



One Step on a Journey

The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and the
Anglican Church of Canada – Lessons Learned

*Photo: Project of Heart tiles on display at the National Centre
for Truth and Reconciliation in Winnipeg, MB*

This report is dedicated to the Indigenous survivors of the Canadian Indian Residential Schools system, who reminded the Church to turn away from darkness, and to choose the Light.

The author would like to gratefully thank all those who participated in the IRSSA Lessons Learned Exercise – particularly survivors who did the emotional labour of revisiting their experiences of the process.

Special thanks are offered to the community of Lytton, BC for convening a dedicated Survivors' Circle for this purpose.

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Anglican Church of Canada

Methodology

The Anglican Church of Canada (hereafter “ACC”) Lessons Learned process was undertaken by the Reconciliation Animator, Melanie Delva, with the advice and assistance of the Primate, the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop, the General Secretary, and the staff of the Anglican Healing Fund and Indigenous Ministries.

We gathered data by surveying national staff members and other national church leaders, convening a Survivors’ Circle, and conducting one-on-one interviews. Participation was fairly evenly representative of urban and rural, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, clergy and laity. In total, 42 individuals participated.

1. The survey of national staff members and other national church leaders was administered as an electronic written questionnaire. The questions were based largely on the “Questions for IRSSA Lessons Learned Exercise” document approved at the September, 2018 meeting of the All Parties Table. The draft questionnaire was first sent to Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders for comments and edits. It was then disseminated electronically to 32 people including current and past General Synod staff members, various grassroots Anglicans who were involved in the TRC regional and national events, and key non-Indigenous bishops whose dioceses had a residential school in them and/or hosted a truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) event. Of those who received the survey, 20 responded.

The survey instrument comprised 30 questions: 16 were statements that respondents could respond to on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. The rest were open-ended questions that asked for a response in the form of a comment box. None of the questions required an answer; respondents could skip any of the questions. Four of the questions were specific to the Common Experience Payment (CEP), 3 to the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Independent Assessment Process (IAP), 9 to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the rest to reconciliation in the Anglican Church of Canada more generally, including views on the next steps that should be taken. The data collected from the survey were tabulated, resulting in an 81-page summary report of responses.

2. A Survivors’ Sharing Circle was held in Lytton, BC, where the Anglican Residential School of St. George’s was located. This was led by local clergy and Pastoral Elders who are part of the Indigenous community and could therefore provide current and ongoing spiritual and emotional care to those who took part. Intergenerational survivors were also present. A set of questions was prepared to give suggestions; however, conveners of the circle were encouraged to allow the conversation to emerge in an organic way. The Circle reported their responses to the Reconciliation Animator in the form of written notes of the conversation.

3. Ten one-on-one interview conversations were arranged by the Reconciliation Animator, and involved Indigenous elders, bishops, former and current Anglican Church of Canada staff members, leaders of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, and residential school survivors. Interviewees were asked about their own experiences and those of the people they care for and minister to. Much like the Survivor Circle, these were not scripted conversations. The

Reconciliation Animator described the Lessons Learned exercise and had the interviewee guide the conversation from there based on their knowledge and experiences.

Limitations to the Methodology

Due to constraints in time and resources, there are several limitations to the methodology used that should be noted. First, receiving answers by survey naturally limits the depth and nature of responses. Although a comment box was employed for each set of scaled questions, understanding why a respondent answered the way that they did on a particular scaled question was sometimes impossible to determine. In many cases, individuals completing the survey opted for the “neither agree nor disagree” middle range, an ambiguous response which could mean either that the respondent had no opinion to register, probably because they felt that they had insufficient information, or that they were ambivalent. In addition, surveys lack the organic nature of a conversation or interview or circle gathering, where participants build on one another’s thoughts and ideas, and deeper responses can be prompted by the conversation.

Second, even geographical representation was difficult to achieve. For example, although respondents represented six Canadian provinces and one Territory, there were only two participants from the Arctic region, and no participation from the Atlantic provinces.

Third, the structure of the ACC complicates this report and its findings. While the report is from the perspective of the “National Office” of the Anglican Church of Canada, the ACC is comprised of 30 different dioceses, episcopally led (that is, by bishops) and synodically governed (that is, elected lay and clergy members together with the bishops). What this means is that although the “National Office” or “General Synod” of the Anglican Church of Canada provides leadership, support, and guidance to the Dioceses, it does not have “jurisdiction” to act in the affairs of a Diocese. As a result of this structure, participant responses sometimes reflected what they know of the General Synod work, but also were coloured by the perspective of their local context. This fact also means that it will not be possible for the General Synod of the ACC to respond to/ act on some of the recommended actions and further work provided for this report. Those which the General Synod cannot directly act upon will depend on the General Synod’s encouragement of Dioceses in the work, and the initiative of the local church in question.

The final limitation that must be noted is that the response-gathering and this report were created, conducted, compiled and written by a non-Indigenous, settler person. Although she has, to the best of her ability, approached the work very aware of her place of privilege both in Canadian society and in the Church, consulted with Indigenous leadership along the way and sought for the report to favour the responses of Indigenous participants, this needs to be acknowledged as it undoubtedly affected the lens through which the report has been written.

Contextual Background

One unexpected outcome of taking part in the Lessons Learned Exercise was the opportunity to revisit and look back on a painful piece of history in the relationship between Indigenous Anglicans and the non-Indigenous ACC. This history was raised by several Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants in the Exercise as contextual to how they were responding to questions and why.

At the second National Native Convocation in Minaki, Ontario, in 1993, the Primate presented to Indigenous Anglicans an apology for the Anglican Church's role in the residential school system¹. That apology was accepted by the Indigenous peoples present at the Convocation.

In April of 1994, Indigenous Anglican leadership gathered in Winnipeg, Manitoba. From that gathering came a declaration called "A Covenant and our Journey of Spiritual Renewal"², known in ACC circles as "The Covenant". It affirmed Indigenous peoples' place in "God's Creation and in God's Love", addressed non-Indigenous Anglicans about the reality of colonial violence and the resulting brokenness in Indigenous communities, claimed responsibility to self-determination within the Anglican Church of Canada, and extended "the hand of partnership to all those who will help us build a truly Anglican Indigenous Church in Canada". In 1995 the General Synod of the ACC accepted that extended hand and pledged to walk in partnership with Indigenous Anglicans in their journey of self-determination. A group made up of ACC staff and both Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders was tasked with guiding and implementing the Covenant.

