Emphasis original].

³¹ Nausner, 131.

³² Nausner, 130.

³³ Negotiated seems an almost overly generous term for many of the written treaty texts, as Indigenous people have long noted discrepancies between what was negotiated at treaty councils and what ended up recorded by government treaty commissioners. The so called, Paypom Treaty is an excellent example of these discrepancies.

³⁴ Tinker deliberately uses lower-case letters for words like european, catholic, american, and english to avoid normativizing Western narratives. As such his quotations are presented in their original format.

³⁵ George E. Tinker, *Spirit and Resistance: Political Theology and American Indian Liberation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 103.

revealed within history.³⁶ This resonates with Dolores Hayden's discussion of the role of spaces as "storehouses of social memories" and their role in identity construction in Western societies.³⁷ A focus on histories of who settled where when and consequently who is the rightful owner of specific spaces and places is a logical consequence of this phenomenon. Conversely, according to Tinker, an Indigenous theology of Creator and creation begins from a fundamentally different place: a concept of Creator that is "revealed in creation, in space or place, and not in time."³⁸

Tinker continues:

The nineteenth- and twentieth-century euro-western sense of history as a linear, temporal process means that those who heard the gospel first have maintained and always maintain a critical advantage over those who of us [sic] who heard it later and have to rely on those who heard it first to give us a full interpretation.³⁹

It is important to clarify that Tinker is not arguing that Indigenous understandings are only spatially grounded, while Western theologies are only temporally grounded, but rather that Western theologies tend to subordinate space to time, while Indigenous theologies conclusively subordinate time to space: "The question is not whether time or space is missing in one culture or the other, but which metaphoric base functions as ordinary, and which is subordinate."⁴⁰

While Tinker writes for the American (United States) context, Thomas King argues that the international border between Canada and the United States is the product of "someone else's imagination," and is largely unimportant to Indigenous people.⁴¹ Although differing systems of government and different histories of settlement have resulted in divergent realities for

³⁶ An idea which he argues has been co-opted by economically focused liberation theologies that he argues reify the modern nation state. Tinker, *Spirit and Resistance*, 103.

³⁷ Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 9.

³⁸ Tinker, *Spirit and Resistance*, 104.

³⁹ Tinker, 104.

⁴⁰ Tinker, 106.

⁴¹ King, "A Million Porcupines Crying in the Dark," 102.

Indigenous nations in Canada and the United States, I understand Tinker's arguments about land to be applicable throughout Turtle Island, and thus significant in the Canadian context.

Tinker argues that land has ceremonial, symbolic, and architectural significance in almost all areas of Indigenous life and in Indigenous framings of the nature of the universe.⁴² He gives the example of his childhood Osage village which was laid out in two halves: *Hu^{n'} ga* (Earth Division) and *tzi sho* (Sky Division), reflecting the fundamental manifestation of *wako^{n'} da* (Creator) as *wako^{n'} da mo^{n'} shi'ta* (Creator above) and *wako^{n'} da udse'ta* (Creator below), and as *itski'ko* (Grandfather Sky) and *i'ko* (Grandmother Earth); highlighting the reciprocity inherent in Indigenous dualisms of above/below, sky/earth, which he argues differs from Western dualisms of good and evil.⁴³ Within Indigenous understandings of reciprocity, humans are not privileged over the rest of the world, nor are individual desires privileged over the good of the entire community, but instead are participants within the larger balance and harmony of all creation.⁴⁴

Tinker argues that this is rooted in an attachment to land and to specific territories:

Each nation has some understanding that they were placed into a relationship with a particular territory by spiritual forces outside of themselves and thus have an enduring responsibility for that territory just as the earth, especially the earth in that particular place, has a filial responsibility toward the people who live there. Likewise, the two-legged people in that place also have a spatially related responsibility toward all people who share that place with them, including animals, birds, plants, rocks, river, mountains, and the like. With such extensive kinship ties, including a kinship tie to the land itself, it should be less surprising that Indian peoples have always resisted colonial pressure to relocate them to different territories, to sell their territories to invaders, or to allow the destruction of their lands for the sake of accessing natural resources. Conquest and removal from our lands, historically, and contemporary ecological destruction of our lands have been and continue to be culturally and genocidally destructive to Indian peoples as peoples.⁴⁵

⁴² Tinker, *Spirit and Resistance*, 107.

⁴³ Tinker, 107.

