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One of the top nine essays that answered the question:

Do you feel like celebrating Canada Day this year?

by Mark Kingwell:

I will fly a Canadian flag on July 1 for an imperfect nation that aspires to keep its heart open to strangers.

At our best, Canada is an open and welcoming nation, a place of gathering and hospitality, even as we deal with our sometimes-shameful past. We have excluded Jews. We have punished Japanese immigrants. The mistreatment of First Nations can be traced in a continuous line to before Confederation.

This land, or village, or settlement, continues to welcome newcomers. It continues to support those of us who have been here for a while, and to respect those who have been here before recorded memory. That is what hospitality means, this eternal openness to the other. That is worth celebrating.

I will fly a Canadian flag on July 1, partly for my parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents who came here to escape famine and political oppression, but also for the very idea of this country, imperfect and unfinished though it is, that aspires to keep its heart and hearth open to strangers who will become friends.