In the wake of lawsuits filed by residential school survivors against the federal government and the churches that administered the schools, the first meeting of ACC representatives and the Government of Canada took place in 1998. In 2000 the negotiations had moved to such a place where the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples (hereafter "ACIP") were asked to appoint an Indigenous representative to the ACC negotiating team. The ACIP accordingly named both a representative and an alternate. Within a year, on June 4, 2001, the Indigenous representative resigned, citing a lack of transparency in the negotiations which he felt precluded him from being able to properly represent Indigenous interests. The alternate representative took his place.

Although ACIP received regular summaries of the negotiations between Church and government, they were general only, and did not include any details of the contents of the Agreement. Therefore, Indigenous Anglicans did not have any opportunity to provide feedback, express concerns, or give/withhold consent to any portion of what emerged as the first (2003) Settlement Agreement³ before it was made public on the Internet in November of 2002. Through the winter, ACIP staff members sought to gather feedback from Indigenous Anglicans regarding the Agreement. This process was laborious due to the remoteness of some communities, the complexity of the agreement, and the language barriers presented in some cases.

What emerged immediately from those consultations were grave concerns about the agreement and the potential impacts upon survivors and their descendants. Concerns were expressed about the way the Agreement had been negotiated by settler leaders without sufficient input from survivors or other Indigenous persons, as well as the detailed contents of the proposed agreement. In particular, the Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) process outlined in Part II of the Agreement was described as

¹ The full text of the apology in English and several Indigenous languages can be accessed at <https://www.anglican.ca/tr/apology/>

² The full text of the Covenant can be accessed at <https://www.anglican.ca/im/foundational-documents/covenant/>

³ It is important to note that this refers to the Settlement Agreement which was negotiated between the ACC and the Government of Canada and signed in 2003, NOT the IRSSA signed in 2006. The 2003 agreement is available at: https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/AGREEMENT_Nov19.pdf

“torturous” and “appalling”, raising a real fear that survivors caught in the process would be further victimized. The greatest opposition, however, was with regard to section 2.19 which read:

As part of any settlement agreement with a Claimant, the Claimant will release the Government and the Anglican Entities from any and all past, present and future claims, whether or not now known to or existing at law, arising from or connected to, directly or indirectly, an Indian Residential School, including, but not limited to, claims for loss of culture and language, or violation of the existing aboriginal or treaty rights of the aboriginal people of Canada set out in s.35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

As such, Indigenous peoples had to waive all future claims for loss of language and culture, or violation of treaty rights. Not only that, but the Agreement also obliged the ACC itself to “vigorously oppose”⁴ any such claims. This was strongly contested by ACIP, who expressed their opposition to the General Secretary and Chancellor in January of 2003. In February they then reached out to the Primate of the ACC in writing, explaining their concerns and asking to meet about their concerns. Although one amendment to section 6 was made in February, the concerns regarding the ADR process and section 2.19 were not addressed. ACIP’s first opportunity to gather to consult as a group about the Settlement Agreement and what their constituents thought and felt about it was on March 6–9, 2003, only five days before the Agreement was to be signed.

On the evening of March 9th, ACIP delivered a letter to the Primate urging him not to sign the Agreement until concerns about the ADR and section 2.19 had been further discussed and addressed. Although a meeting did occur, on the evening of March 10th, it became clear that no changes would be made. ACIP released a Press Statement stating their opposition to the signing, making it clear that the Settlement Agreement process and text itself did not reflect the Covenant partnership of 1994/1995 and when the Primate signed the Agreement on March 11th, “he will not be doing so in our name”.⁵ . The next day, the Settlement Agreement was signed in the ACC offices. Although the ACIP was in the building, members did not as a body attend the signing ceremony. Later, ACC staff members who had been providing staff support to ACIP as part of their roles were disciplined.

The signing of the Settlement Agreement without the support of the Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples and the later disciplining of staff involved caused a definite break in the relationship between ACC settler leadership and Indigenous Anglicans. The *Anglican Journal* reported a “sense of betrayal felt on all sides since signing”⁶. Although the Primate’s Apology for residential schools had been accepted a decade before, the signing of the Agreement “shattered the faith of the [ACIP] Council”. The Council of General Synod made efforts to “mend fences”⁷ with ACIP and gathered that October to further discuss the break, but the damage had been done. By all accounts, the break in relationship was “never really dealt with”.

Several participants in the Lessons Learned Exercise referred to the events of 2003 and requested that this background be shared as part of the report. One Indigenous participant, referring to the worry of ACC settler leaders at the time that the claims of Indigenous survivors could devastate the institution financially, summed up the Settlement Agreement as the ACC “using our birthright to prevent its

⁴ Section 6.3 of the 2003 Settlement Agreement

⁵ Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples’ Press Statement: March 10, 2003

⁶ Anglican Journal – May 2003

⁷ Anglican Journal – June 2003 - <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/council-moves-to-mend-fences-with-acip-1952/>

bankruptcy". The sting of "betrayal" was cited by several participants. Indigenous participants spoke to the feeling that the ACC had "caved to the government mandate". Staff members who had been disciplined spoke to the tensions in the ACC offices and the breakdown of communications and trust. One Indigenous leader of that time said, "We lost a lot of ground [in reconciliation and implementation of the Covenant] because of that experience. It has taken a long time to build it back up".

Before the IRSSA was signed, survivors went through the ADR process. One survivor who experienced this process said that while he was glad to have the opportunity to tell his story, the process was "very aggressive", and "like a court hearing" with the onus on the survivor to "prove" what had happened. More than one survivor described the process as a "revictimization". For some, the worst fears that ACIP had expressed prior to the signing were realized in the ADR process.

It was within this tense and complicated context that the ACC entered into the IRSSA. In gathering responses to the questions around the IRSSA for this Exercise, it became clear that they could not be separated from the lingering negative effects of the events of 2003.

