

Moving Towards Reconciliation – Outreach Ministry of Refugee Sponsorship

The Canadian Refugee Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAH) Association, of which the Diocese of Rupert's Land is a member, is committed to upholding the values, principles, and calls to action that came out of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As we try to live out the Third Mark of Mission – Responding to Human need by Loving Service, and “Welcome the Stranger”, doing the work of re-settling the oppressed and vulnerable refugees of the world, we seek to inform ourselves of the past, acknowledging the wrongs that were done to Canada's First Peoples. In welcoming newcomers to this country - their new home - we recognize that they too should know about the history of Canada as we all learn of the past, seeking forgiveness and reconciliation and learning to live in community. As we undergo the process of building safe, healthy, and inclusive communities, we take this journey by building relationships, so that we can all live in peace and harmony with each other while respecting our individual beliefs.

The SAH Association recently established a collective of settlement organizations dedicated to promoting the work of the TRC with Indigenous Communities. The collective provides a space for discussion, reflection, mutual learning, and critical action. “Our collective responsibility is to educate ourselves about the truth of the oppression of Indigenous Peoples and ways the settlement sector can best work in allyship with Indigenous communities”.

(Marlene Smith – Refugee Coordinator, Diocese of Rupert's Land)

Truth and Reconciliation

On June 1, 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was created to document the history and lasting impacts of the residential school system in Canada on Indigenous individuals and their families. The Commission held several meetings across the country, providing survivors of the residential schools the chance to speak about their experiences.

After several years of meetings and documenting these stories, the TRC released its report detailing its findings and 94 Calls to Action towards reconciliation.

The report notes:

It is due to the courage and determination of former students—the Survivors of Canada's residential school system—that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (trc) was established. They worked for decades to place the issue of the abusive treatment that students were subjected to at residential schools on the national agenda. Their perseverance led to the reaching of the historic Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement.

All Canadians must now demonstrate the same level of courage and determination, as we commit to an ongoing process of reconciliation. By

establishing a new and respect-ful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, we will restore what must be restored, repair what must be repaired, and return what must be returned.

Justice Murray Sinclair, *Chair, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*

Chief Wilton Littlechild, *Commissioner*

Dr. Marie Wilson, *Commissioner*

Below are two documents published by the TRC: **The Survivors Speak** report where residential school survivors detail their experiences, and the **Calls to Action** towards reconciliation. It is important that we read these documents, learn about the impacts of these schools, and commit to reconciliation.

Calls to Action

https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

The Survivors Speak

<https://nccpeterborough.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Screenshot-2021-07-01-at-9.08.51-AM.png>