

The Elusive Goal: The Commitment to Indigenous Self-Determination in the Anglican Church of Canada, 1967–2020

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In 1967 the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) committed itself to support Indigenous peoples who were calling on the Canadian government to recognize their right to self-determination, and in 1995 it resolved to move to recognize Indigenous self-determination within the church itself. Nevertheless, in the ACC, as in the country at large, Indigenous self-determination has remained an elusive goal. To say so is not to deny the progress that the ACC has made in developing Indigenous leadership, governance, ministry, and advocacy. But with a few partial exceptions, Indigenous Anglicans remain under the oversight of a settler-dominated church with its Eurocentric constitution, canons, policies, budgets, liturgical norms, assumptions, and administrative procedures.¹ Why has the goal of Indigenous self-determination proven so elusive? I intend to argue here that colonial assumptions and structures have proven tenacious, and that, although Indigenous self-determination is consistent with historical patterns of Christian mission and organization, the

¹ The terms “settler” and “Indigenous” are both problematic, but the nature of this discussion requires, at least provisionally, a binary terminology, and these terms are currently widely used.

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theological, constitutional, and financial obstacles to decolonization have defied solution.²

INDIGENOUS ROLES IN THE ACC, 1967–2019

In the centennial year of Canadian Confederation, 1967, Indigenous claims for justice finally gained traction in the country at large and in the ACC. In that year the reformist Hawthorn Report was completed; this was a study by social scientists, commissioned by the federal government, of the economic disadvantages and oppressive conditions experienced by Indigenous peoples. The report particularly noted some of the damaging results of the Indian residential schools that were administered (until 1969) by various Christian denominations and entities, including the ACC.³ An international exposition in Montreal, called Expo 67, which attracted fifty million visitors, featured a controversial “Indians of Canada” pavilion, which vividly presented a history of violations of treaties and Indigenous human rights.⁴ Chief Dan George, a well known actor who would later be nominated for an Academy Award, protested the subjugation of his people in a momentous speech entitled “Lament for Confederation,” delivered to over thirty thousand people in Vancouver’s Empire Stadium, and widely reprinted.⁵ A Nisga’a elder named Frank Calder, who was among other things a graduate of the

² A common definition of colonialism is that it is a continuing situation of domination, originally economic, created when a foreign nation has entered a territory, taken authority over the land, and subjected the original peoples to their control. In Canada a principal vehicle of colonialism is the Indian Act, with its many controls and repressions.

³ H. B. Hawthorn, ed., *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: A Report on Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies*, 2 vols. (Ottawa, 1966–1967). Available on-line at <http://caid.ca/DHawthorn.html>. All referenced webpages in this article were accessed 3 July 2019. Most Indian residential schools were administered by what the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) of 2006 called “entities” of the Roman Catholic Church, such as religious societies and episcopal corporations.

⁴ Jane Griffith, “One Little, Two Little, Three Canadians: The Indians of Canada Pavilion and Public Pedagogy, Expo 67,” *Journal of Canadian Studies • Revue d’études canadiennes* 49 (2015): 171–204.

⁵ An on-line location for the text is at the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network, <https://aptnnews.ca/2017/07/01/a-lament-for-confederation-a-speech-by-chief-dan-george-in-1967/>.

Anglican Theological College in Vancouver, launched a lawsuit that would result in the epoch-making declaration by the Supreme Court of Canada that Aboriginal land title predated colonization.⁶ The National Indian Council dissolved amid criticisms of its ineffectiveness, leading to the founding of two more militant organizations, the predecessors of today's Assembly of First Nations and the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.⁷

Before this watershed the ACC had seen itself as a settler organization and treated Indigenous Anglicans not as members but as wards. In 1967 its "Joint Interdepartmental Committee on Indian / Eskimo Affairs" (which had no "Indian" or "Eskimo" members) expressed repentance for its paternalism and patterns of control. In a report to General Synod, the chief governing body of the ACC, it wrote, "We, as Christians," meaning settler Christians, "must plead forgiveness for our participation in the perpetuation of injustices to Indians."⁸ On its recommendation General Synod resolved to "give its full support to and become actively involved in projects enabling Indians to discuss their own proposals for self-determination" within Canada.⁹

Before the end of that year, the ACC commissioned Charles Hendry, a professor of social work, to research First Nations issues and "the church's attitudes towards Native Peoples." When his report was released two years later for discussion by Anglican groups across the country, many were shocked and ashamed to discover the destructiveness of "our past 'apartheid' policies."¹⁰ In 1969 General Synod gave its "general approval" to the recommendations which Hendry's report presented, including that "the Church must listen to the Native peoples" and "the role of the Church must be redefined." It also gave direction for concrete action.¹¹

⁶ *Calder et al. v. Attorney-General of British Columbia*, [1973] S.C.R. 313, decided 31 January 1973.

⁷ Howard Ramos, "Divergent Paths: Aboriginal Mobilization in Canada, 1950–2000" (Ph.D. dissertation McGill University, 2004): 87.

⁸ ACC, *General Synod Journal of Proceedings* [GSJ] (1967): 79–80, 331.

⁹ Resolution moved by G. Beardy, seconded by J. Cruickshank, ACC, GSJ (1995): 97.

¹⁰ Charles E. Hendry, *Beyond Traplines: Does the Church Really Care? Towards an Assessment of the Work of the Anglican Church of Canada with Canada's Native Peoples* (Toronto, 1969). "Apartheid" appears on 12.

¹¹ ACC, GSJ (1969): 35–36, 190–92.

True to its resolution, the ACC began making considerable progress towards respect, healing, and inclusion. It supported Indigenous land claims and other issues of justice, participated energetically in an ecumenical Aboriginal Rights Coalition, increased the numbers of ordained Indigenous clergy and (in 1989) began consecrating Indigenous bishops, established the Council of Native Ministries (the forerunner of today's Anglican Council of Indigenous Peoples, or ACIP), held regular national Indigenous consultations (which in 1988 were formalized as meetings of an entity called "Sacred Circle"), and publicized Indigenous issues through educational and advocacy programs and materials, presentations at church synods and parish meetings, and coverage in the *Anglican Journal* (until 1989 called the *Canadian Churchman*), the monthly denominational newspaper.¹²

These were important achievements and changes. But the church had not yet named and confronted its continuing colonial character, or the full extent of the intergenerational damage it had inflicted on Indigenous peoples, particularly in its Indian residential schools. Nor had it yet formulated the goal of Indigenous self-determination within the church.