Common Experience Payment (CEP)

A common theme which will emerge throughout this report is the wide range of experiences among the participants in all parts of the IRSSA. The CEP was no exception. Some Indigenous survivors said that the process was clear, that they found the supports available appropriate and sufficient, and that communication was timely and helpful. But most respondents felt otherwise. Those in remote communities in particular spoke to the difficulty of getting the information they needed, and the feeling that they had not had a say in the process. The lack of information available to them in Indigenous languages about procedures also caused problems. The onus being on the survivor to prove attendance was problematic, as many had no evidentiary or archival proof of attendance, and obtaining that proof involved another difficult-to-navigate process with colonial institutions and departments. Several survivors talked about being denied compensation and having to re-apply, while others simply gave up.

Respondents criticized the amount and type of compensation they received. Several participants felt that the compensation was not enough and did not take seriously the damage that had been done. Some questioned the decision to compensate individual survivors, as opposed to applying funds to programs for healing and community development. One participant said, "the money was a good idea, but only for those who had dealt with their pain"; for those who had not, it was "very bad". Participants told stories of friends and relatives who received compensation and disappeared, spent it in ways that "were not helpful for them", or were attacked because of it. There were reports of the compensation causing "tension" and "dissension" in communities.

This tension was aggravated by the fact that day scholars of residential schools were ineligible for the CEP. This was repeatedly acknowledged by participants, who said it "taints healing", and was the source of "great pain" for those left out. It also led to guilt on the part of some of those who had received compensation, while their friends, family, and other community members had not.

Independent Assessment Process (IAP)

The IAP was the only option survivors had to resolve claims of physical and sexual abuse, and like the CEP, each experience was unique. Several respondents spoke to the empowerment that they felt in telling their stories. One respondent said that they did not expect healing from the process, but an "affirmation

of experience,” which they felt they did receive. The IAP process was generally described as being “less aggressive” than the ADR process.

That said, many did not have a good experience. Some survivors found that the length of the process took a very negative toll on them. Some experienced the IAP as “very intrusive” and “unfair” with “a hermeneutic of suspicion”. For some, there was a feeling that their integrity was being questioned. Language barriers caused problems and confusions for some survivors whose English was not strong. There were repeated stories of lawyers over-charging survivors, failing to prepare them sufficiently for hearings, sometimes not meeting with them at all, writing documents that did not reflect their “voice”, and taking advantage of them. The focus on “measuring” physical and sexual abuse on a numbered scale to arrive at a calculation of compensation was also experienced as problematic and unfair. For example, one survivor shared the trauma of being ridiculed and bullied in their home community after leaving residential school because they could no longer speak their language. They described the loss of culture and language as being equally traumatic to physical abuse, but that this was not taken into consideration by the IAP.

As with the CEP, communication about the process was sometimes late or unclear. Those in remote communities, in particular, often did not receive information in a timely way or in a way that they understood. The 2012 cut-off for applications was characterized as “unfair”, in part because of the slow spread of information, but also because some did not feel immediately ready to revisit traumatic experiences. Later, when they did feel ready — sometimes after attending a national or regional event — it was too late.

The IAP was one of the sites of potential meeting between ACC representatives and survivors, as survivors could opt to have a church representative present for their hearing and receive an apology on behalf of the Church. Many participants in the Exercise – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – spoke about this aspect of the IAP. Many survivors who did request an ACC representative expressed gratitude for the presence and witness of the representative. They described it as a “powerful moment” when the apology was offered. One survivor expressed it as being a negative experience as the non-Indigenous representative began crying during the hearing, which took away from the focus on the survivor. The representative was asked to leave.

ACC representatives who attended IAP hearings included both Indigenous and non-Indigenous persons. Those who participated in this Exercise spoke candidly about how they were impacted by hearing the stories of survivors. For some, the IAP hearings were the first time they heard first-hand stories of what had happened, and it affected them deeply. One respondent wrote, “There was some deflected trauma in my experience. I have not said that in more than a couple of pretty private places because it would be so easy to steal the spotlight as a white authority figure, and I have the resources to work through this. But I was a mess for a while”. Some ACC representatives to IAP hearings were sent information about hearings where the survivor did not actually request a church presence and were asked to attend. This was both confusing to the representative, and disrespectful of the survivor’s wishes. Representatives were also sometimes asked to “sign off” on the final compensation for the survivor, which did not feel right to them.

Reactions to the decision that was later made to schedule the destruction of the IAP statements was also mixed. Some Indigenous respondents felt that these statements should be kept in perpetuity, while others confirmed the need to respect the survivors who gave the statements with the understanding that

they were private. There also appears to be ongoing confusion about which statements will be destroyed, as more than one individual who gave a statement to the TRC believed that their statement there was to be destroyed as well.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Statements

The TRC invited survivors to give statements about their experiences privately, publicly, or both. Indigenous participants in this Exercise had mainly positive experiences with the statements. They expressed that the process was respectful and well-run. Like the IAP process, some felt “empowered” by giving the statement – particularly when it was given publicly in situations where people expressed a desire to hear and learn more. One participant said, “It was like a sigh: finally, someone believes me and I can tell my story”. The Commissioners were described as “caring and competent”, “very human”, “respectful”, “courteous”, “honouring” and “reverent”. The staff members who took statements were said to have done “a tremendous job”. One survivor told the story of being cleansed and smudged after giving their testimony, and was very grateful for that. Of course, many respondents described it as a very emotional and painful experience as well. Others saw it not as a means of healing or part of a personal journey but as only a contribution to an historical record. Finally, some survivors felt that not enough time was given for statements, although others felt that plenty of time was given to them and that they were unrushed.

Several non-Indigenous respondents marked the public statements as very significant. Again, for some this was the first time they had ever heard a survivor speak about their experiences. They described it as “powerful”, “painful”, “important”, “horrifying”. Significantly, hearing the statements also marked “a turning point” for some where they were able to begin to understand in a deeper way the experience of Indigenous peoples both in the schools and in wider dominant society and systems.

Concerns were raised by many respondents about after-care for survivors who gave statements. One Indigenous respondent said, “What happens when you leave that event? Especially in smaller, remote communities – where do you go for support? Sure, there are hotlines, but how many Indigenous people are going to call a hotline to talk with someone they don’t know?” Others recognized that opening up about incredibly personal stories of trauma and pain was “just the beginning” in terms of healing and were disappointed that ongoing support did not appear to be available.

