



"Where Now for Visible Justice?"

Practical Information Handbook

North America · Turtle Island Regional Ecumenical Theological Institute

Detroit, USA – Toronto, Canada

3 – 16 August 2026

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Welcome to NATI-RETI 2026

Welcome to NATI-RETI 2026, the North America · Turtle Island Regional Ecumenical Theological Institute! From 3 to 16 August 2026, participants, facilitators, and guests will journey together across two countries, guided by the question “Where Now for Visible Justice?”

Our journey unfolds in three movements. During the USA Phase (3–8 August), we gather at the Capuchin Retreat Center near Detroit, Michigan, for study, prayer, and study visits in and around the city. On Sunday 9 August, our Transition Day, we cross the border together by bus, tracing the route of the Underground Railroad through Windsor, Ontario, before continuing on to Toronto. During the Canada Phase (10–16 August), we are hosted at Victoria University in the University of Toronto, with our sessions at Emmanuel College.

This handbook has been created to help you navigate the practical side of NATI-RETI 2026. Please keep it with you as a reference before and during your travels, especially on the days we move between venues and cities. The organizing team will be available throughout the event to support you.

We warmly welcome you to Detroit and Toronto — to the lands and waters of Turtle Island that will host our life together these two weeks.

— NATI-RETI 2026 Organizing Team

1. Essential Information

a. The Journey at a Glance

Dates	Phase	Where
Mon 3 – Sat 8 August	USA Phase	Capuchin Retreat Center (Detroit area) <i>62460 Mt. Vernon Rd., Washington Township, MI 48094, USA</i>
Sun 9 August	Transition Day	Border crossing by bus: Detroit → Windsor, Ontario → Toronto
Mon 10 – Sun 16 August	Canada Phase	Victoria University in the University of Toronto <i>73 Queen’s Park Crescent East, Toronto, ON M5S 1K7, Canada</i>

b. Climate and Time Zone

August is high summer in the Great Lakes region. In both Detroit and Toronto you can expect warm, often humid days (around 25–30 °C / 77–86 °F) and mild nights (around 16–20 °C / 61–68 °F). Summer thunderstorms are possible, so a light rain jacket or small umbrella is a good idea. Both venues are air-conditioned — bring a layer for cooler indoor spaces.

Detroit and Toronto are both on Eastern Daylight Time (EDT, UTC-4), so there is no time change during the program.

c. The Lands We Gather On

NATI-RETI 2026 takes place on Turtle Island. The Detroit area is situated on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe peoples — the Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi nations. Toronto is in the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples, and is covered by Treaty 13 and the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant. Our program — including the land acknowledgment, the Blanket Exercise, and our study visits — invites us to learn and walk respectfully on these lands.

2. Travel Information

a. Travel Documents

IMPORTANT: Bring a valid passport with more than six (6) months of validity remaining beyond the end of the program. You will need it to cross the border from the USA into Canada on Sunday 9 August.

All NATI-RETI 2026 participants are citizens of the United States, permanent residents of the United States, or citizens of Canada, so no visa is required for the border crossing:

- U.S. citizens do not need a visa to enter Canada; a valid passport is sufficient.
- U.S. permanent residents must carry BOTH their valid passport (from their country of citizenship) and their valid Green Card (Permanent Resident Card).
- Canadian citizens do not need a visa to enter the United States; a valid passport is sufficient.

Keep your passport and documents with you in your hand luggage at all times on travel days — never packed in luggage stored under the bus.

b. Getting to Detroit (Monday 3 August)

Each participant arranges and pays for their own travel to Detroit at the start of the program and from Toronto at the end of the program.

- **By air:** Please fly into Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW). Transportation from DTW to the Capuchin Retreat Center will be arranged according to the arrival information you provided in the transportation form.
- **By other means:** If you are not arriving through DTW, please make your own way directly to the Capuchin Retreat Center, 62460 Mt. Vernon Rd., Washington Township, MI 48094.

Arrivals are expected between 07:30 and 13:00 on Monday 3 August, followed by the orientation session at 13:00 and the opening celebration.

If your travel is delayed or interrupted, please inform the organizing team as soon as possible so we can adjust your pick-up.

c. Border Crossing Day: Detroit to Toronto (Sunday 9 August)

On Sunday 9 August we travel together by bus from Detroit to Toronto, crossing the border into Windsor, Ontario, early in the morning. Have your passport (and Green Card, if applicable) ready at hand for the border inspection. Your luggage travels with us on the bus for the whole day.