As in the 1960s, so in the 1990s, these next steps were prepared by external developments. In 1988 there appeared the first draft of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which affirmed Indigenous self-determination as a right. (UNDRIP would finally be ratified in 2007 with only four dissenting votes: Canada, United States, Australia, and New Zealand.)¹³ Indigenous self-determination was the main theme of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1991–1996) [RCAP], the country's most comprehensive investigation ever of the issues of Indigenous peoples and the negative consequences of colonialism. RCAP quickly publicized its view that the many problems of Indigenous communities could be solved only by the communities

¹² A useful overview is Donna Bomberry, "Justice and Healing: A Journey toward Reconciliation of Relationships in the Anglican Church of Canada," *A New Agape: The Resource Binder* (ACC, [2001]), Book E, <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/BookE.pdf>.

¹³ In 2016 Canada declared its support for UNDRIP and its intention to implement it by law.

themselves, and only if they were empowered to be self-determining.¹⁴ RCAP's most telling exposé of the damage done by the colonial denial of Indigenous self-determination was its report of the physical, sexual, and psychological abuse inflicted on First Nations children (as well as Inuit and Métis children) at the churches' Indian residential schools. The full extent of this historical outrage was just coming to light as RCAP was beginning its work.¹⁵ The ACC had administered about thirty-five of the schools,¹⁶ which were designed to assimilate pupils into British cultural norms of behavior, values, and outlook. Some Anglicans even yet defended the intent of the schools, but many others were ashamed. In August 1993 Michael Peers, the primate of the ACC, came to Sacred Circle to apologize on behalf of the church: "I am sorry, more than I can say, that we tried to remake you in our image, taking from you your language and the signs of your identity."¹⁷

The affirmations of UNDRIP, RCAP's promotion of Indigenous self-determination, the growing settler recognition of Indigenous rights, and the revelations of the churches' involvement in the criminal abuse of Indigenous children set the stage for a meeting of Indigenous Anglicans in 1994 which made a solemn covenant "to call our people into unity in a new, self-determining community within the ACC."¹⁸ In 1995 General Synod voted to "receive, accept, and affirm the Covenant," as "a promise and hope for liberation and self-determination for indigenous people," and for "transformation for the whole Anglican Church."¹⁹

¹⁴ For example, RCAP, *Sharing the Harvest: The Road to Self-Reliance* (1993), online at <http://data2.archives.ca/rcap/pdf/rcap-453.pdf>. A huge database of RCAP publications, reports, submissions, and transcripts of hearings is online from <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/royal-commission-aboriginal-peoples/Pages/introduction.aspx>.

¹⁵ On the residential schools, see James R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto, 1996). On the televised interview in October 1990 where a prominent school survivor disclosed his sexual victimization, see 328; thousands of other victims came forward subsequently.

¹⁶ Numbers are vague because residential schools can be variously defined, and Anglican sponsorship is not always clear. The IRSSA covered 141 residential schools, of which 29 were administered by the ACC.

¹⁷ Available on the ACC website at <https://www.anglican.ca/tr/apology/>.

¹⁸ Bomberry, E12; the Covenant can be read at <https://www.anglican.ca/im/foundational-documents/covenant/>.

¹⁹ ACC, GSJ (1995): 97.

Unfortunately, progress towards self-determination was stalled for a decade as the ACC wrestled with legal actions involving well over a thousand plaintiffs on account of its Indian residential schools, as well as several criminal proceedings. In this context an embittering episode of 2003, largely unnoticed by settler Anglicans, again demonstrated to Indigenous Anglicans their colonized condition within the church.²⁰ Settler ACC officials, wanting to protect the church from bankruptcy in the face of residential school litigation, had been negotiating a deal with the federal government that would minimize and cap the church's liability. They co-opted one conflicted Cree archdeacon to the negotiating team, but otherwise they did not consult with ACIP or with other Indigenous Anglicans, although they represented themselves both publicly and to their Indigenous brothers and sisters as profoundly sympathetic to Indigenous justice issues. In February 2003 they revealed the terms of their agreement in principle. The government would cap the church's liability, but survivors of the Anglican Indian residential schools would be required to renounce all further claims, "whether or not now known or existing at law," explicitly including any claims relating to violations of treaties or loss of culture; and, should any such claims be made, the church would join with the federal government in "vigorously" opposing them. For settler Anglican leaders, the government was evidently the ally, Indigenous Anglicans the adversary. Interestingly, the United Church of Canada, offered the same opportunity by the government, declined.²¹ Indigenous Anglican leaders felt betrayed. They registered strong

²⁰ [Melanie Delva,] ACC, "One Step on a Journey: The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and the ACC – Lessons Learned" (ACC, 2019), <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/All-Parties-Lessons-Learned-ACC-FINAL.pdf>. The agreement signed by the ACC with the government in March 2003, which is the one discussed in this paragraph, was superseded by the IRSSA. See also Alan L. Hayes, *Anglicans in Canada: Controversies and Identity in Historical Perspective* (Urbana, 2004): 42–45.

²¹ Personal communications from Brian Thorpe and James Scott, who participated in these decisions for the United Church. They note, not wanting to claim morally superiority for the United Church, that since their denomination had managed fewer residential schools than the ACC it faced a lower level of liability; moreover, it had just received a substantial bequest. Note that the agreement discussed here, although signed, was superseded by the IRSSA.

protests with the primate, the chancellor, and the general secretary, but to no avail. The ACC signed the agreement at a ceremony that ACIP boycotted. Nor was this betrayal an isolated episode in a singularly desperate situation. It was part of a multi-year legal strategy by which the ACC and other defendants, as a law professor observed, “used adversarial tactics that often re-victimized the survivors.”²²

The lesson for Indigenous Anglicans was clear: they needed to stop imagining that they could depend on settler leaders for their protection. They needed to become masters in their own household.

The ACC returned to its agenda for Indigenous self-determination after it signed the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) of 2006 among the federal government, the church “entities” that had managed the schools, and representative Aboriginal organizations. Its first notable step was creating the position of National Indigenous Anglican Bishop (NIAB) in 2007.²³ The first (and so far only) NIAB, Mark Macdonald, has effectively strengthened the common ecclesial life of Indigenous Anglicans, ensured that their voice has been heard in the wider church, given wise pastoral direction, and raised morale. A second step was the enactment by General Synod of in 2010 of Canon XXII on “The National Indigenous Ministry;” its text incorporated in full, by direct quotation, the Covenant of 1994 with its aspiration to Indigenous self-determination. (The same session of General Synod embraced UNDRIP as a standard of practice in the church.)²⁴ Still another concrete change in the direction of Indigenous self-determination was the creation in 2014 of an Indigenous diocese, called the Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, for about

²² Kent Roach, “Blaming the Victim: Canadian Law, Causation, and Residential Schools,” *The University of Toronto Law Journal* 64, special issue on “the Residential Schools Litigation and Settlement” (2015): 566–95, quotation at 568.