TRC Events

Virtually all participants in this Exercise attended at least one national and/or regional event, with some attending more than one; some attended all.

Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants particularly appreciated the Health Support Workers who were present – that there were enough of them, that their care was appropriate, that they were clearly identifiable, and that they were respectful of traditional understandings of healing and crisis care. Some non-Indigenous individuals who were in distress at events were unsure if they were also “allowed” to request support from the support workers or felt too ashamed to do so.

One respondent mentioned a discomfort about the gestures of reconciliation presented at the TRC Events. They felt that it was not a relational action that the parties “figured out together” but instead a gesture that was made without a process of being received. Such gestures might have made the “givers” feel good in the moment, the respondent said, but “what do they actually do? “

Several respondents noted that the National Events were “too big” and “overwhelming”. For example, there were often long lineups for workshops that had “too many people”. These respondents stated a preference for the smaller regional gatherings which were able to better represent local language, traditions and culture, and felt less intimidating. That said, one survivor stated that larger events afforded them opportunities to reach out to and connect with non-Indigenous peoples (particularly young people) in a new way.

Participants frequently brought up the birthday party cupcakes that were “born” out of an ACC idea. Survivors spoke to the importance of the marking of their birth, and the recognition that so many birthdays had been “lost” while they were in residential school. Many respondents who attended events mentioned the emotional moment of the singing of Happy Birthday. Several mentioned with pride the coordinated effort that staff and local grassroots Anglicans made to receive donations from grocery stores, recruit volunteers, and bake, decorate, and deliver birthday cakes. One non-Indigenous respondent said, “it was a small thing we could do to hopefully show we care”.

Finally, there was the critique that there was very little of a spiritual nature at the TRC events. The respondents noted that they could understand why Christian spiritual practices may not be welcome but felt that more could have been done to celebrate Indigenous spirituality – a day of prayer for example – in the way that would be healing. Some non-Indigenous respondents expressed the desire that the TRC events would have created opportunities for all guests at the events to come together in Indigenous ceremony – to appreciate and learn more.

Archives and Document Collection

Schedule N of the IRSSA required the ACC to produce relevant documentation in its possession regarding the IRS system. Survivors mentioned their desire to know more about the schools that they attended. Anglican archivists were committed to the task of collecting and processing residential school documents, which they found very difficult both personally and professionally. The concept of a “relevant” record was never fully defined and the process was very labour intensive. Direction from the Commission “seemed to be slow in coming, conflictual, or incomplete”. Due to differences in resources and staffing among the denominational archives, consistency in production was hard to achieve across the ACC. Respondents also expressed dismay that other parties to the IRSSA were slow or negligent in producing records.

Often mentioned was the effort that Anglican archivists made to bring displays, and particularly photos, to the TRC Events. The photos became a very important part of these events for many survivors and created an impromptu yet meaningful gathering place for survivors to meet and connect with one another, themselves, friends, family, and also non-Indigenous attendees. People spoke of the experience of connecting across cultural boundaries, and the opportunity for survivors who did not make official “statements” to tell their stories informally in connection with the photos. One participant said, “A lot of people [in higher church leadership positions] missed that part – people sitting at the tables with the archives’ photos. If you wanted to really hear the stories and connect...that was the place to be. It wasn’t timed or rehearsed or choreographed. It was just relaxed.” Archivists made high resolution copies for survivors to take with them, which was a very popular feature.

IRSSA Monitoring Bodies

Those respondents who had experience with any of the monitoring bodies (All Parties Table, Oversight Committee, National Administration Committee), were invited to discuss their effectiveness, and to indicate if anything was missing at this level.

The All Parties Table was seen as an important “information sharing and planning table”. Relationships were formed there that people appreciated and that helped them to understand other perspectives. At the same time, it was acknowledged that changes in staffing throughout the process “caused inconsistencies in information sharing” because the institutional and historical knowledge was not there. Some participants felt that there should have been more Indigenous participation at the Table, and that government policies complicated processes too much. One survivor spoke about an Adjudicator who did not seem to understand Indigenous culture and ways of being/knowing. He recommended that all Adjudicators should be educated about the Indigenous culture of the survivor’s people/Nation (not a “pan-Indigenous” approach to culture) in order to be able to make appropriate decisions.

Party Relationships

One theme that was raised by several participants – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – was the opinion that the non-Church parties seemed uninterested in a true partnership with the Church parties, and the Churches were not “respected as equal partners” in the process. Some respondents expressed the feeling that because the Church involvement in the IRS system had resulted in such damage, it was “frozen out” of efforts to “take care of people”. That “the baby was thrown out with the bathwater” without recognizing that there are elements of the Church that are gifted in healing, justice-seeking and journeying with people in trauma. It was felt by some that the Churches’ involvement was only welcomed on a financial level. “How much say did [the ACC] actually have in the process? We were only asked for money, not real involvement. We have more to offer – we were part of the problem, we should have been part of the solution”, asserted one Indigenous participant. This was seen as a “missed opportunity for all of us” to learn from one another and build bridges of true understanding, relationship and healing between peoples and communities.

IRSSA Gaps

Respondents were asked if there was anything that they felt the IRSSA had not covered that it should have. The two most common answers to this question from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were that the day scholars had not been included in the agreement, and that there was no formal recognition that inter-generational survivors had also been damaged by the residential schools.

The concern for day scholars included both students who attended residential schools but were boarded with families or lived at home, and students who attended Indian Day Schools on reserves. In both cases, many experienced the same kinds of abuse as those who lived in the residential schools. Both cases were repeatedly mentioned by respondents. One respondent described an example where a local children’s home was used as “overflow” for a residential school, but students who went to the IRS but lived at the home were excluded from the IRSSA. This was described as a “sore wound” in the community.

The reality of effects on inter-generational survivors was mentioned many times by participants. In some situations, respondents felt that inter-generational survivors should have been able to collect

compensation in place of their deceased family member. In other situations, respondents felt that the inter-generational survivors should have been allowed to apply for compensation in their own right. There was a repeated acknowledgement that the pain and suffering doesn't end with the survivors of the schools, and that there is a severe lack of recognition of and support for these inter-generational survivors. One survivor asserted, "In a lot of ways, I am not the survivor – they [the intergenerational survivors] are".