The day is itself a pilgrimage through Underground Railroad history:

- Stop at the Gateway to Freedom Monument (Detroit) and border crossing to Windsor
- Ecumenical prayers with the Windsor community at All Saints' Anglican Church
- Walk from City Hall Square to the Tower of Freedom Monument, and travel through the McDougall Corridor
- Lecture and lunch at Tanner-Price AME Church
- Visit to Sandwich First Baptist Church, a historic Underground Railroad site

In the afternoon we continue by bus to Toronto (approximately 4 hours), where we check in at Victoria University and share dinner together.

d. Departure from Toronto (Sunday 16 August)

The program closes on Sunday 16 August with breakfast and the closing celebration in the morning. Check-out from the residence is at 11:00; a luggage storage space will be indicated on site for those departing later in the day.

Each participant arranges their own onward travel from Toronto. Convenient options from downtown Toronto include:

- **UP Express:** a direct train from Union Station to Toronto Pearson International Airport (YYZ), departing every 15 minutes with a travel time of about 25 minutes. upexpress.com
- **Union Station Bus Terminal:** intercity coach services (e.g., to other Ontario cities, Montreal, and U.S. destinations).
- **VIA Rail:** intercity trains from Union Station to destinations across Canada. viarail.ca

Union Station is about a 25–30 minute walk, a short subway ride (Museum Station to Union on Line 1), or a 10-minute taxi/rideshare from Victoria University.

3. Venue Information

a. USA Phase: Capuchin Retreat Center (Detroit)

The Capuchin Retreat Center is a center of Franciscan spirituality set on 95 wooded acres in Washington Township, Michigan, about 45 minutes north of downtown Detroit. It is run by the Capuchin friars of the Province of St. Joseph, who warmly welcome guests of all traditions. Address: 62460 Mt. Vernon Rd., Washington Township, MI 48094 · capretreat.org

To get a feel for the retreat center before you arrive, visit their YouTube channel:
youtube.com/@capuchinretreatcenter

Accommodation: Each participant will have a private room with a private full bathroom. Linens, towels, and soap are provided. Rooms are climate-controlled, and Wi-Fi is available.

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are served on site, following the times in the NATI-RETI 2026 timetable.

House etiquette: The retreat center is a Franciscan house of prayer that also welcomes other retreat groups. Please help preserve its spirit of quiet and welcome:

- Maintain a respectful, calm atmosphere, especially in the evenings and in common areas.
- Casual, modest clothing appropriate to the weather is recommended.
- Alcohol is not to be consumed on the grounds.
- The grounds — woods, walking paths, and outdoor spaces — are open to you for reflection and rest.

b. Canada Phase: Victoria University in the University of Toronto

In Toronto we are hosted by Victoria University, federated with the University of Toronto, in the heart of downtown Toronto next to Queen's Park. Accommodation is in the Margaret Addison Hall and Burwash Hall residences · vic.utoronto.ca

Accommodation: Participants are accommodated in shared residence rooms with shared washrooms. Linens and towels are provided. The residences have Wi-Fi and common rooms, and are a short walk from all program venues.

Take a look at the residences and dining hall before you arrive:

- **Margaret Addison Hall:** [info sheet \(PDF\)](#) · [virtual tour \(video\)](#)
- **Burwash Hall – Upper Houses:** [info sheet \(PDF\)](#) · [virtual tour \(video\)](#)
- **Burwash Hall – Lower Houses:** [info sheet \(PDF\)](#) · [virtual tour \(video\)](#)
- **Burwash Dining Hall:** [dining information](#) · [video](#)

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are served in the Burwash Dining Hall, following the times in the NATI-RETI 2026 timetable. (On the study-visit day, Thursday 13 August, a bagged breakfast and lunch en route are provided.)

Program venue: Sessions, plenaries, and prayers take place at Emmanuel College, University of Toronto (75 Queen's Park Crescent East), a few minutes' walk from the residences. Some sessions during the Interfaith Dialogue days take place at the Toronto Bahá'í Centre.

4. What Is Covered

The NATI-RETI 2026 program fee covers your participation in the residential phase, including:

- Accommodation in Detroit and Toronto
- All meals during the program
- Study materials
- Program transportation: the bus from Detroit to Toronto on 9 August and all scheduled study visits and local program excursions

Participants are responsible for:

- Travel to Detroit at the start of the program and from Toronto at the end of the program
- Personal expenses (snacks, souvenirs, laundry, etc.)

