

A Ceremony for Solidarity for the National Aboriginal Day of Prayer, 2016

Notes:

The Document which follows, “**AN ACTION IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF CANADA**”, is a local response to the Primate’s call for “The United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” to be read in every parish in Canada on June 21, 2016 or on the Sunday closest. It was created by the Rev. Canon Greg Smith, inspired by an idea of Victoria Andersen within the Worship Planning Team of St. Aidan’s Church, London, ON. It is being offered as a resource to parishes in the Diocese of Huron by the Bridge Builders (task force on the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery), which is comprised of indigenous and non-indigenous members.

This document does not contain the full text of the UN Declaration but simply the headings of each Article as modeled in the video of 46 indigenous representatives presenting a short version of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

DVD Title: Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples-51598291(6 mins)
<https://vimeo.com/51598291>.

These Articles are accompanied by a reading of the Ten Principles guiding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the mandate given by the Primate and prayers from Indigenous Ministries resources.

It is recommended that every member of the church be given access to the whole text of the UN Declaration – the length of which makes a public reading very challenging – either in printed form or as a web address. A convenient pocket size edition has been produced by the Society of Friends in Canada and can be purchased (while supplies last) by contacting them at <http://quakerservice.ca/our-work/indigenous-peoples-rights/un-declaration/> . This resource is also available through the kairoscanada.org website (Resources).

This document is produced as a means of “getting a job done”. It is anticipated that it would be read as a community at the time normally taken by the sermon. Reading the text as printed will take 10 minutes. It will be up to individual communities to provide the theological rationale for this action by, for example, including the readings appointed for the National Aboriginal Day of Prayer www.anglican.ca , incorporating other appropriate elements to the worship, and by the community leader making a brief public introduction to the action based on Scripture and Christian teaching.

To avoid misappropriation, it is important to note that non-indigenous should not make use of any ritual or ceremony sacred to the First Nations people without the

guidance, teaching and leadership of an indigenous person who practices the traditions. However, worshipping in circle and turning to honour the four directions in prayer are appropriate actions.

AN ACTION IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF CANADA

Narrator Voice: Listen to the words of the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada speaking at the Chapel of the Mohawks, Brantford, Ontario, March 19, 2016.

Voice 1: “In renouncing the Doctrine of Discovery that drove colonial expansion – regarding “**discovered lands**” as empty lands; and treating the First Peoples of the land as savages to be conquered, civilized, and Christianized - our church described that doctrine “as fundamentally opposed to the gospel of Christ and our understanding of the inherent rights that individuals and peoples have received from God”.

I remain deeply committed to enabling our church to let its “yes” in repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery be a resounding and continuing “yes”.

While much has been written about this doctrine, it is clear there is much more education required if we are to understand the political and spiritual arrogance inherent in it, and the force with which it was upheld through strategies aimed at systemic cultural genocide... I call on every diocese and territory of our church to ensure opportunity for learning about the history and lingering legacy of this doctrine...I am requesting that on National Aboriginal Day, June 21 or the Sunday closest, there be a public reading of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in every parish across Canada.

Leader: Let us pray,

(A Prayer for Reconciliation)

All: Creator, we give you thanks for all you are and all you bring to us for our visit within your creation. In Jesus, you place the Gospel in the Centre of this Sacred Circle through all of which all creation is related. You show us the way to live a generous and compassionate life. Give us your strength to live together with respect and commitment as we grow in your spirit, for you are God, now and forever.

AMEN. (from Indigenous Theological Training Institute planning and design team, written to accompany the Disciple’s Prayer Book)

A Collect for Covenant

All: Creator God, from you every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. You have rooted and grounded us in your covenant love, and empowered us by your Spirit to speak the truth in love, and to walk in your way towards justice and wholeness. Mercifully grant that your people, journeying together in partnership, may be strengthened and guided to help one another to grow into the full stature of Christ, who is our light and our life. Amen. (from the 1994 Covenant, Our Journey of Spiritual Renewal)

Narrator Voice: Following are the voices of the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by 144 nations in September 2007, and by Canada as “an aspirational document” in November 2010. These headings summarize the Articles of the Declaration affirming the rights and standards affecting relationships with indigenous peoples around the world. They will be accompanied by the voice of the principles guiding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #1: “The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.”