A third concern, not mentioned as frequently by the respondents but clearly important, was that Inuit and Métis voices were left out of the process, and the effects of the IRS system on these communities was omitted.

The majority of respondents decried the fact that ongoing compensation and care for those in Indigenous communities was not built into the Agreement. Over and over, respondents spoke to the ongoing traumatic effects of the IRS on both survivors and their families – suicide, addiction, abuse, and mental health issues. One respondent said that the CEP was "like going into a war zone with bandaids" and that there should have been a commitment to at least another 20 years of healing programs in community in order to begin to really address the deep-seated trauma. The need for "long term care" for survivors and their families had several respondents calling for the re-establishment of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, which was ended in 2014. Many identified a critical need for culturally appropriate counselling, crisis intervention and suicide prevention workers, healing circles and lodges.

Perhaps controversial was the sentiment amongst some participants — both Indigenous and non-Indigenous — that former staff members of the residential schools should have been included somehow in the process. Different reasons were given. Some respondents wanted former staff members to testify and "give account" for their involvement and wished that the TRC had had subpoena power for this purpose. But other survivors remembered some staff members with affection, perhaps one or two teachers or staff members in their school who had shown genuine care for them. One Indigenous respondent said that somehow including these staff members "would have given a more rounded picture and an insight into the complexity" of the system and how otherwise "well-intentioned" people got "co-opted" by the system. They said that hearing those voices might "be important to avoiding it [this kind of co-opting] in the future".

Effectiveness of the IRSSA in General

Respondents were asked to comment on the extent to which the Settlement Agreement (including the funding component, the TRC, and the Commemoration) helped with healing — in individuals, communities, and between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples⁸. Virtually all respondents noted that since reconciliation and healing are long-term endeavours, only so much could be expected from the IRSSA. The phrase "first step" was commonly used.

Several respondents expressed appreciation that the processes had raised awareness among non-Indigenous peoples. "It helped people realize that healing is needed"; it has "heightened the level of awareness among many more (though still not enough) non-Indigenous Canadians with respect to not only the IRS legacy, but the collective consequences of colonialism on Indigenous peoples." It was noted that awareness and activism were particularly high in places where National Events had taken place.

⁸ This, in Canadian society in general and not specific to the context of the ACC, which will be discussed later.

Some respondents expressed disappointment in the IRSSA. “Survivors still hurt so I don't think it did much.” “I was disappointed that there was not the broad buy in and engagement across the country that would allow for national reconciliation and healing.” “The parties only did what they were mandated by the court, otherwise we would be at square one from my personal experience.” One Indigenous leader asserted; “The Commission has had absolutely no effect on the daily lives and hardships in my community,” and expressed their disengagement with the process because of that reality.

There were similar mixed reactions to the TRC's 94 Calls to Action. Some respondents felt that it was a very helpful list that allowed people to take measurable action towards reconciliation. One respondent, for example, appreciated that they “act as a catalyst, a kind of guidepost of what needs to be done”. Others expressed that reconciliation happens in relationship and can't be the result of a set of tasks to be checked off a list. There was also the comment that many of the Calls to Action are directed to government departments and systems and are therefore difficult for the “average Canadian” to really be a part of. Some Indigenous respondents felt that the 94 Calls proposed little or nothing to affect the realities of life in grassroots communities, rendering them “dislocated” and “ineffectual”. One respondent candidly said, “Our people are too busy trying to survive” to look at the Calls.

Learning from Survivors

Participants in the Exercise who were not survivors were asked what they learned from survivors throughout the IRSSA process. Words like “resilience”, “persistence”, “forgiveness” were often used. Great admiration was expressed for the strength and courage shown by survivors who came forward to tell their stories. The need for justice as a pathway for reconciliation was also a recurring theme. For some, the stories were of factual significance, as they did not know about the IRS system, the abuses and dehumanization that occurred in them, or the intergenerational impact of colonial systems. One non-Indigenous respondent commented that “the testimony of survivors gave my picture [of the IRS] three dimensions instead of two, and colour instead of black-and-white”. Also of significance was the reminder that the entire IRSSA was initiated by the progressive call for justice from survivors: “I would love to believe that Canada and the Churches would have eventually come to the conclusion ourselves that this was a horrible thing that we did, and that we would want to make reparations, but in truth I wonder if that would ever have happened without the survivors calling us to account”. One survivor stated plainly; “no one listened to the concerns until the lawsuits came”.

Importance of Leadership in Right Relationship

The nature and commitment of those in leadership affected the way people saw reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination in the ACC. Respondents – Indigenous and non-Indigenous - spoke with deep respect of the current and former Indigenous ACIP leadership, staff, and the National Indigenous Bishop who have “fought hard” for self-determination and Indigenous rights, and continue to provide “fearless leadership”. They were described as “inspiring and encouraging”, “enlivening and quickening the self-determination journey” and firm in their commitment to the Covenant of 1994.

Many respondents – Indigenous and non-Indigenous - named the current Primate as one of the keys to the positive changes they saw in the non-Indigenous ACC and the healing of relationships. “[The current Primate] changed a lot in the church. You can see and feel his sincerity and support”. He was named as “someone willing to walk with [Indigenous peoples] and listen to us”; someone whose “heart is in it”.

However, some non-Indigenous leadership were seen by respondents as having “interactions” with Indigenous peoples and communities as opposed to building “real relationships” with Indigenous peoples. They were not seen as making intentional efforts to attend Indigenous public events open to everyone, to sit with and learn from Indigenous elders, and to nurture relationships with Indigenous peoples outside of “official” meetings and events. These real relationships, respondents asserted, are the true mark of reconciliation.

The concern was raised that not all Bishops in the ACC are “agents of change” with the result that reconciliation is “stunted” in their Dioceses. As the “seat of power” in the ACC is with the Diocesan Bishops and their synods, whether or not the Diocesan leadership is “on board” can greatly affect both the energy that is pointed towards reconciliation work, as well as the funding allocated to Indigenous Ministry and justice work.

