

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.

Third Week of Lent

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:

Canadian Governments and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

43. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.
44. We call upon the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures to achieve the goals of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Royal Proclamation and Covenant of Reconciliation

45. We call upon the Government of Canada, on behalf of all Canadians, to jointly develop with Aboriginal peoples a Royal Proclamation of Reconciliation to be issued by the Crown. The proclamation would build on the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Treaty of Niagara of 1764, and reaffirm the nation-to-nation relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown.
46. We call upon the parties to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement to develop and sign a Covenant of Reconciliation that would identify principles for working collaboratively to advance reconciliation in Canadian society.
47. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

Settlement Agreement Parties and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

48. We call upon the church parties to the Settlement Agreement, and all other faith groups and interfaith social justice groups in Canada who have not already done so, to formally adopt and comply with the principles, norms, and standards of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation.
49. We call upon all religious denominations and faith groups who have not already done so to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius.

Equity for Aboriginal People in the Legal System

50. In keeping with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, we call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal organizations, to fund the establishment of Indigenous law institutes for the development, use, and understanding of Indigenous laws and access to justice in accordance with the unique cultures of Aboriginal peoples in Canada.
51. We call upon the Government of Canada, as an obligation of its fiduciary responsibility, to develop a policy of transparency by publishing legal opinions it develops and upon which it acts or intends to act, in regard to the scope and extent of Aboriginal and Treaty rights.
52. We call upon the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments, and the courts to adopt the following legal principles:
 - i. Aboriginal title claims are accepted once the Aboriginal claimant has established occupation over a particular territory at a particular point in time.
 - ii. Once Aboriginal title has been established, the burden of proving any limitation on any rights arising from the existence of that title shifts to the party asserting such a limitation.