⁴⁴ George E. Tinker, *American Indian Liberation: A Theology of Sovereignty* (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis Books, 2008), 67.

⁴⁵ Tinker, 72.

In Tinker's description of Indigenous attachment to traditional land, we hear echoes of Levi General's lament for the loss of much of the land Grand River Country to settlers who built my home in the middle of Block 2. Acknowledging Nausner's argument that Christianity lacks implicit connections to land and territory, and that these connections are negotiated, and Tinker's contention that the history of Indigenous/settler relations (in Canada) clearly demonstrates a pattern of settler removal of Indigenous peoples from traditional lands, how ought Canadian Anglicans respond?

A brief anecdote from the parish I presently serve makes clear that this question is not merely an abstract, academic question to be tossed around intellectually, but that it rooted in actual struggles experienced by everyday Anglicans in 2017. During a recent Lenten course I taught on residential schools and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, I mentioned that the church building on the banks of Sixteen Mile Creek was built on the traditional territory of the Mississauga's of the Credit River and that May 2017 marked one hundred seventy years since the removal of the Mississaugas to the New Credit Reserve on a corner of Six Nations' Grand River Country near Hagersville, Ontario. At the time, the Mississaugas argued against the forced sale of the land, insisting in a letter to the Lieutenant Governor: "Several years ago we owned land on the twelve mile creek, the Sixteen [sic] and the Credit. On these we had good hunting and fishing, and we did not mean to sell the land but to keep it for our Children for ever [sic.]"⁴⁶ Members of the course struggled with the implications of this knowledge – it seems the parish had long ago lost any memory of the contested history of its land. Several members grumbled that it was too bad that the Mississaugas had lost their land but that we should just move on;

⁴⁶ "Petition of behalf of the Mississauga nation", April 1829. William Perkins Bull, as cited in Meaghan Fitzgibbon, "The Mississaugas: Treaty Period" (Heritage Mississauga, 2007), 33, <http://heritagemississauga.com/assets/Mississaugas%20of%20the%20Credit%20River%20-%20Internship%20Report%20-%20by%20Meaghan%20Fitzgibbon.pdf>.

others worried that discussing anything about contested land in Oakville might threaten their sense of security about their own lands and houses; still others suggested that the parish might hold a tea party for the Mississaugas to apologize for the loss of their land (a suggestion that many argued was itself colonial). However, the general consensus was a desire to do *something*, to find some way to engage in a process of reconciliation with the Mississaugas, to acknowledge the colonial history of the land, and to pressure the government to fully engage in the land claims process. I suggested knowledge and relationship building were themselves acts of reconciliation, yet people seemed to be struggling for more concrete actions. In the following section, I wrestle with this desire by looking for a framework which answers the question, “How might Canadian Anglicans restructure their relationship to borders and boundaries in ways that are life-giving and affirming of Indigenous understandings of land, and which acknowledge the tortured history of being complicit in removing Indigenous peoples from traditional lands?”

Paul Hiebert – Bounded versus Centered⁴⁷ Sets

In pondering a response to the above question, Paul Hiebert’s framework of Christianity build around bounded and centered sets has proven particularly helpful. In this section I unpack Hiebert’s framework and seek to formulate a centered set in answer to the above question.

Hiebert argues that human systems of organization generally fit into two types of categories: bounded and centered sets. Bounded sets are created by listing the fundamental characteristics required to be considered part of the set and have clearly defined boundaries of membership.⁴⁸ An object is either part of the set or not part of the set. Further, objects within bounded sets are uniform in essential characteristics and membership is static.⁴⁹ All objects

⁴⁷ For ease of quotations I have deliberately maintained Hiebert’s American spelling of centre.

⁴⁸ Paul G Hiebert, “Sets and Structures: A Study of Church Patterns,” in *New Horizons in World Mission*, ed. David J. Hesselgrave (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1979), 220.

⁴⁹ Hiebert, 220–21.

inside the set are fully part of the set, and individual variations are not considered significant for membership in the set. Hiebert argues that Western societies are often built around bounded sets.⁵⁰ Christianity communities are historically bounded sets: they have defined “essential” characteristics that are required for membership (baptism, a believer’s prayer, a specific eschatological understanding, etc.), perceive clear distinctions between Christian and non-Christian, and all Christians are viewed as possessing the same essential characteristics. In Anglicanism, this has often presupposed a historical connection to England whether through family history or affinity. Using the logic of bounded sets, it is easy to conceive of a church built around a strong sense of geographic identity that values borders and boundaries.

