

The Exploration Survey The Global Diaspora Hub Toronto

Introduction

This paper presents findings from an exploration survey of the Global Diaspora Hub Toronto. The exploration survey has been conducted in February 2019 as an initial process of the Global Diaspora Hub. The aim of the survey was to listen to Christian leaders about the needs and possibilities of a peace and reconciliation movement: we asked Christian leaders in Canada to identify – 1) pressing reconciliation issues in Canada, 2) agencies and individuals that are currently involved in the peacemaking work, and 3) the further needs and resources for the peacemaking work. (For the survey questions, see ‘the Appendix – The Survey Questionnaire.’)

The exploration survey was distributed to Christian leaders who are active in churches, mission organizations, educational institutions, diaspora or networking ministries. These Christian leaders were contacted through working relationships and partnerships, especially through the leadership committee of the Global Diaspora Hub. The institutions that bridged connections for the survey include Tyndale Intercultural Ministry Centre, Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, Mission GTA, Canadian Bible Society, Lausanne Canada, and Multiply.

About 80 Christian leaders were contacted for the survey. 35 leaders of them replied to the survey email, and 25 leaders filled out the survey. The survey findings are summarized in the following pages.

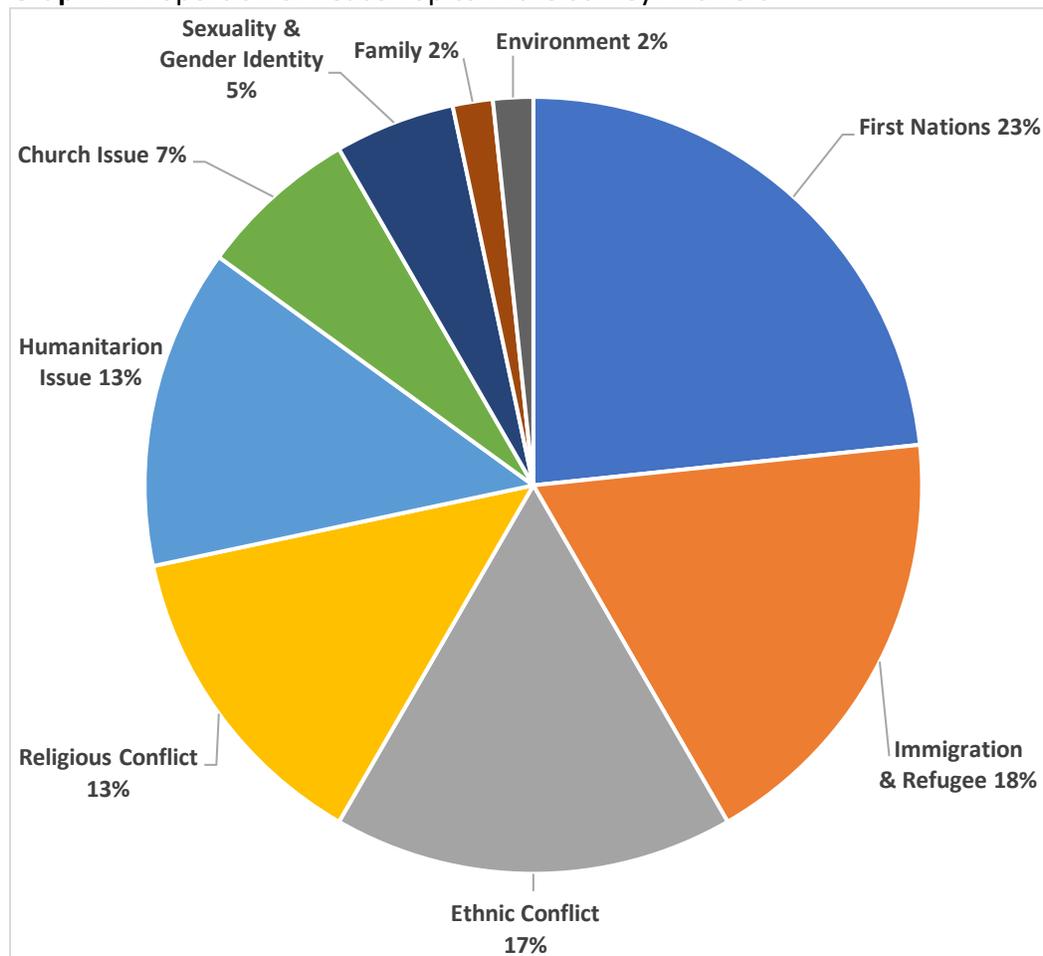
Survey Findings

a) Key Issues of Peace and Reconciliation in Canada

The respondents of the survey are Christian leaders from various ministries and backgrounds. Some of the respondents are experienced and focused in the field of peace and reconciliation, while other respondents are less directly involved in the peacemaking work. Each Christian leader that have answered listed '3 to 4 key issues of peace and reconciliation' in Canadian context at present.