Voice 2: **United Nations Articles** (*Note: it is recommended that the number of each article be read aloud to designate it clearly*)

#1 Human Rights and fundamental freedom

#2 Equality

#3 The right to self-determination

#4 Autonomy and self-governance

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #2: “First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have treaty, constitutional and human rights that must be recognized and respected.”

Voice 3: United Nations Articles

#5 Indigenous institutions, state participation

#6 Nationality

#7 Life, security, violence free, Guarding against genocide

#8 Cultural integrity and prevention of cultural destruction

#9 Communities and nations without discrimination

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #3: “Reconciliation is a process of healing relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.”

Voice 4: United Nations Articles

#10 Free, prior and informed consent prior to removal and relocation

#11 Cultural tradition and customs

#12 Spiritual and religious traditions; repatriation of remains

#13 Native language is fundamental to preserve culture. The guarantee to participate in political, legal and administrative proceedings.

#14 Education in our own culture and language

#15 Education and public information to promote peace in society.

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #4: “Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacy of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal people’s education, cultures and language, health, child welfare, the administration of justice and economic opportunities and prosperity.”

Voice 5: United Nations Articles

#16 Media and cultural diversity

#17 Employment and labour; protection from exploitation of children

#18 Indigenous decision making and institutions

#19 Prior consultation with free, prior, informed consent

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #5: “Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

Voice 6: United Nations Articles

#20 Subsistence and development in economic activities; entitlement to just and fair redress.

#21 Improvement of indigenous living standards and special measures to ensure them.

#22 Ensure protection for elders, women, youth ,children, and persons with disabilities

#23 Determine and administer the right to economic and social development

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #6: “All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.”

Voice 7: United Nations Articles

#24 Traditional medicine and holistic protection of resources. Progressive realization of physical and mental health.

#25 Indigenous peoples have distinctive spiritual relationships with their territories and have responsibilities to future generations.

#26 Land rights and legal recognition of indigenous systems

#27 Due recognition of indigenous lands and resources through fair process by strong participation

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #7: “The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.”

Voice 8: United Nations Articles

#28 Indigenous redress and restitution for lands and resources

#29 Environment conservation and protection ; prevention of hazardous materials; restoring health impacted by such materials

#30 No military activities on indigenous land

#31 Cultural heritage, traditional property and intellectual property.

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #8: “Supporting Aboriginal peoples’ cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.”

Voice 9: United Nations Articles

#32 Determine and develop priorities and strategies for development

#33 Indigenous identity and citizenship based on customs.

#34 Indigenous legal structures and customary practices in accordance with human rights standards.

#35 Determine individual responsibility in indigenous communities

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #9: “Reconciliation requires political will, trust building, accountability and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.”

Voice 10: United Nations Articles

#36 Contact and cooperation despite division due to borders

#37 Recognition of treaty rights and observation of agreements.

#38 National measures for achievement of declaration articles

#39 Access to assistance from states and international cooperation

#40 Dispute resolution and remedies based on indigenous traditions and customs and international human rights law

#41 Full realization of rights through cooperation and assistance from UN systems and intergovernmental organizations

Narrator Voice: TRC Principle #10: “Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.”

Voice 11: United Nations Articles

#42 Promotion and application of declaration articles through UN specialized agencies and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

#43 The rights and the declaration are the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world

#44 Guarantee of gender equality

#45 Nothing in the declaration diminishes or extinguishes indigenous peoples' rights now or in the future

#46 Respect for UN Charter and promotion of the principals of peace, justice and human rights.

All: Merciful God, you call us to loving relationship with one another.

Be with us now as we seek to heal old wounds and find joy again in this relationship.

Replace our hearts of stone with hearts of flesh.

Give us the gifts of honesty and openness, and fill us with your healing power and grace.

We ask this in Jesus's name.

Amen. (Anglican Healing Fund prayer)