Parish clergy were also cited as having a responsibility to provide leadership for right relationship, beginning with their education and the need for required seminary courses on Indigenous culture, tradition, and spirituality. Though many parishes, deaneries and Dioceses have participated in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise⁹, many respondents to this Lessons Learned Exercise were concerned about a sense of ambivalence at the grassroots level about ongoing engagement, relationship-building and justice-seeking in the area of Indigenous rights. The need to properly equip the clergy in order that they may provide leadership for their parish churches and “parishes must be encouraged to become more involved” was repeatedly expressed. In addition, “our clergy need to welcome Indigenous ways of being and worshipping inside our church buildings” – this was directed to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous clergy who had been historically trained to believe that Indigenous spirituality was “pagan” or “un-Christian”.

Positive Impacts of the IRSSA within the Anglican Church of Canada

Of the participants in this Exercise, the majority agreed that the ACC has been changed by its involvement in the IRSSA, though there was a wide range of feelings about the degree and nature of that change. Some felt that more change has happened at the grassroots level, while others felt that the National level of the ACC had been most affected. Some felt that the impacts on the ACC have been deep and systemic, while others responded that “nothing much has changed”. Most responses fell somewhere in between; perhaps the most typical single response was along the lines that some progress had been made, but that “there is a long way to go”.

Respondents spoke to both positive structural/objective changes and more relational/subjective changes.

Positive structural developments mentioned included:

- The establishment and work of the Primate’s Commission on Discovery, Reconciliation and Justice and its work in educating on and seeking to dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery in the ACC
- The establishment and work of the Vision Keepers Council and its work on monitoring the implementation of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the ACC

⁹ “The KAIROS Blanket Exercise™ program is a unique, participatory history lesson – developed in collaboration with Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers and educators – that fosters truth, understanding, respect and reconciliation among Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples”. Learn more at: <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/>

- The naming of a Jubilee Commission to assess and advise on a just and sustainable funding structure for the self-determining Indigenous Anglican Church
- The ongoing work of the Anglican Healing Fund which, to date, has distributed over \$8 million in funds to Indigenous-led, church and non-church healing programs in Indigenous communities
- The naming of a National Indigenous Anglican Bishop and the passing of Canon XXII on an Anglican Indigenous Ministry and the Sacred Circle¹⁰
- The “Let Our Yes Be Yes”¹¹ statement from Archbishop Fred Hiltz, responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action # 48 on behalf to the Anglican Church of Canada
- The hiring of a full-time Reconciliation Animator to continue ongoing education, monitor and encourage responses to the TRC 94 Calls to Action, and build a network of reconciliation activity
- The emergence of the Anglican Territory of the People ministry in place of the former Diocese of Cariboo¹² with a focus on healing, reconciliation and the leadership of its Pastoral Elders.
- The creation of the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, and later its Northern Manitoba Area Mission
- The consecration of nine Indigenous Bishops within the ACC¹³
- The emerging self-determining Indigenous Anglican Church within the ACC
- National Church leadership in anti-racism programming in Dioceses
- Ongoing education in many dioceses regarding the TRC, historical and current effects of colonization
- The hiring of two part-time suicide prevention officers in Indigenous Ministries
- Advocacy on Bill C-262 and other individual TRC 94 Calls to Action
- The funding and production of a full-length documentary film on the Doctrine of Discovery produced by Anglican Video

Positive cultural/attitudinal changes mentioned included:

- A focus on healing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans
- A desire to listen to Indigenous voices more
- A shift from “trying to help” Indigenous people to more collaborative relationship and support for self-determination
- A greater acceptance of Indigenous spiritualities and traditions – both as part of services and in their own right
- IRS as a “critique point of awareness” that points to other ways the church has been complicit in systemic evil: Japanese internment, LGBTQ2S+ rights, violence against women and helps to unveil them.
- Some Indigenous people seeing for the first time that “there are people who really care about us”

¹⁰ A fuller look at the history of Indigenous Ministries in the ACC can be found at:

<https://www.anglican.ca/im/ahistory/>

¹¹ The response was presented at Her Majesty’s Royal Chapel of the Mohawks, Six Nations of the Grand River on Saturday, March 19, 2016 and can be accessed at: <https://www.anglican.ca/news/let-yes-yes/30015309/>

¹² The Diocese of Cariboo ceased operating as a Diocese in the wake of residential school litigation in 2001.

¹³ This is the current number of Indigenous Bishops in the ACC. Several more have also retired.

Ongoing Concerns Regarding Right Relationship in the Anglican Church of Canada

- “Inertia” in non-Indigenous Anglicans at a grass-roots level – the challenge of changing the hearts of “the whole church”, “down to the pews”
- Little recognition and understanding of the ways that institutionalized racism (as opposed to personal bias or prejudice) operates in the church and the dismantling of the same
- Lack of anti-racism work being done at the National level – no staff person named to this work and the inactivity of the Anti-Racism Working Group of the Council of General Synod
- Reconciliation being seen as “programmatic” and not as a need for systemic change
- Lack of understanding about Indigenous traditions, culture and spirituality
- Parish clergy not getting involved/building relationships in local Indigenous communities
- Lack of ongoing safe spaces for Indigenous people to tell their stories and be listened to “over and over as long as it takes”
- Concern that more Indigenous leadership is needed across the church – not just in the ACIP but at all levels – need for Bishops to have the power to appoint Indigenous representatives to things outside the canonical/electoral process
- Insufficient system for the identification of and training for “reconcilers” at the grass-roots level, to be “change champions” and “bridge builders”
- Reduction of the budget of the Anglican Healing Fund and the lack of healing initiatives being part of the ongoing overall budget of the ACC as opposed to a separate fund that is continually depleted over time.
- Lack of understanding about what Indigenous Anglican self-determination means and how non-Indigenous Anglicans can support it.
- Ongoing issue that many Indigenous clergy are unpaid, non-stipendiary clergy and yet are often the only 24 hr responder to crises and social services in their small and/or remote community
- Ongoing lack of recognition of Indigenous languages as equally important – manifested in lack of Indigenous translations of materials, or translations are “handmade but sitting next to the glossy English ones. What does that say about our language?”

Doing Things Differently

Two questions, “What would you do differently moving forward?” and “What advice would you give to another body entering into this kind of Settlement Agreement/Truth and Reconciliation Commission?” produced answers that overlapped and garnered similar responses.

