

WE ARE STILL HERE

Responsive Litany

Affirmed at Walpole Island First Nation, April 2018

Primate's Commission on the
Doctrine of Discovery, Justice and Reconciliation

The following is a litany developed by the Primate's Commission on the Doctrine of Discovery, Justice and Reconciliation for use in community settings, whether in Sunday worship, diocesan or deanery meetings, study groups, or another form of gathering. It may be used as a closing prayer to both the KAIROS Blanket Exercise and the PWRDF Mapping Exercise, or another learning experience. While the litany does not claim to capture all aspects of colonization, it does try to reflect the truth we have come to know through processes such as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as ongoing Anglican journeys of apology and self determination. With its alternating voices (Indigenous and non-Indigenous), it works best in settings where both communities are represented. However, in a group where there is not diverse representation, it can also be appropriate to ask one part of the gathering community to respectfully speak the voice of a community not their own. In this case, the worship leader could invite this. And, at the end of the litany, the leader might ask for a moment of silence to reflect on what it felt like to speak the words of another's experience, while praying for opportunities in the future to strengthen bonds of peace and friendship between communities. Where it is appropriate for the community, a drum beat might be added to the litany representing the heart beat of the Creator, or chanting could also be considered.



The General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada

WE ARE STILL HERE

Indigenous: We are still here, on Turtle Island, placed by the Creator.
Non-Indigenous: Some of us came seeking home, displaced or persecuted.
Indigenous: And we were here, diverse nations, many peoples—at home.
Non-Indigenous: Some of us came seeking adventure, riches or glory.
Indigenous: And we were here, living with deep connection to the land.
Non-Indigenous: Some of us came seeking a better life, security and possibility.

Indigenous: We offered peace and friendship
Non-Indigenous: And some of us accepted, treaty people, living in relationship
Indigenous: We shared the land, and our deep wisdom of this place.
Non-Indigenous: And some of us were open to hear.
Indigenous: At first you were few and we were many.
Non-Indigenous: And then we were many, with greater and greater hunger for land.

Indigenous: The land of our ancestors, our identity.
Non-Indigenous: The land we imagined could be ours.

Indigenous: At first we were friends and allies
Non-Indigenous: Then you became enemy, in the way of what we wanted.
Indigenous: We shared and still share a deep reverence for life gifted from the Creator
Non-Indigenous: We seemed unable to recognize your faith, seeking to impose our own.

Indigenous: We believed we could live side by side, two boats in the same river.
Non-Indigenous: We could only imagine you becoming like us.

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Indigenous: You spoke benefit but brought harm
Non-Indigenous: Trying to dissolve you into our image.
Indigenous: You brought unspeakable pain
Non-Indigenous: Abuses of power, holding tight to a sense of superiority.
Indigenous: You took our children from us
Non-Indigenous: Breaking sacred bonds of kinship.
Indigenous: Your gospel of love distorted by hate.
Non-Indigenous: How could we have been so wrong?

Indigenous: Your ways tried to break us.
Non-Indigenous: But still you rise.
Indigenous: Your vision tried to disappear us.
Non-Indigenous: But still you stand.
Indigenous: We are resilience and strength.
Non-Indigenous: We are beginning to understand.

Indigenous: We are coming home to our traditions.
Non-Indigenous: We still seek home, but now alongside and with you.
Indigenous: You are facing this truth.
Non-Indigenous: We are listening, unlearning, and learning anew.
Indigenous: Stand beside us in acts of justice.
Non-Indigenous: Receive our contrition, embodied in solidarity.
Indigenous: May the Creator's plan
Non-Indigenous: For right relation in this place

All: Finally come to be. Amen