

to advocate for Indigenous perspectives and ensure that they are fully represented in the institutional structures, programs, and services of their respective churches.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in 2013 endorsed a report on the development of a theological framework for Aboriginal spirituality within the church. The report noted “the need for Aboriginal Christians to be true to both their *Indigenous identity* and to their [Christian] faith,” and concluded, among other things, that “this conversation has the potential not simply to help us address our relationship as Presbyterians with Aboriginal people; it has the potential to contribute to the renewal of our church.”<sup>86</sup>

The Anglican Church has developed a vision for a self-governing Indigenous church to coexist within the broader institutional structure of the church. In 2001, a strategic plan called “A New Agape” was formally adopted by the church’s General Synod meeting. The plan set out the church’s vision for a

new relationship ... based on a partnership which focuses on the cultural, spiritual, social and economic independence of Indigenous communities. To give expression to this new relationship The Anglican Church of Canada will work primarily with ... Indigenous peoples for a truly Anglican Indigenous Church in Canada. It is an important step in the overall quest for self-governance.<sup>87</sup>

In 2007, the church appointed Rev. Mark MacDonald as its first Indigenous National Bishop.

The United Church has also examined its theological foundations. In a 2006 report, “Living Faithfully in the Midst of Empire: Report to the Thirty-ninth General Council 2006,” the United Church responded to an earlier call from the World Council of Churches “to reflect on the question of power and empire from a biblical and theological perspective and take a firm faith stance against hegemonic powers because all power is accountable to God.”<sup>88</sup> The report recommended that further work be done, and a follow-up report, “Reviewing Partnership in the Context of Empire,” was issued in 2009. The report’s theological reflection noted:

Our development of the partnership model was an attempt to move beyond the paternalism and colonialism of 19th century missions. The current work to develop right relations with Aboriginal peoples is an attempt to move beyond a history of colonization and racism. This ongoing struggle to move beyond empire involves the recognition that our theology and biblical interpretation have often supported sexism, racism, colonialism, and the exploitation of creation.... Theologies of empire have understood God and men as separate from and superior to women, Indigenous peoples, and nature.<sup>89</sup>

In 2012, the Executive of the General Council reported on the follow-up to the 2006 and 2009 reports on how to re-envision the church’s theological purpose and restructure its institutions by shifting from a theology of empire to a theology of partnership.<sup>90</sup>