²³ The ACC website has a page about the NIAB at <https://www.anglican.ca/im/niab/>. As of 2019, the incumbent has the title of archbishop (and is thus the “NIAA”).

²⁴ Canons are published in the *Handbook of the General Synod*, available at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/handbook-18th-ed.pdf>. The original version of Canon XXII as submitted in 2010 is archived at <http://archive.anglican.ca/gs2010/wp-content/uploads/A051-GWG-6-Enactment-of-Canon-XXII-re-NIAB-ACIP-Sacred-Circle.pdf>.

twenty-five Cree and Oji-Cree parishes in northwestern Ontario and northern Manitoba. It is led by an Indigenous bishop and an Indigenous suffragan bishop.²⁵ Episcopal areas with Indigenous suffragan bishops were later carved out within the dioceses of Calgary, Brandon, and Saskatchewan. At this writing, the ACC has twelve active Indigenous bishops, most but not all of them appointed to oversee Indigenous clergy and ministries.

These measures were welcome progress, but the specific goal of Indigenous self-determination has remained distant. Of the two governance bodies established in Canon XXII, Sacred Circle is allowed only “to worship, to discuss, and to communicate with the broader Church,” while ACIP is authorized simply to “maintain relations with” settler-dominated units of church governance, and to organize the Sacred Circle. Revisions to the canon in 2019 were trumpeted as monumental steps in the triumphal march towards a self-determining Indigenous church, but they were excruciatingly modest in substance: ACIP now could determine its own voting membership and that of Sacred Circle, and could “regulate the affairs” of the NIAB’s tiny department at the denominational head office. The NIAB himself has no jurisdiction; the mandate of that office in Canon XXII is simply, and vaguely, to have “a pastoral episcopal relationship” with Indigenous ministries. Since 2017 a small council called the Vision Keepers, appointed by the settler primate not the NIAB, monitors “the work of the Church in implementing the spirit of UNDRIP through transformed church structures, governance systems, processes and practices,” but the group has no power to make changes and has had little to say.²⁶ No further constitutional reforms are on the horizon.

Despite the formal pronouncements of their General Synod in favor of Indigenous self-determination, many settler Anglicans remain resistant or at least uncommitted. There are no doubt many

²⁵ The ACC website gives an overview of Mishamikoweesh at <https://www.anglican.ca/im/mishamikoweesh/>; the diocesa website is at <https://mishamikoweesh.ca>.

²⁶ Jolle Kidd, “In depth: Indigenous self-determination measures pass in nearly unanimous vote,” *Anglican Journal* (13 July 2019), at <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/in-depth-indigenous-self-determination-passes/>. The General Synod resolution was numbered A220, <https://gs2019.anglican.ca/cc/resolutions/a220/>.

who remain scarcely aware of the issues. Of those who are, not all accept that Indigenous Anglicans should be treated differently from other Anglicans, or from other minority Anglicans; not all are persuaded that talk of Indigenous self-determination is more than the hobby-horse of a few activists; and not all accept that the words “colonial” and “racist” are accurate descriptors of any part of the ACC. Many are inclined to think that “we” have already done enough for “them.” As a reasonably typical example of settler Anglican sentiment, consider this outburst by a prominent settler priest (now deceased) in a diocesan monthly newspaper. Addressing a hypothetical Indigenous Anglican after many Indigenous delegates to the General Synod of 2007 voted against the blessing of same-sex marriages, he wrote: “If you believe I need to repent of my culture’s racist past in order to enter God’s new creation of love and justice, I think it only fair that you repent of your culturally-entrenched homophobia.”²⁷ Note how he made no distinctions among Indigenous cultures, how he pictured Native societies as backward and error-bound, how he used settler vocabulary (“homophobia”) to caricature the culturally complex “Other” and shut down dialogue, how he treated Indigenous peoples as one special interest group among many, how he wished that Indigenous peoples could think more Eurocentrically in order that the ACC could be a better place, how he regarded his own culture’s racism as “past,” how he spoke from an assurance of his own “wokeness.”²⁸

With partial exceptions, such as Mishamikoweesh, Indigenous Anglicans remain under settler-dominated governance and under the authority of settler bishops. Even the NIAB himself cannot exercise his ministry, even on treaty or unceded lands, without the prior permission of the settler bishop within whose settler-defined territory he proposes to function. Similarly, the budgets for Indigenous ministries, the salaries (if any) of Indigenous clergy, and denominational policies in general remain, for the most part, under settler control. In short, the scope for Indigenous Anglican self-determination remains slight.

²⁷ *Niagara Anglican* (September 2007): 16.

²⁸ Many Indigenous groups are accepting of same-sex relationships, but have a different cultural understanding of marriage from western Christians.

INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION IN THE CONTEXT
OF CHURCH HISTORY

The language of “self-determination” is not, of course, Biblical. Probably few theologians would claim that God has given nations or individuals the power actually to *determine* themselves or their circumstances or their destiny. It is the language of international affairs. It took root after World War I, to promote and justify the ethnic fragmentation of central Europe and the Russian and Ottoman Empires. The “self-determination of peoples” was affirmed in Article I of the United Nations Charter of 1948. The principle was invoked in the subsequent rounds of African and Asian decolonization. UNDRIP applied self-determination to peoples and communities that were to remain joined to a larger nation-state, in effect relativizing it by recognizing the necessity of “balancing . . . rights and duties between states and Indigenous institutions, especially regarding the scope of Indigenous self-government.”²⁹

Nevertheless, in church affairs the principle of national self-determination pre-dates modern commitments to human rights. Indeed, we see it in the historic nation-by-nation organization of most of the world’s church families. The Anglican Communion is an association of forty national provinces, all but a few of them representing single nation-states. The Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches are associations of autocephalous national churches. The Roman Catholic Church historically negotiated concordats with European nations, and today has devolved authority in some measure to national conferences of bishops. The Lutheran World Federation, the Methodist World Council, and the World Reformed Council all connect national churches.