The answers of the Christian leaders pointed to topics such as the First Nations issues (Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and the well-being of the Indigenous Communities), Immigration and Refugee related issues, Ethnic and Religious conflicts, Violence and safety of people, Divisions within the church – especially in diaspora church, and the split around the human sexuality and gender identity issue. A pie graph below represents the proportion of each peace topic among all the identified topics.

Graph 1: Proportion of Peace Topics in the Survey Answers



Note: This pie graph shows the relative portion of peace topics among the survey answers. For example, the biggest pie in the graph, 'First Nations 23%,' means that peace issues related to the First Nations take up 23% of all the peace issues listed and identified by the respondents.

a) Key Issues of Peace and Reconciliation in Canada

The answers of Christians leaders include key words, key phrases, and details about the Canadian peace and reconciliation issues. The table in the below highlights some of the answers in the survey. (For original and complete answers, see ‘the Appendix – Table 5.’)

It is clear that the responses of Christian leaders have identified common and crucial topics. The key words related to the First Nations, Immigration, Refugee, Ethnicity, and Religion appear commonly across the survey responses. Collected together, the survey answers give a broad view of the crucial peace and reconciliation issues in the Canadian context.

Also, the survey responses reveal the intimate knowledge of the survey participants on the realities and needs of peacemaking in Canada. For example, the lack of clean water and nutritious food in Indigenous communities, ethnic hostility between some newcomer groups, or public stigma on refugees are specific and detailed information. This intimate knowledge would have been acquired from years of experience, ministries, research, and prayerful engagements in the communities.

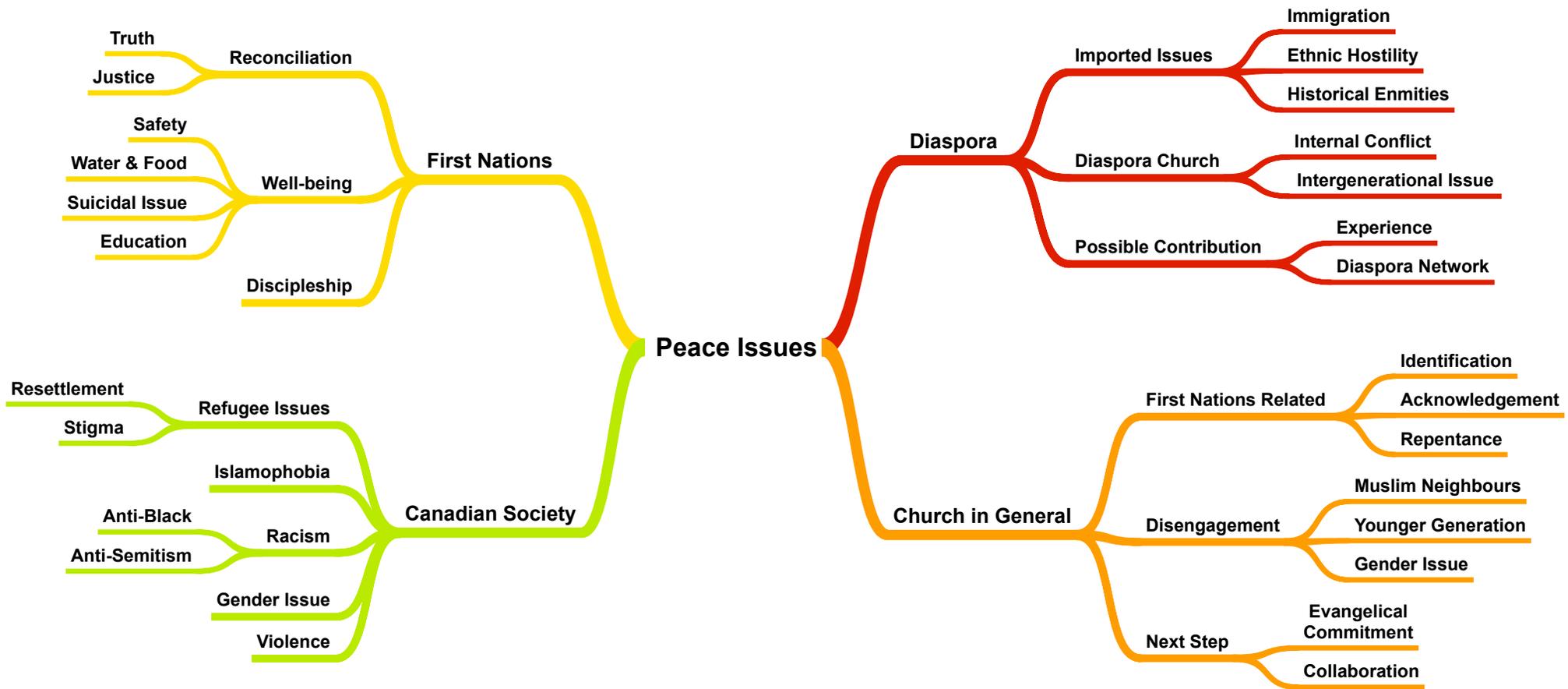
Table 1: Highlighted Answers about the Canadian Peace and Reconciliation Issues

