



October 8, 2021

Reflection Circle at King's dedicated to use by the community

London, ON: On October 7, 2021, members of the King's University College community gathered for a special ceremony to dedicate the Reflection Circle at King's, and to honour Joanne and Peter Kenny for their generous support of this new space. The Reflection Circle is situated on the King's Green, the land located at Waterloo and Huron Streets.

The dedication ceremony, led by Knowledge Keepers and Elders Dan and Mary Lou Smoke, included songs, prayer, smudging, the hanging of flags, and lighting of the fire by Fire Keeper Russ Green, a Sociology student at King's. Attendance at the ceremony was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions.

A simple, circular structure with natural stone seating and an earthen firepit in the centre, the Reflection Circle is an inclusive space for private reflection or group gatherings. Accessible by King's students, faculty, staff, community members, and people of all faiths and backgrounds, this space specifically supports the needs of the Indigenous community at King's by providing an outdoor location for sacred gatherings and Indigenous ceremonies.

The Reflection Circle was created thanks to the generosity of Joanne and Peter Kenny, long-time supporters of King's. A portion of their \$500,000 gift was allocated to establish the Reflection Circle. The Kennys value the small, caring, and inclusive community at King's, as well as the College's leadership role as a Catholic undergraduate liberal arts institution of higher learning in Canada. They have also focused their support to Indigenous issues across Canada for many years and believe in the importance of designated spaces for use by the Indigenous community. A plaque recognizing their generous support will be placed at the Reflection Circle.

Quotes:

Peter Kenny, donor: When Joanne and I first discussed how we might support King's, it was important for us to include a way to honour the heritage of the land as well as to honour and support students, in particular members of the Indigenous community. We were aware that there was no dedicated space for Indigenous ceremonies, so we are pleased to have contributed to such a space on campus. We are glad to know that anyone at King's will be able to use this beautiful space for reflection, conversation, education, and special ceremonies.

Dr. David Malloy, King's President: Joanne and Peter Kenny have a long history of supporting King's students and the King's community as a whole. This generous donation further shapes and improves our campus by helping our Indigenous community access their right to practice and manifest their cultural and spiritual traditions and customs as we work towards reconciliation. This gift of a Reflection Circle will be used as a dedicated space for Indigenous ceremonies at King's as well as a quiet place for reflection by all members of the King's community, regardless of background or faith.

Holly Clarke, President, King's University College Students' Council: On behalf of the Students' Council we want to thank (Joanne and Peter Kenny) for their contributions to the King's community. In the past, King's has not had a suitable place for Indigenous ceremonies, creating a disconnect between Indigenous students and the college and community. I hope that with the development of the circle, Indigenous students will feel welcome to celebrate their culture on campus and that all students can use this space as a place of peace and healing.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that our campus at King's University College is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenapeewak, and Attawandaron peoples, all of whom have longstanding relationships to the land of Southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The First Nations communities of our local area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. And in our region, there are eleven First Nations communities, as well as a growing Indigenous urban population. King's University College values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations, and all of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island (also known as North America).

About King's University College

King's is a public Catholic University College that provides general and honors degree programs in the liberal arts, social sciences, management, and a master's degree in social work. It is positioned in the top rank of institutions of higher learning in Canada for the high quality of its teaching faculty and student experience. Institutionally autonomous, King's is academically affiliated with Western University, and King's graduates receive a Western University degree. King's is open to students of all faith backgrounds, with its community centred on the values of social justice, equality and the education of the whole person.

For more information, please contact:

Jane Antoniak

Director, Communications & Media Relations

King's University College

jane.antoniak@kings.uwo.ca

Cell: 519-719-9366

[@kingsatwestern](https://www.kingsatwestern)

www.kings.uwo.ca