This pattern of nation-by-nation ecclesiastical authority no doubt has practical, political, and legal advantages, but it is theologically grounded. In the Bible the main unit of narrative interest is not the individual, not the family, not the clan or tribe, not the

²⁹ Dorothee Cambou, “The UNDRIP and the legal significance of the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination: a human rights approach with a multidimensional perspective,” *The International Journal of Human Rights* 23 (2019): 34–50, at section 3.1. UNDRIP is available at https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.

human race, but the nation. (The Biblical languages do not know the English distinction between “nations” and “cultures,” both being represented by *goyim* in Biblical Hebrew and *ethnē* in Biblical Greek.)³⁰ The Old Testament is concerned with Israel among the nations. God made Abraham “a great nation” (Gen. 21:18) and “the father of many nations” (Gen. 17:5); Israel’s role, as it emerges in the prophecies of Isaiah, is to bring the knowledge of God to the other nations (Is. 40–55). With the New Testament, the focus moves to the person Jesus, but Jesus himself represents his nation as its king, messiah, and prophet. When Jesus, surprisingly to some of his disciples, deals with non-Jews, they are identified by nationality, such as Samaritans, Syro-Phoenicians, and Romans, representing the extension of salvation to the nations beyond Israel. In Luke, Jesus tells his followers to proclaim the forgiveness of sins “to all nations” (24:47). In Matthew, he commissions them to “make disciples of all nations” (28:14). Christ redeemed us, says Paul, “in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the nations” (Gal. 3:14). Luke records Simeon’s prophecy that Jesus will be “a light to lighten the Gentiles”: the Greek word is just *ethnē*, the invented word “Gentiles” being used in English translations for “nations other than Israel.” The theme of bringing the gospel to the nations is illustrated in the fine dramatic narrative of Pentecost in Acts 2, where the testimony of the apostles reaches Jews and proselytes who are explicitly representatives “from every nation;” their home nations are listed. These examples show that “all the nations” does not function in the Bible as a synonym for “everyone in the world.” All people are culturally located. From this missiological point of view, the early church proclaimed the gospel nation-by-nation, not individual-by-individual.

The key strategy for the spread of early Christianity was honoring cultural pluralism. Christian missions relativized the culture of the message-bearer and made “the recipient culture the true and

³⁰ Terence L. Donaldson, “Gentile Christianity as a Category in the Study of Christian Origins,” *Harvard Theological Review* 106 (2013): 433–58. I am indebted to this article, and to my conversations with its author, for several points in this discussion.

final locus of the proclamation,” as Lamin Sanneh, the late professor of mission at Yale University, argued memorably. Sanneh contrasted the church’s “mission by translation” with the alternative “mission by diffusion,” exemplified by Islam, the religion in which Sanneh himself grew up: Islam makes “the missionary culture the inseparable carrier of the message.”³¹ By “translation” Sanneh partly meant linguistic translation. In the narrative of Pentecost just considered, the author makes a point of saying that people heard the message in their own respective languages. Accordingly, missionaries translated the Bible into many languages. But linguistic translation requires cultural translation, since language is embedded in culture. If converts were to truly meet Christ in their life and not simply assent to foreign formulas, Sanneh said, the gospel proclamation had to make sense to them within their culture. Translation was thus a theological process, forcing the church in every culture to consider the meaning of the gospel for its people.

Students in my Christian history courses are often surprised by how many European conversions occurred not individual-by-individual but nation-by-nation: Armenia in (perhaps) 301, Gaul in 496, the kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England in the 600s as narrated by Bede, Saxony in 785, Bulgaria in 865, Poland in 966, Russia in 988, Iceland in 1000, Lithuania in 1387. Often a ruler declared the nation Christian and arranged for mass baptisms, and the new national church thus established developed practices of Christian piety, discipleship, worship, and decision-making that made sense in its cultural context.

Similarly, “Indigenization” was the goal of church missions recommended by Henry Venn, the chief missiological theorist for the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the English evangelical organization which took on the lion’s share of early Anglican outreach to Indigenous peoples in the Canadian North West and in British Columbia.³² The missionaries appointed by the

³¹ Lamin O. Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (Maryknoll, New York: 1989); *Disciples of All Nations: Pillars of World Christianity* (Oxford, 2008).

³² Wilbert R. Shenk, “The Contribution of Henry Venn to Mission Thought,” *Anvil* 2 (1985): 25–42.

CMS typically learned Indigenous languages, lived in Indigenous communities, translated the scriptures, preached in Native tongues, and relied on Indigenous assistants. But in the end CMS missionaries were frankly too Eurocentric and racist to bring themselves to acknowledge the spiritual wisdom of Indigenous Christians. They finally rejected “mission by translation” and Venn’s goal of “Indigenization” and operated on the premise that Indigenous peoples could not be *real* Christians unless they were assimilated into English culture.³³

As recent postcolonial interpretations have shown, however, Indigenous Anglicans did indeed “translate” the gospel, in ways to which white missionaries were largely oblivious. Indigenous Christian catechists, evangelists, lay preachers, prophets, parents, and other leaders not only proclaimed the gospel within their cultural contexts of meaning, but often infused their traditional practices and ceremonies (some of which had become illegal under settler law) with gospel significance.³⁴ On the west coast, for example, Indigenous Anglicans sometimes celebrated saints’ festivals, funerals, and birthdays in ways that could look strangely like potlatches.³⁵ On Baffin Island the Inuit held Christmas parties that looked strangely like their traditional winter festival.³⁶ Around the Great Lakes, when Ojibway Christians sang hymns and prayed away from the mission chapel, the occasions could look strangely like traditional Ojibway celebrations with singing societies and

³³ An interesting particular case is discussed by Norman Knowles, “The Pest: The Rev. James Settee and the Church Missionary Society in Nineteenth-Century Rupert’s Land, A Case Study of the Native Church Policy and the Indigenous Missionary,” *Canadian Society of Church History Historical Papers* (2014): 99–124.

³⁴ Over the past twenty years a number of historians and anthropologists have demonstrated the agency of Indigenous peoples under colonialism, in various regions and contexts, in constructing their religious beliefs and commitments within their own cultural frames of meaning. One fine example is Susan Neylan, *The Heavens are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montreal and Kingston, 2003).

³⁵ Among many sources for this observation, Cara Krmpotich, *The Force of Family: Repatriation, Kinship, and Family on Haida Gwaii* (Toronto, 2014): 34.