Full details are published at nati-reti-2026.org/fees.html.

5. Practical Matters

a. Laundry

Card-operated laundry machines are available in the Toronto residences at a small cost (details available on arrival). No laundry service is planned during the Detroit phase, so please pack enough clothing for the first week.

b. Media, Photography, and Consent

Communications teams will be present throughout NATI-RETI 2026, taking photographs and recording video and interviews for documentation and promotional purposes. By participating, you consent to being photographed or filmed. If you do not wish to appear in photos or recordings, please inform the communications team at the beginning of the program.

c. Phone and Internet

Wi-Fi is available at both venues. The USA and Canada share the same country code (+1), but they are different countries for mobile roaming: check that your phone plan includes coverage on both sides of the border, or consider adding a cross-border/roaming option before you travel.

d. Electricity

The USA and Canada use the same power plugs and sockets (Type A and B) with a standard voltage of 120 V at 60 Hz — no adapters needed between the two countries.

e. Currency and Money

You will use two currencies during the program: the U.S. Dollar (USD) in Detroit and the Canadian Dollar (CAD) in Windsor and Toronto. Credit and debit cards (including contactless) are very widely accepted in both countries, so large amounts of cash are unnecessary — a small amount in each currency is enough for incidentals. ATMs are easy to find in both cities.

Tipping is customary in restaurants and cafés in both countries (usually 15–18%), but no tipping is needed for any organized NATI-RETI 2026 services (buses, study visits, meals at the venues).

6. Emergency Information

In both the United States and Canada, dial 911 for police, ambulance, or fire emergencies.

Contact details for the on-site organizing team will be shared at the beginning of the program.

7. Health and Safety

Detroit and Toronto are welcoming host cities, and there are no significant safety risks associated with the program. As in any urban area, keep an eye on your personal belongings, particularly in airports, stations, and busy public spaces.

- **Medication:** Bring an adequate supply of any regular medication for the full duration of the program, in your hand luggage.
- **Water:** Tap water is safe to drink in both countries. Bring a reusable water bottle.
- **Sun and insects:** Several program elements take place outdoors (study visits, walking tours, learning on the land). Bring sunscreen, a hat, and mosquito repellent for summer evenings and wooded areas.
- **Walking:** Expect a fair amount of walking on study-visit days — bring comfortable, supportive shoes.

8. What to Bring Along

a. Two Special Invitations

- **A blanket for the Blanket Exercise (Wednesday 12 August):** every participant is required to bring a blanket — any color, one that feels familiar to you — that can be laid on the floor. Together, our blankets will form a map, and we will work on the blankets throughout the exercise: standing, walking, and moving on them as the story unfolds. Please bring one you are comfortable using this way.
- **Musical talents and instruments:** if you play an instrument and can bring it along, you are warmly invited to share your gifts during the Morning and Evening Prayers.

b. Work Day at Freedom Dreams EcoVillage (Wednesday 5 August)

Our Climate Justice study visit to Freedom Dreams EcoVillage in Detroit is a hands-on day of work on the land: pathway building, gardening, and weed clearing around the Hill House, along with some deconstruction of pallets and sheathing of the Hill House. The deconstruction is minimal, fully supervised, and done with tools and PPE provided on site. For this day, please:

- Wear clothes you are comfortable getting dirty.
- Bring a hat and sunglasses.
- Bring your water bottle.
- Gloves and safety goggles will be provided!

c. Packing Checklist

- 📄 Travel documents: passport (valid 6+ months) — and your Green Card if you are a U.S. permanent resident
- 📖 Your Bible
- 🧣 A blanket (any color) for the Blanket Exercise
- 🎵 Your musical instrument, if you play one
- 🧢 Work clothes you don't mind getting dirty — for the Freedom Dreams EcoVillage work day
- 👕 Casual, modest clothing and layers (air-conditioned rooms indoors, warm humid days outdoors)
- 🧥 A light rain jacket or small umbrella
- 👟 Supportive shoes for walking tours and study visits
- ☀️ Sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses
- 🦟 Mosquito repellent for evenings and wooded areas
- 💊 Any regular medication you may need during your stay
- 💧 Reusable water bottle
- 🔌 Chargers and cables for your devices (no power adapters needed)
- 💵 A small amount of cash in both USD and CAD
- 📓 A journal or notebook for reflection

We look forward to welcoming you in Detroit and Toronto.

Have a safe trip!