

May 5th, 2010

Greetings Equipping Ambassadors of Reconciliation Network,

This brief outline provides confirmed information about the first national Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada event to be held from Wednesday, June 16th until Saturday, June 19th 2010 in Winnipeg. This event is an historic opportunity for the Canadian public to engage with the legacy of the Indian Residential School system.

There will be a total of seven national TRC events over the next five years. The second national TRC event will take place in Inuvik, Northwest Territories, in June 2011. The three TRC Commissioners for this truth-telling and reconciliation process are Justice Murray Sinclair, Marie Wilson and Chief Wilton Littlechild.

The first national event will take place in The Forks region of Winnipeg, which is a traditional meeting place for Aboriginal peoples. A sacred fire will be lit on the first day. The four-day national event will be multi-dimensional in an attempt to reflect on the residential school experience from a variety of perspectives and a range of mediums. Over 20 tents will be used to provide venues for truth-telling circles, statement gathering, artistic and cultural expression, historical research and photo displays, interfaith and apology programs, survivor respite, children's space and entertainment.

The sharing of stories and statements will be conducted in two ways. A private tent will be available for Residential School Survivors to share stories discretely with those who have the background and training to hear them. An opportunity to share stories publicly will be available in a Commissioners' tent. There will be one public circle on the first day of the event. Three public circles – each with a TRC Commissioner – will then form afterward. An ecumenical church-sponsored reception for former students and their families will follow the opening ceremonies on the first day. A powwow will conclude the national event on the Saturday.

There are current plans by the Churches to develop ecumenical liturgical resources specific to the TRC. Protocols are being developed by the TRC to guide any local events that communities wish to hold. Please visit the official TRC website at www.trc-cvr.ca for further details and developing information.

Thank you,

Chad Beharriell
Program Coordinator - Aboriginal Justice & Right Relations
The United Church of Canada
cbeharri@united-church.ca
1-800-268-3781 ext. 4045
Cell: 416.992.9120