Conversely, a centered set is defined by the creation of a center and the relationship of things to that center.⁵¹ According to Hiebert, membership in a centered set is defined by movement toward or away from the center – all objects moving toward the center have membership in the set. In a centered set boundaries are defined in relation to the center, yet there is no requirement to maintain firm boundaries as long as the central point of focus is clear.⁵² Centered sets do not have essential characteristics required for membership, since all objects are understood in relationship to the center. Further, since centered sets are always in motion they are dynamic sets – it is possible to change direction and gain/lose membership in the set.⁵³ Given the dynamicity of centered sets, the significance of the center and thus a reduced significance for boundaries and borders, the logic of a centered set seems a fruitful lens through which to propose a framework for Anglicans to develop a life-giving relationship to borders and boundaries that

⁵⁰ Hiebert, 219.

⁵¹ Hiebert, 223.

⁵² Hiebert, 223.

⁵³ Hiebert, 224.

affirms Indigenous understandings of land and seeks to reconcile the wrongs of the past. What might be at the center of an Indigenous/settler centered set of reconciliation?⁵⁴

In her work developing an ethics of diversity in crossing borders of injustice, Marilyn Legge argues that the concept of *justice-love* forms a central expectation for relationships which value diversity.⁵⁵ *Justice-love*, built around mutual respect and care, and a fair sharing of power, “calls us into being, sustains us, and invites us to act with dignity and joy.”⁵⁶ It calls us to affirm diversity as a resource, to challenge white privilege, and to become aware of our own multiple identities as complex human beings – a process that Legge argues is often difficult for settlers.⁵⁷ According to Legge, *justice-love* must be rooted in acts of hospitality which draw on the diverse gifts of the community for strength and direction:

Then relationships with local, regional, national, and global movements of solidarity for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation become necessary, not optional for moral energy and responsible living which come from a vision of God’s realm that is contradicted by existing social arrangements of domination and subordination.⁵⁸

Further, hospitality “creates a safe and welcoming space for persons to find their own sense of humanity and worth,” while resisting perceptions of liberating or helping the oppressed other to achieve liberation, instead “liberating ourselves in relation to the oppressed other.”⁵⁹

An Anglican centered set with the concept of *justice-love* at its center offers fruitful ground on which to strive to build reciprocal relationships of reconciliation with Indigenous

⁵⁴ I am aware of the implicit power differential inherent in settler writings about reconciliation. I fully affirm that the Indigenous peoples of Canada must lead the way in defining the requirements of a reconciled Indigenous/settler relationship. However, in this section I strive to find language familiar within Anglicanism that might serve as an impetus for greater engagement in such a relationship.

⁵⁵ Marilyn Legge, “Beyond Borders: Diversity as Moral and Spiritual Resource,” *The Ecumenist* 42, no. 3 (Summer 2005): 11. Legge borrows this term from Marvin Ellison’s work (Marvin M. Ellison, *Same-Sex Marriage: A Christian Ethical Analysis* [Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004], 142).

⁵⁶ Legge, 11.

⁵⁷ Legge, 14.

⁵⁸ Legge, 14.

⁵⁹ Legge, 14.

peoples. *Justice-love* as a center would not completely do away with borders and boundaries, nor would it provide any easy, ready-made solutions, but instead would draw attention to times and places where Indigenous borders and boundaries have been unjustly ignored or obliterated by Canadian Anglicanism including:

- Our historical complicity with Indigenous residential schools and their overarching goal of forcing Indigenous assimilation within settler society, severing Indigenous connections to traditional lands and attempting to remake Indigenous peoples in a settler image.
- The complex and contested treaty history between settler Anglicans and Indigenous nations, including the reality that many of our parish buildings are built on contested land, that Anglicanism has historically benefitted from Indigenous loss of land through the Clergy Reserves system,⁶⁰ and that Anglicanism continues to benefit from occupation of Indigenous land.