³⁶ Frédéric B. Laugrand and Jarich G. Oosten, *Inuit Shamanism and Christianity: Transitions and Transformations in the Twentieth Century* (Montreal and Kingston, 2010): 98–100.

drums and feasting.³⁷ On the Canadian Prairies, Archdeacon Edward Ahenakew (1865–1961), as settler Anglicans discovered after his death, kept alive the stories of his own Cree nation, “pagan” though they would have appeared to his British imperialist bishop.³⁸ In other words, Indigenous Anglicanism has long been self-determining, but in an undocumented, even subversive way that typically escaped the notice of settler missionaries, church leaders, and Indian agents. Today the great majority of Indigenous peoples self-identify as Christians to census-takers, without any devaluation of their cultural and social identity.³⁹

If this line of thought seems to be leading to an affirmation that the Indigenous members of the ACC should be recognized as a self-determining nation, it meets two obvious problems. First, indigeneity is not a culture or nation. It is a colonial catch-all category for an extremely diverse group of cultures, representing, in Canada, an estimated seventy languages, diverse environmental adaptations, complicated sets of historical rivalries and hostilities and alliances, and innumerable different stories and histories and identities. Would a single Indigenous Anglican church fall into a kind of Anglican pan-Indianism, in which, to borrow a phrase from a skeptical Nak’azdli academic, all members would “smudge themselves . . . and consider tobacco, eagles, drums, etc. as sacred”?⁴⁰ Strategically, given their small numbers, Indigenous

³⁷ Michael D. McNally, *Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief, and a Native Culture in Motion* (Oxford, 2000); Michael D. McNally, “The Practice of Native American Christianity”, *Church History* 69 (2000): 834–59.

³⁸ Tasha Beeds, “Rethinking Edward Ahenakew’s Intellectual Legacy: Expressions of nehiyawî-mamitoneyihcikan (Cree Consciousness or Thinking),” in Tolly Bradford and Chelsea Horton, eds., *Mixed Blessings: Indigenous Encounters with Christianity in Canada* (Vancouver, 2016): 119–44.

³⁹ Statistics Canada, “NHS [National Household Survey] Aboriginal Population Profile,” Catalogue no. 99-011-XWE2011007, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/aprof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=01&Data=Count&SearchText=Canada&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&A1=All&B1=All&Custom=&TABID=1>, reported that of 1.4 million persons in Canada who self-identified as Indigenous in private households, 63% identified as Christian. Census data are, admittedly, particularly unreliable for Indigenous peoples.

⁴⁰ Nicholette Prince appears to be the main author of *Nak’azdli and Tl’azt’en: We Are Telling You* (Northern Health, Nak’azdli Whuten and Tl’azt’en First Nation, 2015), at <https://www.indigenoushealthnh.ca/sites/default/files/Nakazdli%20and%20T%27lazten-We%20are%20telling%20youF.pdf>, 11–12.

peoples do need to cooperate in their confrontation of colonialism, but they also take pride in their differences. In 2019 Inuit musicians boycotted the annual Indigenous Music Awards when the administrators of the competition refused to disqualify a Cree artist who performed throat-singing, an Inuit art form. For the Inuit musicians, cultural appropriation by an Indigenous person was no more permissible than by a non-Indigenous one. From this perspective, should Indigenous Anglicans oppose a trans-cultural, syncretized Indigenous identity as colonial, or should they embrace it as a strategic counterweight to colonialism? The question is even more fraught if we acknowledge that a significant minority of Indigenous Anglicans actually oppose attempts to integrate traditional spiritualities into their expressions of Christianity, especially ceremonially, because, as one put it, having “put these pagan traditions aside,” they would be “wrong to take them up again.”⁴¹

A second complexity in affirming the theological appropriateness of a self-determining Indigenous Anglican church is that, as an effect of colonialism, it is not easy to determine who is Indigenous. The 2016 census reported about 820,000 status Indians under the convoluted rules of the Indian Act, but another 232,000 who self-identified as First Nations (“Indians”) without having the legal status.⁴² Does only the smaller number qualify as Indigenous, or the larger number, or another number? The Métis National Council has established a process for identifying Métis “citizens,” but its criteria of Métis identity are contested, especially in eastern Canada. The construction of Inuit identity has been complicated by the creation of the mostly Inuit territory of Nunavut, which raises the possibility that Inuit identity can be determined on a civic and not just a cultural basis.⁴³ Moreover,

⁴¹ Bomberry, E10.

⁴² Shelly Trefethen, *Strengthening the Availability of First Nations Data*, prepared for Indigenous Services Canada and the Assembly of First Nations (2019), https://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/NCR-11176060-v1-STRENGTHENING_THE_AVAILABILITY_OF_FIRST_NATIONS_DATA-MAR_25_2019-FINAL_E.pdf.

⁴³ André Légaré, “Inuit identity and regionalization in the Canadian Central and Eastern Arctic: a survey of writings about Nunavut,” in *Polar Geography* 31 (2008): 99–118.

many people in Canada are bicultural or have hybrid parentages. Would the self-determining Indigenous Anglican church restrict itself to those who met certain requirements of its own definition? In a town or city, where Indigenous and settler peoples lived in the same neighbourhoods and worked together and went to the same schools, would they have to choose between an Indigenous and a non-Indigenous church? Would bicultural Anglicans need to select their preferred identity? Would mixed congregations need to split themselves into two? What about families with Indigenous and settler members?

In summary, a self-determining Indigenous Anglican church would not in itself represent an inculturation of the gospel. Its value at first might be as an anti-colonial counterweight, offering Indigenous Anglicans freedom in the gospel protected from the repressions and incomprehensions of settler oversight. And it would face some complicated issues. But in time it could develop into an umbrella structure for a diversity of self-determining Indigenous communities, some Cree, some Mohawk, some Inuit, some Nisga'a, and so on, in the great line of national churches that originated in New Testament times.

MODELS OF SELF-DETERMINATION

There are several alternative approaches to Indigenous self-determination in the ACC, each with its advantages and disadvantages. Each approach looks to past analogies, since where else other than history can one search for proven workable models? Each model offers a slightly different answer to the question: how is the good of social and cultural distinctiveness to be balanced against the good of church unity? When Indigenous Anglicans in 1994 penned the phrase "a self-determining community within the Church" they identified two principles in tension, the authority of a culturally diverse unit versus the authority of the whole. How can both principles be appropriately honored? Indeed, that question has continually vexed the wider Anglican communion, and it cannot be answered *a priori*; circumstances change. In 1863, for example, Canadian bishops wanted to

remain within the Church of England, but were forced to separate from it by English judges.⁴⁴ Today the ACC regards its independence from the Church of England as entirely natural and desirable. The tension between diversity and unity cannot be engineered perennially for Indigenous Anglicans within the ACC now any more than it could have been for settler Canadian Anglicans within the Anglican Communion in 1863. In 2020 the balance is to be found if and as the ACC lives into a new reality of Indigenous autonomy.