Moving forward, several respondents talked about the need to listen more, and listen “deeper” with “more quiet respect”. Listening should be followed up with action in partnership regarding ongoing injustices – recognizing that the injustices are “not just something of the past”. Many – both Indigenous and non-Indigenous – asserted the need for ongoing education, starting with children. The education should include age-appropriate teachings on the history of early Indigenous-settler relationships, treaties, residential schools, as well as “experiences for non-Indigenous children of Indigenous ways of knowing and importance of the land”. In the case of Indigenous children, many expressed the need for language and cultural teachings – that which was taken away in the “seven generations”.

Several participants expressed the need for the ACC to “put our money where our mouths are”. This included financial allocations to healing initiatives and spaces, language revitalization, education, suicide

prevention, prison chaplaincies, and Indigenous clergy stipends – not simply as “grants” or “add-ons” but as a matter of course. Land and property were also referred to several times as resources that the ACC needs to consider carefully and “decide upon in consultation with Indigenous peoples”.

Finally, there was little or no aftercare provided to staff and volunteers who engaged with the Settlement Agreement – its facets and the affects. Vicarious trauma was voiced as an experiential reality by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. Vicarious trauma is the “emotional residue of exposure” to the trauma of others.¹⁴ It is a “a process of change resulting from empathetic engagement with trauma survivors” and “anyone who engages empathetically with survivors of traumatic incidents, torture, and material relating to their trauma, is potentially affected”.¹⁵ Several participants said that they struggled with vicarious trauma during and after the IRSSA process. They asserted that if the process was done again, this potential should be openly talked about, and there should be debrief sessions and regular “check-ins” with staff and volunteers so that they could deal with their experiences in an appropriate and helpful way.

In terms of advice for others entering into this type of process, clarity around goals and purpose was often cited. Several participants stated that some Indigenous peoples expected things that were not delivered upon – including the opportunity to confront perpetrators as in the case of the South African TRC, and that the goal of the IRSSA was “a process of healing itself, rather than learning about, processing and planning healing initiatives in future”. At the same time, it was noted several times that a perfect process isn’t possible and that trying to formulate one may stall things inevitably and get in the way to actually moving ahead.

Communication rose up as a key piece of advice to others. One Indigenous person stated, “Many good people did their best to make sure communication happened, but it only happened in pockets. Some people still had no clue”. Others spoke to the timing of communications – that even good communications came too late in the process and that earlier communications could have “got more people on board”. Respondents also advised on considering the method of communication – that it can’t be solely or even predominantly internet-based. Many remote Indigenous communities do not have reliable (or any) high-speed internet so receiving information, downloading information, or filling out online forms is not a realistic expectation. The process needs to involve communication modes that make sense in the community – radio, newspaper, flyers, fax. Being careful in translating communications and having people available to explain concepts was also advised; “the English language can play tricks on the core meaning of the message”, said one respondent “it needs to be explained in the cultural context of how it will be understood”.

The need to be fearless in speaking and hearing truth was also a repeated piece of advice. Survivors counseled, “Be honest with yourself”, “take the risk”, “don’t take your story to the grave”, “be honest with the young folks”. Others spoke to the need for non-Indigenous peoples to listen without defensiveness, “learn to listen intentionally”. One Indigenous leader simply said, “do not be afraid. It will be okay in the end”.

¹⁴ American Counselling Association, “Vicarious Trauma”. <https://www.counseling.org/docs/trauma-disaster/fact-sheet-9---vicarious-trauma.pdf>

¹⁵ British Medical Association, “Vicarious trauma - signs and strategies for coping”. <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-wellbeing/vicarious-trauma>

Looking to the Future – Reconciliation Within and Without

Despite the broad spectrum of responses to the data gathering for this report, there were themes which arose repeatedly. It became clear that they could be encompassed into two separate, yet inter-related groupings: reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples within the ACC, and reconciliation between the ACC and Indigenous peoples more widely.

Indigenous Christianity has continued despite the Church's involvement in systemic oppression and cultural genocide and there are many faithful Indigenous Anglicans. Within the Anglican Church, it is apparent that the events of 2003 and the signing of the IRSSA marked a break in relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples within the ACC. While some healing has taken place, it became clear in the responses to this Exercise that there is a need to return to the 1994 Covenant ("A Covenant and our Journey of Spiritual Renewal"), the associated Pinawa Declaration¹⁶ and Mississauga Declaration¹⁷ which followed thereafter and the 2014 document "Where We Are Today: Twenty Years after the Covenant, an Indigenous Call to the Wider Church"¹⁸ in order to pursue "internal" reconciliation in the ACC. The Covenant called on the Indigenous Anglican Church to "call our people into unity in a new, self-determining community within The Anglican Church of Canada", and the acceptance of the hand of partnership called the non-Indigenous Anglican Church to take some ownership in seeing this vision become a reality. Key to understanding how many of the themes from this Lessons Learned Exercise fit so clearly into the Covenant is recognising Indigenous self-determination as not simply a new governance model, but as a "journey of healing", a "new relationship", and a "claiming of place".¹⁹ As opposed to being organized around structures of jurisdiction and authority, it must be understood as a "plan for loving and effective healing ministries". This idea of ministry as opposed to governance structure emerged repeatedly in responses from Indigenous participants. Tangible ways of the ACC returning to the Covenant as laid out in responses to the Lessons Learned questions include:

1. New, creative, sustainable funding for and partnership with Indigenous Ministries/the self-determining Indigenous Anglican Church

One participant wrote, "We need to make reparations for all that we have stolen. This will cost us financially, but it will enrich us spiritually". Another asserted, "We need to work at de-colonizing. That includes...ensuring funding and stipends in the Indigenous church equal to those in the rest of the church, and returning church lands to the appropriate communities". The naming of a Jubilee Commission to examine systems and propose co-ordination of this funding is a positive first step but must be followed by appropriate action based on the Commission's work. An approach for sharing information to help Dioceses across Canada understand the purpose of the Jubilee Commission, its purpose and mandate will be vital. Beyond funding, helping non-Indigenous Anglicans understand what it means to take the "hand of partnership" offered by Indigenous Anglicans in the 1994 Covenant is called for. It was raised several times in

¹⁶ The Pinawa Declaration came out of Sacred Circle, 2005 and was a call for 15 Indigenous Bishops to be consecrated – full text can be found at: <https://www.anglican.ca/im/foundational-documents/pinawa-declaration/>

¹⁷ The Mississauga Declaration was a call to return to the work of the 1994 Covenant and was released in September of 2011 - full text available at: <https://www.anglican.ca/im/foundational-documents/mississauga/>

¹⁸ Full text can be found at: <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Where-we-are-today-Twenty-Years-after-the-Covenant.pdf>

¹⁹ Quotes from the 1994 Covenant.

the responses of participants that education will be necessary in order to help people understand what self-determination means and looks like. Non-Indigenous Anglicans seem to understand that it is important, and much support was voiced for it, but “the work for [the] self-determining Indigenous Anglican Church is not well understood by many Anglicans”.

