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More churches across Canada have been destroyed or damaged by fires that police are describing as suspicious or suspected arson.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Morinville, Alberta, investigated a fire at St. Jean Baptiste Church, a 100-year-old building that went up in flames early June 30.

The fire in Morinville, about 20 miles north of Edmonton, is being investigated as arson, Staff Sgt. Tom Kalis told Canadian Broadcast Corp. News.

In a statement, St. Paul Bishop Paul Terrio said, "It is with a sad heart that we learn the historic parish church of Morinville burned to the ground early this morning." He called for "prayers and support for our brothers and sisters of Morinville parish as they grieve the loss of their very beautiful and historic parish church."

Edmonton Archbishop Richard Smith released a video message on YouTube in which he called the news "heart-rending" and called for prayers for parishioners of St. Jean Baptiste. He also said the archdiocese is working with parish priests and police on arson prevention protocols.

The fires occurred as news has emerged of unmarked graves at former residential schools on First Nations lands. About 70% of the government schools were run by Catholic religious orders, which worked to assimilate the First Nations students. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission said more than 4,000 students died while attending the residential schools, and many of the families never heard what happened to them.

First Nations leaders have condemned the fires. Chief Clarence Louie of the Osoyoos Indian Band, who is also tribal chair and spokesman for the Okanagan Nation Alliance, told Global News June 27 he has no doubt the fires were intentionally set.

"Obviously, it's the same group of people. Why did they do it under the cover of darkness? Because it's a criminal act and they are criminal," he said.

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On June 21, the Penticton Indian Band condemned the burning of two churches on First Nations Land in the South Okanagan area, saying they and the Osoyoos Indian Band "are in disbelief and anger over these occurrences, as these places of worship provided service to members who sought comfort and solace in the church."

Perry Bellegarde, Assembly of First Nations national chief, said June 30 the Indigenous way is not to burn things down, but, rather, is about building relationships and coming together.

Some politicians are also starting to speak out. On Twitter, Alberta Premier Jason Kenney said the burning of the Morinville church "appears to be another violent hate crime targeting the Catholic community." He said the century-old church "was the heart of Morinville and a key part of the history and spiritual life of Alberta's Francophone community."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau mentioned the church fires, saying: "This is not the way to go. The destruction of places of worship is unacceptable. And it must stop."

RCMP are also investigating two church fires east of Calgary that damaged the Siksika First Nation Catholic Church June 28 and the Siksika Anglican Church June 29.

In Nova Scotia, police are describing a fire as "suspicious" after it damaged St. Kateri Tekakwitha Church on the Sipekne'katik First Nation grounds northwest of Halifax.

The spate of fires began June 21 when fires reduced to rubble two historic Catholic churches on First Nations lands in the Okanagan area.

Those fires, which police consider suspicious, destroyed Sacred Heart Mission Church on Penticton Indian Band land and St. Gregory Mission Church on Osoyoos Indian Band land.

Two more Catholic churches on First Nations land were then destroyed by fire, while fire damaged an Anglican church on First Nations land in northern British Columbia. Police are calling all the blazes "suspicious."

Penticton South Okanagan Similkameen RCMP continue investigating June 26 fires that destroyed the century-old St. Ann's Catholic Church on the Hedley Native Reserve of the Upper Similkameen Band and Our Lady of Lourdes Church on the Chopaka Native Reserve, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, near Osoyoos.

Lower Similkameen Indian Band Chief Keith Crow told CBC that many in the community were members at the church and were very upset.

"I'm angry," he told CBC. "I don't see any positive coming from this and it's going to be tough."