Further, *justice-love* rooted in diversity challenge settler Anglican conceptions of “us vs. them,” “mine vs. yours,” “ours vs. theirs,” “my land vs. your land,” instead acknowledging the complexity within these terms as part of a relationship of mutuality and respect. It also provides a firm grounding to assist settler Anglicans in demanding government action in resolving treaty disputes, land claims, and fully implementing both the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. *Justice-love* would hear the lament of Levi General about the loss of Grand River Country and would advocate for a fair resolution; it would hear the cry of the Mississaugas about the loss of land on Sixteen Mile Creek and would likewise seek to make amends and foster new

⁶⁰ The Clergy Reserves system existed in the nineteenth century and reserved one seventh of all Crown lands in Upper Canada for the use of the clergy of the Church of England for the construction of rectories and glebe lands. To this day, the Anglican Diocese of Toronto maintains an endowment fund of monies collected during the Clergy Reserves period through the First York Rectory Endowment Fund. See <https://www.toronto.anglican.ca/parish-administration/grants-funding/york-rectors-fund/>.

relationships built on respect and equity. It would view its own embodiment (the norms of mutual respect and equity) as more important than clinging to colonial articulations of borders, thereby creating space for recognition of Six Nations as a sovereign entity in a nation to nation relationship with the colonial Canadian government. Most importantly, *justice-love* challenges settler notions of being inherently right, of possessing all of the facts, and of being the ultimate arbiters of Indigenous claims of injustice, instead seeking to build a relationship based on mutual respect and diversity. This creates space in Anglican discourses to develop a greater understanding of Indigenous conceptions of land rooted in space and relationship with the land, as articulated by George Tinker. Further, it embodies Michael Nausner and Homi Bhabha's understanding of borders as complex spaces of negotiation and hybridity, instead of static boundaries designed to keep the good guys in and the bad guys out. I argue that the treaties negotiated (and often imposed) as part of the Canadian process of colonization provide a fruitful ground for beginning to think about what *justice-love* entails.

James Henderson – Empowering Treaty Federalism

James Henderson argues that the written agreements between Indigenous nations and the imperial Crown created nation to nation relationships that recognized Indigenous autonomy and rights to self-determination.⁶¹ Rather than subsuming Indigenous rights under an imperial Crown, Henderson furthers that treaties “created shared responsibilities rather than supreme powers.”⁶² Yet history demonstrates that after the War of 1812, Canadian colonial governments largely ignored these shared responsibilities, instead regarding Indigenous nations as subservient to the Crown. Despite this, Henderson contends that Canada lacks a coherent vision of

⁶¹ James Youngblood Henderson, “Empowering Treaty Federalism,” *Saskatchewan Law Review* 58 (1994): 246–50.

⁶² Henderson, 253.

federalism or democracy, and that the Canadian view of sovereignty is of rule from above.⁶³ The remedy to this, for Henderson, is a reconception of Canada as a federated collection of nations based on free-association and self-determination, grounded in the treaties.⁶⁴ This vision of Canada is compatible with Legge's articulation of *justice-love* in that it envisions a country built around an ethic of "mutual respect and care, and a fair sharing of power," which, as previous explained, Legge views as key to embodying *justice-love*. Given Canada's recent constitutional history and the (thus far futile) struggle of Quebec to achieve fair and equitable recognition of its unique status within Canada, Henderson's idea of treaty federalism seems unlikely to become a reality any time soon. There are signs of hope in the Government's recent announcements about the adoption of the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, but much groundwork and healing remains to be done before anything resembling treaty federalism could become a reality. However, in the concluding section I want to highlight some areas where the Anglican Church of Canada has undertaken steps to implement a system resembling treaty federalism within its own governance systems, potentially offering an example and beacon of hope for Canadian settle society at large.

Anglicanism and Indigenous Self-Determination

Since the mid-1980s Indigenous and settler communities within the Anglican Church of Canada have sought to articulate a framework that would allow Indigenous self-determination. The "turning point"⁶⁵ in this work was the 1994 Anglican Covenant in which Indigenous elders and leaders articulated a "prayerful dialogue toward self-determination."⁶⁶ This lead, in 2007, to

⁶³ Henderson, 312.

⁶⁴ Henderson, 312.

⁶⁵ "The Road to Warm Springs: The National Consultation on Indigenous Anglian Self-Determination. September 15-17, 2017 at Pinawa, Manitoba.," accessed December 13, 2017, <http://www.anglican.ca/im/rws/>.

