

at “The Meeting Place,” an event co-sponsored by Council Fire Native Cultural Centre and the Toronto Conference of the United Church of Canada in June of 2012.

Yet, more remains to be done in education and training with regard to reconciling Indigenous spirituality and Christianity in ways that support Indigenous self-determination. Writing in 2009, the former Archdeacon for the Anglican Church and founding member of the Indian Ecumenical Conference, Rev. John A. (Ian) MacKenzie, said,

Most urgently, churches need to consider opening a serious dialogue with Aboriginal theologians, doctors, and healers who represent ... the North American intellectual tradition.... [Aboriginal peoples] call for recognition of the truth of past injustices and respect for their civilizations. Most of all, this is a call for respect for their traditional religious thoughts and practices. The only legitimate North American intellectual tradition comes from the diverse tribal societies in our midst!...

Sustainable reconciliation will only take place when every Canadian seminary includes a course on Aboriginal religious traditions; when every congregation ... reflect[s] on North American intellectual tradition by initiating and inviting Aboriginal religious leaders to lead such discussions ... when Aboriginal peoples achieve real self-government within their churches; and when Christian theology not only respects Aboriginal thought, but learns from it.<sup>96</sup>

## Call to Action

- 60) We call upon leaders of the church parties to the Settlement Agreement and all other faiths, in collaboration with Indigenous spiritual leaders, Survivors, schools of theology, seminaries, and other religious training centres, to develop and teach curriculum for all student clergy, and all clergy and staff who work in Aboriginal communities, on the need to respect Indigenous spirituality in its own right, the history and legacy of residential schools and the roles of the church parties in that system, the history and legacy of religious conflict in Aboriginal families and communities, and the responsibility that churches have to mitigate such conflicts and prevent spiritual violence.

## Church healing and reconciliation projects

Beginning in the 1990s, the four Settlement Agreement churches began allocating specific funds for community-based healing and reconciliation projects. This work continued under the terms of the Settlement Agreement. Each of the defendant churches agreed to provide and manage funds specifically dedicated to healing and reconciliation. All the churches established committees, including Aboriginal representatives, to review and