



***“For the child taken, for the parent left behind.”***

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada is the result of a historic agreement which came into effect in 2007 among the churches, the federal government, aboriginal leaders, and survivors who were treated unjustly and abused in various ways in 130 Indian Residential Schools in Canada from 1883 through to 1973. The impact of the legacy of the Residential Schools is immense, multi-faceted and multi-generational, and over 70,000 former students are still alive.

### ***A Process Toward Healing***

Learning from other Truth and Reconciliation processes, including that within South Africa under the leadership of Bishop Desmond Tutu, this unique 5-year process within Canada, guided by 3 Commissioners, will include 7 national events, the first of which was June 16-19, 2010 in The Forks region of Winnipeg. The process provides a historic opportunity for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada to engage in truth-telling, lament and healing regarding the devastating racism and abuse that is the dominant, though not exclusive, legacy of the Residential School system.

The **Mandate** of the Commission is as follows:

*There is an emerging and compelling desire to put the events of the past behind us so that we can work towards a stronger and healthier future. The truth telling and reconciliation process as part of an overall holistic and comprehensive response to the Indian Residential School legacy is a sincere indication and acknowledgement of the injustices and harms experienced by Aboriginal people and the need for continued healing. This is a profound commitment to establishing new relationships embedded in mutual recognition and respect that will forge a brighter*

*future. The truth of our common experiences will help set our spirits free and pave the way to reconciliation.*

### ***Canada Apologizes***

In June of 2008 the Government of Canada offered an historic Apology to the survivors of Residential Schools in a moving and long-sought occasion of repentance in Parliament. This Apology marked an official recognition of the harm and abuse that occurred in the Residential School system. It also, hopefully, marked a turning point in the kind of relationships that are to be built and maintained in the future between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

### ***National TRC Events***

National TRC events will include sacred fires throughout the gathering, and reflection on the experience of the survivors of Residential Schools from a variety of perspectives and multi-dimensional mediums: truth-telling circles, statement gathering, artistic and cultural expression, historical research and photo displays, interfaith and apology programs, survivor respite, children’s space, and more. More information is available on the national website: [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca) Upcoming national events are:  
*June 28 – July 1<sup>st</sup> in Inuvik, Northwest Territories*  
*October in Halifax, Nova Scotia*

### ***Church Involvement***

As part of the comprehensive settlement, each of the 3 historic churches – the Anglican, Presbyterian, and United Churches – alongside various Roman Catholic agencies, agreed to educate, support, and participate fully in the TRC process. A number of national and regional staff from the various churches attended the first national gathering in Winnipeg, and local church members supported the event in numerous ways.

In addition, the churches have collaborated to begin offering Equipping Ambassadors of Reconciliation training and learning events across the country. The first regionally-based Equipping event was in Ontario in November, 2009, the second just occurred

in Nova Scotia in early May, 2011, and more are being planned by a mutually mandated ecumenical team.

All who care about justice, healing and reconciliation are invited to find out more by phoning your national or regional denominational office or contacting an Ambassador in your area.