⁶⁶ Indigenous Ministries of the Anglican Church of Canada, "A Covenant and Our Journey of Spiritual Renewal," 1994, <http://www.anglican.ca/im/foundational-documents/covenant/>.

the formation of a national Indigenous ministry within the Anglican Church led by a newly created National Indigenous Bishop. Further, in June 2014, this process led to the creation of the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, an Indigenous governance structure that encompasses over twenty-five Indigenous nations in Northern Ontario and Manitoba, and is a:

uniquely aboriginal... expression of Indigenous self-determination within the Anglican Church, committed to upholding the tradition, order, and discipline of the Church, expressing that commitment in a manner that is consistent with the cultural and spiritual heritage of the Indigenous people of the region.⁶⁷

Mishamikoweesh possesses all of the rights of self-determination and governance inherent in a diocese of the Anglican Church of Canada, although the spiritual ministry has chosen not to call itself a diocese in a desire to overtly reject colonial norms.

A current area of tension in Indigenous/settler Anglican discourse is the ongoing discussion about revising the national marriage canon to explicitly permit the marriage of same-sex couples within the Anglican Church of Canada. In a statement released in July 2016 after the first of two General Synod votes required to revise the canon, the three Indigenous bishops in the Anglican Church of Canada argued that unilateral action by settler Anglican governance systems had placed many Indigenous Anglicans in a difficult position due to differing Indigenous/settler understandings of the basis and purposes of marriage, and the absence of Indigenous voices in many facets of the ongoing conversation.⁶⁸ Acting in ways consistent with its stated goal of supporting increased Indigenous self-determination within Canadian Anglicanism, and embodying the principle of *justice-love*, the Council of General Synod has undertaken a process of engagement and relationship building around this issue in an attempt to provide a modified

⁶⁷ Anglican Church of Canada, "Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh," 2014, <http://www.anglican.ca/im/mishamikoweesh/>.

⁶⁸ "A Statement by the Bishops Mark MacDonald, Lydia Mamakwa, and Adam Halkett" (The Anglican Journal, 2016), <http://www.anglicanjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/A-Statement-by-the-Bishops-Mark-MacDonald.pdf>.

proposal for amending the marriage canon that greater reflects Indigenous understandings and self-determination in time for the next meeting of General Synod in 2019.

Anglican Indigenous/settler relationships of reconciliation are still very new – barely fifty years old in many places, and these relationships often exist at national and provincial levels but have little trickle-down to the everyday lives and ministries of Indigenous and settler Anglicans, as exemplified in my anecdotes about my two Anglican parishes. However, these national and provincial processes are signs of hope, and evidence that the Holy Spirit active, doing her work, in the hearts and minds of Indigenous and settler Anglicans in Canada. As these relationships continue to deepen, greater attention must be given to equipping lay Anglicans at the parish level to become sensitive to the summons of *justice-love*, and opportunities must be fostered for ordinary Indigenous and settler communities to build relationships of mutuality and trust with each other. Here greater understanding of the UN *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and further study of treaty systems and histories which govern the land on which Anglican ministry in Canada happens, provide many opportunities for the furthering of knowledge, challenging of biases and renewing of relationships with Indigenous peoples, their understandings of land and creation, and our own relationship with the land. These opportunities create space for Nausner’s contention to be realized – as Christians the place where ministry is enacted matters, but there is nothing inherent about our relationship to geographic space, it is always negotiated. Only Christ and Christ’s presence transcend place, calling Christian expression to always be contextualized and to be sensitive to its surroundings, to resist arbitrary and static boundaries but instead “negotiating at boundaries,” and building relationships.⁶⁹ They provide a potential avenue to

⁶⁹ Nausner, “Homeland as Borderland: Territories of Christian Subjectivity,” 121.

reinvigorate the relationships committed to in the Two Row Wampum mentioned in the introduction. To seek to grow into the ways God calls us to be God's people (settler and Indigenous, Christian and non-Christian, gay and straight, male, female, transgender, gender non-conforming, immigrant or long-time resident of these lands) in this time and this place.

When I set out to write this paper, I described myself using Thomas King's term "hopeful pessimist," and stated I struggled to find things to be hopeful for in Canada. While the problems are still there, Six Nations still struggles for land justice, the treaty system remains broken, and white privilege continues to cloud recognition of the ways colonialism operates, this exercise of examining ways my own spiritual tradition both struggles with and resists colonialism and "homeland vs. foreign land" thinking, and of reconceiving many of my own questions by changing interpretive lenses from my usual bounded set thinking to a centered set based on *justice-love* I have discovered that there is more to be hopeful for in Canada than I initially imagined possible. I have been encouraged by several insights around my own work both in my parish and in the work of solidarity in reconciliation. Thanks be to God for God's faithfulness as we struggle to learn to be the people God calls us to be.

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