2. Renewed commitment to anti-racism work at the National Church level

It was noted more than once in responses to the Exercise that “inequality, racism, colonialism and hurt are still with us”. Several participants noted that they felt that National Church leadership in anti-racism work has “stalled” somewhat. Connections are often not made between systemic racism and ongoing effects of colonization. Staff participants in the Exercise could not recall the last time anti-racism training or workshops were held for National Office staff. A renewed commitment to anti-racism work at this level would include the “A Charter for Racial Justice in the Anglican Church of Canada”²⁰, the re-activating of the Council of General Synod’s Anti-Racism Working Group²¹, and the naming of a staff support person to the Working Group.

3. Ongoing education of Anglicans on the history and legacy of the IRS, treaties, Indigenous rights/self-determination and current manifestations of racism and colonialism.

This includes education appropriate for both non-Indigenous and Indigenous Anglicans, for as one Indigenous participant stated, “Sometimes our own people don’t know or understand the reasons behind why we are suffering”. The online Reconciliation Toolkit²² is a small step towards this education. The promotion and distribution of the Anglican Video documentary on the Doctrine of Discovery, together with study guide, will be a key part of this as well. The National Church office can provide leadership, examples of educational materials, workshops, communications etc. to further this education, but it will largely rely upon Diocesan Bishops, parish clergy and grassroots Anglicans to encourage – or even require – this kind of education to happen.

Continued efforts at reconciliation between the ACC and Indigenous peoples more broadly emerged as a separate but inter-related theme. While Indigenous Anglicanism is strong, there are many Indigenous people and communities with whom the Anglican Church has no relationship. What is the ACC’s role in healing and relationship-building with these communities? Some answers include:

²⁰ History and background as well as the full text can be found at <https://www.anglican.ca/about/ccc/cogs/arwg/>

²¹ <https://www.anglican.ca/about/ccc/cogs/arwg/>

²² The Reconciliation Toolkit is a gathering of information on history, resources, and relationships which can be found at <https://www.anglican.ca/tr/reconciliation-toolkit/>

1. Intentional and sustained funding for the Anglican Healing Fund²³

One respondent wrote of the IRSSA, “We opened up so many wounds in this process, are we showing up to help close them?”. Another, that the ACC “needs to provide resources for safe gatherings for Indigenous people to do their own healing and reclaiming”. The Anglican Healing Fund has given over \$8 million to Indigenous-led healing initiatives without any requirement of church affiliation. However, of late, the budget for the Anglican Healing Fund and its administration has been reduced. While resources in general have declined since that time, Anglicans have repeatedly proven their ability to resource what is shown to be of importance.²⁴ TRC Call to Action #61 calls for “church parties to the Settlement Agreement, in collaboration with Survivors and representatives of Aboriginal organizations, to establish permanent funding to Aboriginal people” for community-controlled initiatives. In order for the ACC to fulfill this Call to Action, it will need to take an intentional look at the best way to sustain ongoing funding for the Anglican Healing Fund.

2. Continued advocacy in Indigenous-led movements for Indigenous inherent rights

At its November meeting of the Council of General Synod²⁵ in 2016, the Council passed a motion which read, “Be it resolved that the members of the Council of General Synod express their support for Indigenous peoples and their desire to grow and deepen that trust both within the church and without in asserting and advocating for their right to free, prior and informed consent concerning the stewardship of traditional Indigenous lands and water rights, and in acknowledging and responding to their calls for solidarity”. In consultation with Indigenous peoples, the ACC has begun to take “official” stances on issues of Indigenous rights, for example, its public support of Bill C-262.²⁶ However, several respondents to the Lessons Learned Exercise cited the need for the Anglican Church to go “beyond words” and take action in advocating for Indigenous rights. They also specifically requested that as a co-Party to the IRSSA, the ACC should “continue to push [the Canadian] government” to take action on the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP.

3. The building of a stronger national network of local reconciliation work

While initial actions have been taken by the Reconciliation Animator to identify local leaders in reconciliation, in order to promote ongoing education, and the “[movement] from education to relationship” that is needed at grassroots levels, a strong, more organized network is needed. Several respondents cited the need for this network, to

²³ For 25 years, the Anglican Healing Fund has financially supported local, community-led healing projects. As a response to the on-going legacy of the residential school system, grants from the healing fund are made to encourage and initiate programs that help heal, educate, and recover language and culture. No church affiliation is required to obtain a grant: <https://www.anglican.ca/healingfund/>

²⁴ At the time that the 2003 Settlement Agreement was signed, \$25m was raised/pledged in a 3-month period in the ACC to contribute to the Settlement Fund.

²⁵ The executive body of the ACC General Synod is called the Council of General Synod (CoGS).

²⁶ “Primate endorses Bill C-262 in letter to Prime Minister Trudeau” - <https://www.anglican.ca/news/primate-endorses-bill-c-262-letter-prime-minister-trudeau/30020361/>

learn from, share with, and support one another. This network would also assist in localizing the relationship-building, education and advocacy initiatives.

Conclusion

Despite limitations, the Lessons Learned Exercise was very helpful in identifying where the Anglican Church of Canada has been on the road of right relationship, and where it needs to focus attention in the future. Several participants in the Exercise mentioned their gratitude at having an opportunity to look back on the IRSSA process and give voice to their experience of it – positive and/or negative. The most re-iterated comment in the entirety of the Exercise was the idea that the IRSSA was but one step in a broader and longer journey of reconciliation and right relationship, and this understanding will be key as the Anglican Church of Canada discerns appropriate ways to heal relationships with Indigenous peoples both within the Church, and in the broader Canadian society.