

## Language and culture

13. We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights.
14. We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act.
15. We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote Aboriginal languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of Aboriginal-languages initiatives.
16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.
17. We call upon all levels of government to enable residential school Survivors and their families to reclaim names changed by the residential school system by waiving administrative costs for a period of five years for the name-change process and the revision of official identity documents, such as birth certificates, passports, driver's licenses, health cards, status cards, and social insurance numbers.

### **Collect for the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada, 2011**

**Holy One, Creator of all that is, seen and unseen, of story and of song, of heartbeat and of tears of bodies, souls, voices and all relations: you are the God of all truth and the way of all reconciliation.**

**Uphold with your love and compassion all who open their lives in the sacred sharing of their stories**

**breathe in us the grace to trust in your loving forgiveness, that we may face our histories with courage;**

**touch us through the holy gift of story that those who speak and those who listen may behold your own redeeming presence;**

**guide us with holy wisdom to enter through the gates of remorse that our feet may walk gently and firmly on the way of justice and healing.**

**Amen.**

THE MATERIAL IN THIS BULLETIN HAS BEEN POSTED ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE. IF YOU ARE ONLINE PLEASE VISIT US THERE, SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS, AND JOIN THE DISCUSSION.

## Lent at ASK:

### **A Journey with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission**

Canada's residential school system for Aboriginal children was an education system in name only for much of its existence. These residential schools were created for the purpose of separating Aboriginal children from their families, in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages, and to indoctrinate children into a new culture—the culture of the legally dominant Euro-Christian Canadian society, led by Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. The schools were in existence for well over 100 years, and many successive generations of children from the same communities and families endured the experience of them. That experience was hidden for most of Canada's history, until Survivors of the system were finally able to find the strength, courage, and support to bring their experiences to light in several thousand court cases that ultimately led to the largest class-action lawsuit in Canada's history.

*(from the preface to HONOURING THE TRUTH, RECONCILING FOR THE FUTURE)*

The Truth and Reconciliation of Canada was established in 2008 as part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. This Lent, here at All Saints Kingsway, we as a community are working our way through the TRC's 94 calls to action as part of our own communal walk towards reconciliation.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation hosts a website (<http://www.nctr.ca>) where you can access all the reports, monitor the response to each of these calls to action, and explore a vast collection of records.

HONOURING THE TRUTH, RECONCILING FOR THE FUTURE can be found on this site, under the Reports tab. It gives historical context for each of the 94 calls to action.

It's a difficult read. And that's just why we need to read it.

You'll find some sections fascinating, and some will make you angry. Some of it will make you believe in the spirit of hope, and some will just break your heart.

## First Week of Lent

This week, we address the 17 calls to action dealing with maintaining children's health and safety, accessing adequate education, and preserving language and culture.

Please refer to **HONOURING THE TRUTH, RECONCILING FOR THE FUTURE** (referenced on front page) for background information on why these calls to action are necessary.

### TRC Calls to Action:

#### Child welfare

1. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care.
2. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the provinces and territories, to prepare and publish annual reports on the number of Aboriginal children (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) who are in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, as well as the reasons for apprehension, the total spending on preventive and care services by child-welfare agencies, and the effectiveness of various interventions.
3. We call upon all levels of government to fully implement Jordan's Principle.  
**(N.B. Jordan's principle requires that when an aboriginal child is ill, the agency of first contact must pay for required healthcare until any jurisdictional dispute over payment can be resolved.)**
4. We call upon the federal government to enact Aboriginal child-welfare legislation that establishes national standards for Aboriginal child apprehension and custody cases.
5. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.

## Education

6. We call upon the Government of Canada to repeal Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada.  
**(N.B. This section justifies "force by way of correction" toward a pupil or child.)**
7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
8. We call upon the federal government to eliminate the discrepancy in federal education funding for First Nations children being educated on reserves and those First Nations children being educated off reserves.
9. We call upon the federal government to prepare and publish annual reports comparing funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves, as well as educational and income attainments of Aboriginal peoples in Canada compared with non-Aboriginal people.
10. We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding.
11. We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.
12. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.