A first model of Indigenous Anglican self-determination is the diocese of Mishamikoweesh, mentioned earlier, where Indigenous bishops oversee Indigenous parishes. It is self-determining insofar as it can honour Indigenous wisdom, values, languages, and lifestyles, but it remains formally subordinate to the governances of the ecclesiastical province and national church, and it relies financially on settler-dominated judicatories, corporate bodies, and benefactors. Moreover, virtually all its clergy are non-stipendiary.⁴⁵

A second model was suggested by Sacred Circle at its meeting in 2011 in Mississauga, Ontario, in a statement that it called the Mississauga Declaration. Working through questions of “structures of authority” and “jurisdiction,” the vocabulary of settler constitutional law, Sacred Circle arrived at the solution of an Indigenous “fifth province.” The ACC now has four internal geographical ecclesiastical provinces; under this proposal, a fifth non-geographical province would be created, drawing parishes from the other four. A drawback is, again, that internal ecclesiastical provinces are subordinate to General Synod and its settler structures, priorities, attitudes, and conventions of decision-making.⁴⁶

A third model is a kind of para-church entity, as suggested in 2017 by the chancellor of General Synod. The CMS, previously mentioned, is an example of an independent but distinctly Anglican agency. Under this proposal, the National Indigenous

⁴⁴ Hayes, 92–96.

⁴⁵ Diocesan website at <https://mishamikoweesh.ca>; Matt Gardner, “The Unpaid Labourers,” *Anglican Journal* (December 9, 2019), <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/the-unpaid-labourers/>.

⁴⁶ The Mississauga Declaration is available at <https://www.anglican.ca/im/foundational-documents/mississauga>.

Ministry might become an independent Anglican corporation a little like the CMS. The catch, however, is that in any given area this entity could only “operate with the permission of the appropriate diocesan bishop.”⁴⁷ In other words, Indigenous Anglicans would have self-determination only so far as allowed by settler bishops. This is obviously not self-determination at all.

A much more radical approach was intimated in 2001 in an Indigenous ACC resource called “A New Agape.” It proposed “a truly Anglican Indigenous Church in Canada” as inspired by the Two-Row Wampum Belt treaty of 1613 between the Haudenosaunee and the Netherlands (and later the English), where the two peoples agreed to travel their journey independently but side by side.⁴⁸ Since the Haudenosaunee have never accepted that they are anything less than a sovereign people,⁴⁹ this model implies actual independence from the ACC. Similarly, in their Mississauga Declaration Indigenous Anglicans affirmed “our sovereign identity as the people of the Land.” This reference to sovereignty appears to evoke an aspiration to decolonization, a much more robust goal from that envisioned by UNDRIP, which balances Indigenous rights to language and identity, and Indigenous authority in education, health, social services, and other areas, against settler sovereignty.⁵⁰ The rejection of settler oversight in this model invites comparison with recent Indigenous critiques of “the politics of recognition” in Canada. For writers like Glen Coulthard, Indigenous peoples gain little of substance when they persuade a settler government to recognize their rights, lands, and authority, since state recognition leaves the state’s role intact, protects its ultimate authority of dispossession, and reproduces the colonial power relationship.⁵¹ In the context of the ACC, when

⁴⁷ Memorandum from David Jones to Mark Macdonald, 3 February 2017, <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/From-Chancellor-Elements-of-a-Self-Determining-National-Indigenous-Ministry-within-The-Anglican-Church-of-Canada-2017.pdf>, quotation at 3.

⁴⁸ *A New Agape: The Resource Binder* (ACC, [2001]), Book A, p. 66, accessed at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/BookA.pdf>.

⁴⁹ As just one example, see Susan M. Hill, *The Clay We Are Made Of: Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River* (Winnipeg, 2017), 239 (and *passim*).

⁵⁰ Article 46 of UNDRIP determines this interpretation.

⁵¹ *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis, 2014).

General Synod passes a Canon XXII to recognize some modest measure of Indigenous authority, it is *ipso facto* reinscribing its own colonial authority. The two-row wampum model proposed in “A New Agape,” by contrast, envisions two independent, non-interfering Anglican provinces in the same country. An Anglican parallel might be the Church of North India and the Church of South India.

A fifth model on which some Indigenous Anglicans have looked with interest is the “tikanga” system, established in 1992 by the Anglican Church in New Zealand, Aotearoa, and Polynesia. Its three tikangas, or cultural streams, are the Maori of Aotearoa, the Pakeha (settlers) of New Zealand, and Polynesia. Each has its own primate, episcopal hierarchy, and legislative body. On this model, one can imagine two episcopal hierarchies and legislative bodies in the ACC, one for Indigenous peoples and one for non-Indigenous peoples. A disadvantage is that separating tikangas can—some New Zealand Anglicans say it actually does—minimize mutual interchange and dialogue, cooperation in common mission, and possibilities for reconciliation. And they can force mixed Maori/Pakeha families either to choose one tikanga over the other, or to worship separately.⁵² Also, a significant difference between New Zealand and Canada is that New Zealand has only one dominant Indigenous grouping, while the latter has several dozen Indigenous nations.

A sixth historical solution that might be adapted to the ACC is the reasonably common practice in the Roman Catholic Church of overlapping episcopal jurisdictions under Canon 372 of the Code of Canon Law. In Canada, for example, Ukrainian Catholics in a given area have one bishop and Latin rite Catholics have another. Pope Francis in 2017 instituted a similar provision for India; the Syro-Malabar Church has its own episcopal hierarchy. Latin bishops have not generally been pleased with these arrangements, but Pope Francis has wanted to accommodate the “variety of ecclesial life, which shines with great splendour throughout lands and nations,” and has affirmed that “the presence of several bishops of the various *sui iuris* Churches in the same territory will surely offer an eloquent witness

⁵² A helpful history, with no author given, is currently accessible on the website of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia, at <http://www.anglican.org.nz/About/History>.

to a vibrant and marvellous communion.”⁵³ But this model works partly because all Roman Catholic bishops are answerable to a Vatican in a far-away country, unlike the situation in the ACC.

