

A Framework for Reconciliation

A Workshop on Regional/Local Implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Goals:

- To explore the state of reconciliation in Canada two years after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) released its Calls to Action
- To learn what the United Church, nationally, has done to respond to TRC Call to Action 48 (implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation)
- To examine where, in our own contexts, we are already responding to this Call to Action and where we might take additional action
- To commit to supporting our municipal, provincial/territorial, and federal governments in living out their own implementation of the UN Declaration (Call to Action 43)

Time required:

- 30 minutes minimum; longer for a more robust discussion and an action plan

Background resources:

- Search “UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” on www.united-church.ca or go to www.united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/reconciliation-and-indigenous-justice
- Specifically, read the [ecumenical](#) and [United Church statements](#) on implementing the UN Declaration, and materials on the [campaign in support of Bill C-262](#)

Materials required:

- Computer and projector
- United Church video “Haven’t We Done That? Reconciliation and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”
- Access to the background resources listed above

Notes:

- This introductory process is designed to fit into a half-hour. If you have more time, use the boxed prompts to go more deeply into the process.
- No matter how much time you have, ask the group to take this process home and work on it with their own community of faith.

Step 1 (7 min.)

Have the group **view the video** “Haven’t We Done That?” Ask the group:

- What are the connections between the promises we have made as a church and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?
- Do you think things have changed for Indigenous Peoples in Canada since the Apology? Do you think they experience what the Declaration calls for?

If you have more than a half-hour ... Break into small groups to discuss these questions in more detail.

Step 2 (3 min.)

Move on to **share how church can live out the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** (TRC Call to Action 48). Explain the following:

- Part of this work is **structural**, and the national committees of the church are now examining how to make our policies, procedures, and practices consistent with the Declaration.
- Part of this work is **relational**; in this workshop, we will explore the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in our local contexts.
- Finally, in addition to the call to churches, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls on **all levels of government to adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation** (Call to Action 43). As a church that is engaged in public witness and committed to reconciliation, advocating with government at all levels is part of our commitment to the UN Declaration.

Step 3 (10 min.)

Examine your **local context and relationships**. Ask participants to form knee groups and consider the following questions:

- Who are the Indigenous peoples closest to you, with whom you share the land?
- Do you have a relationship with them? If not, how might you? Is listening a first good step?
- Are they affected by any of the issues raised in the film? Do other issues related to the UN Declaration affect them? If you don't know, how can you find out?
- Have you asked the community how you might best support it in these struggles? If not, how might you do? If so, what next step might you take?

If you have more than a half-hour ... Break into small groups to discuss these questions in more detail and to **prepare action plans**.

Step 4 (10 min.)

Consider the **political context**, and think about how you can respond. Ask participants to form knee groups and consider the questions below. Ask one person to jot down notes and communicate commitments to United Church Reconciliation and Indigenous Justice Animator Sara Stratton (sstratton@united-church.ca).

- Have your municipal and provincial/territorial governments adopted the UN Declaration? Can you commit to advocating with them to do so?
- The Canadian government has not yet met its stated commitment to implementing the Declaration. A private member's bill, Bill C-262, before the House of Commons would establish a timeline and accountability process for implementation. The United Church has joined an ecumenical campaign in support of the principles of Bill C-262. Can you commit to advocating with your member of Parliament to support this bill?

If you have more than a half-hour ... Break into small groups to discuss these questions in more detail and to **prepare action plans**.