

Church News

Prayer Service Will Focus On Indigenous Children

All are welcome to attend a Prayer Service for Children of Indian Boarding Schools at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd at 4 p.m., Monday, Nov. 1.

The service will be an opportunity to remember and lament Indigenous children who suffered or died at residential schools and their families, many of whom continue to suffer.

In remembering these children, Good Shepherd joins with other congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

(ELCA) in responding to a request from the ELCA American Indian/Alaska Native Lutheran Association.

In a July 23, 2021, letter addressed to ELCA congregations, they stated: "We speak to you all today on behalf of the Indigenous people throughout North America. We come with sad hearts at the news of 215+ children of the Kamloops Residential School whose remains were recently found in a mass grave and of the children of the Rosebud Sioux whose bodies were

returned to their homeland this past week.

"They are being remembered by many by the color orange. The color orange is symbolic and came from the inspiration of a survivor of that era, Phyllis Webstad, who stated that when she was a 6-year-old girl arriving at a residential boarding school, she was stripped of her clothes which included a new orange T-shirt her grandmother had gifted her and was never given back. The orange shirt/color now symbolizes how the church

and the schools they administered took away the Indigenous identity of the children in their care.

"In honor and memory of the children of the First Nations people and of our Native children who never made it home, and for those still living the nightmare imposed on them as children of Canada and the United States, we humbly ask our brothers and sisters of the church to hang an orange banner in the sanctuaries of your churches for 225 days. In remembrance and lament of each child that was

thrown into those graves, and those yet to be discovered we honor each of their lives...Please grieve with us and remember us as the Indigenous people of this land who are going through a very sad and heartbreak-ing time in our collective psyche."

During the service on Nov. 1, as a symbol of this sacred remembrance and lament, orange fabric will be hung in the sanctuary and on the crosses on the front lawn, where it will remain for 225 days, until June 14, 2022.

Afterward, attendees are encouraged to participate in the Transylvania NAACP Moral Monday vigil in front of the Brevard courthouse at 5 p.m. The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd is located at 22 Fisher Road, across from the main entrance to Ingles. Contact the church office (828-883-3680 or lcs@comporium.net) to register for the service. To protect everyone's well-being, physical distancing will be observed and masks will be required.