A seventh historical model, this one from outside the ecclesial world, is the example of Quebec, a “distinct society” within the Canadian confederation, a “nation within Canada” according to the federal House of Commons. It is distinct in recognizing an adaptation of Napoleonic civil law; it enjoys greater authority than other provinces in such areas as employment, immigration, pensions, and taxation; and it takes pride in its distinct artistic culture, as well as an understanding of Canadian history unlike what is taught in the “ROC” (“rest of Canada”).⁵⁴ In 1987, identifying Indigenous nations as distinct societies was unsuccessfully recommended to a Canadian constitutional conference at Meech Lake, Quebec.⁵⁵ On this model, Indigenous Anglicans might negotiate a special status within the ACC with heightened authority in certain areas.

A difficulty with applying any of these seven models to Indigenous Anglican self-determination is that they are all “one size fits all,” even though in fact Indigeneity in Canada is culturally very diverse. In this respect these solutions are like Canada’s Indian Act, which ignores distinct nationalities. A more flexible arrangement is the self-government agreements (SGA’s) between Canada and specific First Nations and Inuit populations. “Because communities have different goals,” the government of Canada says of

⁵³ Accessed on line from the Vatican press office at <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2017/10/10/171010b.html>. I am grateful to Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick of the diocese of Antigonish, and to Father Francis Morrisey, OMI, professor of canon law at St. Paul University, Ottawa, for this reference. For different reasons, Anglicans are also accustomed to overlapping episcopal jurisdictions: in Europe there are both “the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe” of the Church of England and the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe of the Episcopal Church in the United States. For this point I am grateful to members of a session at the 2019 Episcopal/Anglican Tri-History Conference in Toronto where I gave an earlier and shorter version of this paper.

⁵⁴ Andrew McDougall, *Canadian Federalism, Abeyances, and Quebec Sovereignty* (Ph.D. diss, University of Toronto, 2016).

⁵⁵ Dorothy Schreiber, “Native people a distinct society says Senate report,” *Windspeaker* 5, 26 (1988): 1, republished at <https://ammsa.com/publications/windspeaker/native-people-distinct-society-says-senate-report>.

its approach to SGA's, "negotiations will not result in a single model of self-government."⁵⁶ Canada has concluded twenty-two SGA's with Indigenous groups across the country, and about fifty negotiations are in process. They pre-empt the Indian Act. As an example, an SGA might recognize a band's legal authority for itself and for settlers on its territory in such areas as health, education, environmental management, taxation, and land use, establish funding arrangements with Canada comparable to transfer payments between the federal and provincial governments, and identify programs and services which the community will provide. On this analogy, the ACC might negotiate diverse SGA's covering specific congregations, organizations, and ministries, identifying areas of autonomy and laying out financial relationships. Indeed, the chancellor of General Synod has mused about an arrangement similar to this.⁵⁷ Some critics, however, object that Canada's SGA's "municipalize" First Nations, which remain generally subject to provincial and federal law except in matters otherwise specified, leaving them well short of sovereignty.⁵⁸

For mixed situations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans, a ninth model that might be considered is the collaborative Gwaii Haanas agreement of 1993 between the Council of the Haida Nation and the government of Canada. The two parties jointly established an Archipelago Management Board for a national park reserve.⁵⁹ The representatives from both parties reach

⁵⁶ Government of Canada, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, "Advancing Indigenous Self-Government," <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100032275/1529354547314>.

⁵⁷ Jones to Macdonald, 4.

⁵⁸ The current municipalizing template is "The Government of Canada's Approach to Implementation of the Inherent Right and the Negotiation of Aboriginal Self-Government" (1995), <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100031843/1539869205136>. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau proposed another template for SGA's that would move closer to Indigenous sovereignty: Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, "Engagement Document" (2018), at <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1516389497863/1516389603336>.

⁵⁹ Gwaii Haanas agreement, <http://www.haidanation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/GwaiiHaanasAgreement.pdf>; Graham Richard, "Gwaii Haanas," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 5 August 2016, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/gwaii-haanas>.

decisions by consensus, with a special provision for rare cases of disagreement. Questions of actual land ownership are held in abeyance.

Most models implicitly assume that it is the Indigenous grouping that is anomalous and requires special provisions, exemptions, or agreements, while settler governances continue as always. A tenth model takes a different approach: to reform settler governance. A settler government that has gained authority through land dispossession and genocide cannot be presumed to stand above correction. John Borrows, an eminent professor of law and a member of the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, has recommended strengthening the place of Indigenous laws in the Canadian judicial system.⁶⁰ Indigenous legal traditions, which are sophisticated and robust, are already recognized by Canada in limited ways, as in the “reserved rights” of Indigenous peoples in matters not subject to treaty. It may seem complex for courts to have to work with different legal traditions, but, as Borrows points out, Canada has been doing exactly that since the Quebec Act of 1774, which recognized both English common law and French civil law. These two legal traditions sometimes function separately and sometimes are harmonized. Borrows argues that it will be virtually impossible to address many issues of Indigenous justice, such as land tenure, within European law systems alone. On this analogy, the ACC should thoroughly re-think and reform its constitution and canons, taking into account the jurisprudential and legal wisdom of its Indigenous members.

An eleventh model for Indigenous Anglican self-determination is to interpret it spiritually, shifting attention from governance to discipleship. This substantial “change in direction,” as Macdonald has called it, was broached at General Synod in 2016. Indigenous Anglicans would no longer struggle to change colonial institutional structures; they would focus instead on cultural matters, Christian community formation, leadership training, and ministry. According to a later elaboration, Indigenous Anglicans would maintain their “citizenship” in the settler-dominated

⁶⁰ John Borrows, *Canada's Indigenous Constitution* (Toronto, 2010).

church, but add a second citizenship under Canon XXII, roughly analogous to Anglicans in the military who come under two jurisdictions, the military ordinariate and a geographical diocese.⁶¹ This spiritualizing approach was further developed for Sacred Circle in 2018, where it was summarized in the phrase “our spirituality is our governance.” The spirituality envisioned was a “gospel-based discipleship” such as had recently been promoted by the World Council of Churches Conference on World Mission and Evangelism in Arusha. Self-determination would be a Christian life lived out in very close-knit local Indigenous communities focused on Scripture and prayer. The vocabulary of authority and jurisdiction, which formerly had seemed to many Indigenous Anglicans to be essential to forestall future betrayals by settler leaders, was now largely rejected as Eurocentric and institutional.⁶²

Whatever model of self-determination might be chosen, its prospects will be strengthened if financial self-sufficiency can be developed, as UNDRIP recognized. Colonialism has made self-sufficiency elusive for Indigenous peoples by displacing them from their lands, restraining their rights, seriously damaging their cultures, and until the 1960s formally excluding them from many economic relationships. In the ACC in particular, Indigenous ministries depend primarily on annual operating budgets decided by settler-dominated governances, and allocations to Indigenous ministries are so minimal that relatively few Indigenous clergy receive stipends or salaries.

Are there possible systemic solutions? In 2018 the ACC appointed a small group called the Jubilee Commission to find a funding base

⁶¹ André Forget, “Indigenous Leaders outline features of ‘confederacy’,” *Anglican Journal*, 10 July 2016, <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/indigenous-anglicans-outline-features-of-indigenous-confederacy/>; Tali Folkins, “CoGS ponders finances, structure of Indigenous church,” *Anglican Journal*, 29 June 2017, <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/cogs-ponders-finances-structure-indigenous-church/>.

⁶² Tali Folkins, “Sacred Circle ponders principles of future Indigenous Church,” *Anglican Journal* (8 August 2018), at <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/sacred-circle-ponders-principles-of-future-indigenous-church/>; [Mark Macdonald,] “An Indigenous Spiritual Movement: Becoming What God Intends us to be” [2018], typescript at <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/An-Indigenous-Spiritual-Movement-Becoming-What-God-Intends-us-to-be.pdf>.

for Indigenous ministries.⁶³ Its direction is unclear at this writing. It may exercise a certain forensic function, since there is a suspicion that in the past some funding (perhaps *much* funding) intended for Indigenous missions and ministries has been diverted to other uses. It may also consider ways to give Indigenous Anglicans restitution for their loss of land, such as a tithe on sales of church property to support Indigenous ministries. There are some parallels and precedents. In May 2019 the synod of the Anglican diocese of New Westminster (the lower mainland of British Columbia centred on Vancouver) approved a resolution to direct five percent of the proceeds of the sale of land and buildings to “the Indigenous Nations and communities who are the ancestral caretakers of that land for use as they see fit,” plus another five percent to the Native ministries of the dioceses and the national church.⁶⁴ (Canadian bishops are not required to accept the resolutions of synod; the bishop of New Westminster has rejected this one.) Still another option is the repatriation of land that the ACC has acquired from Indigenous peoples, not always in the most transparent and consultative way. In May 2019 the United Church of Canada transferred to the Lenape people of the Eleunaapeewi Lahkeewiit (Delaware) nation about ten acres of their ancestral land in Bothwell, Ontario, which it had received as a gift decades earlier.⁶⁵ Since all of Canada is the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples, settler acts of restitution might seem reasonable and just. But settlers typically regard violations of Indigenous land rights as events in past history that have been normalized by the passage of time.

⁶³ Tali Folkins, “CoGS to appoint commission to find ‘funding base’ for Indigenous church,” *Anglican Journal* (3 June 2018), <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/cogs-to-appoint-commission-to-find-funds-for-indigenous-church/>; Tali Folkins, “Macdonald calls for discipleship as heart of future Indigenous church,” *Anglican Journal* (9 August 2018), <https://www.anglicanjournal.com/macdonald-calls-for-discipleship-as-heart-of-future-indigenous-church/>;

⁶⁴ Douglas Todd, “Metro Vancouver Anglicans to direct millions to Indigenous efforts,” *Vancouver Sun* (3 June 2019), <https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/metro-vancouver-anglicans-to-direct-millions-to-indigenous-efforts>.

⁶⁵ “The United Church of Canada returns land to Delaware Nation,” CBC News, 10 May 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/united-church-truth-reconciliation-1.5130363>.

CONCLUSION

Before 1967 Indigenous Anglicans in Canada were virtually outsiders in a settler Church. Today they are an influential, impassioned, faithful, and creative constituency, served by wise and well respected leaders, ministering to one another in local communities, carrying on effective programming in Indigenous education, discipleship, ministries, communications, and healing, and inviting many non-Indigenous Anglicans into their histories, cultures, and spiritualities.

This progressive historical trajectory has not, however, reached the elusive goal that generated so much apparent enthusiasm at General Synod in 2010: a self-determining Indigenous community within the ACC, an ecclesiastical adaptation of UNDRIP. The dominant theological, constitutional, canonical, and administrative ethos of the ACC remains Eurocentric, obstructing the stated desire of Indigenous Anglicans to govern themselves as “the church in our own homelands and among our own peoples, . . . structured by our own understanding of what it means to be nations and peoples.”⁶⁶

Why has the goal of Indigenous self-determination remained elusive? Obviously it has not been fully embraced by settler Anglicans, who dominate denominational governance; but why not? It may simply be that many settler Anglicans have not engaged with the issues. For that purpose, the ACC has appointed a reconciliation animator to promote conversation and mutual understanding among Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.⁶⁷ But many settler Anglicans are actually resistant to change or worry about creating problematic precedents. Many no doubt are attached to colonial assumptions and privileges. Some may be reacting negatively to “compassion fatigue” and “guilt-tripping” with issues of Indigenous justice. Some worry about possible financial costs to the church. Some resent Indigenous Anglicans for allegedly

⁶⁶ Mark Macdonald, “A Concept Paper on Indigenous Governance” (ACC, 2011), <https://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/A-Concept-Paper-on-Indigenous-Governance-February-2011.pdf>.

⁶⁷ ACC, General Synod Communications, “General Synod Appoints Reconciliation Animator” (3 April 2017), <https://www.anglican.ca/news/general-synod-appoints-reconciliation-animator/30018270/>.

braking progress in other justice issues, such as reforming the heteronormativity of the ACC's marriage canon.

Moreover, it is not at all clear how the goal of Indigenous self-determination is to be attained. There are many alternative, sometimes dramatically conflicting models. Is there one solution that can win broad support because it succeeds in balancing church unity with Indigenous self-determination, establishing financial sustainability for the Indigenous church, finding space for bicultural individuals and mixed communities, recognizing Indigenous nationhood as a theologically crucial category while also affirming the strategic value of Indigenous alliances, and promoting interchange and mutual understanding among Indigenous and non-Indigenous Anglicans? If there is, it has not yet been found.