Topics	Related Answers in the Survey
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations reconciliation • Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples • Right relationship with the Indigenous communities • Indigenous justice • 81 Indigenous communities still do not have clean drinking water coming out of their taps. Second issue is the lack of nutritious food that is affordable. • Suicide is the ten times higher than the national average. • Healing of past historical trauma, forgiveness, partnership • Murdered missing Indigenous women, youth, and men • Disparity in education allocations • Indigenous children should have access to education that is on par with main stream schools.
Immigration and Refugee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration & cultural identity • Migration and hospitality • Poverty in some ethnic communities • Understanding and reconciliation between newcomers, particularly between former enemies • Refugees fleeing from war zones like Christians and Yazidis • Refugee rights / Refugee resettlement • How to help public to eradicate negative stigma on refugees?
Ethnic Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French-English cultures • Racism / Ethnic Prejudice • Systemic racism – White privilege • Issues related to anti-black racism • Racial reconciliation

Religious Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of Muslims / Islamophobia • Fears regarding violent extremism • Creating Civility among the growing and diverse world religions in Canada • Christian – Muslim relationship beyond rhetoric • Healthy interfaith dialogue
Humanitarian Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence against humanity – human trafficking, domestic violence, child/senior neglect and endangerment • Youth violence in urban centres • Gang issues • Community building
Church Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral and spiritual commitment to peace • Equipping leaders to handle diverse theology • The majority Canadian church is disconnected from Muslim and First Nations. • Identifying and strengthening next generation non-white leaders • Some Diaspora churches feel marginalized from broader Canadian church. • Helping Diaspora make a positive contribution to P & R back in their home country • What about P & R between 1st & 2 & 3 generations – helping to create dialogue so the exodus of younger leaders can be addressed
Sexuality and Gender Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues related to sexual and gender identities • Helping churches navigate the changing Canadian context when dealing with controversial issues like LGBT community • LGBTQ reconciliation within the church
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and children relation • Fatherless in families
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change

Another way of looking at the Canadian peace issues – found in the survey – is to categorize them by ‘Who’ are related to the issues. A mind map in the next page categorize four main groups that are involved in the Canadian peace issues; they are “First Nations,” “Canadian Society,” “Diaspora,” and “Church in General.” Branches of the map represent the peace matters that are directly related to each group.

The mind map (in the following page) gives us a glimpse of Canada in the perspective of peace and reconciliation: we see that these four groups have different needs and hurts concerning peace and reconciliation. What we notice in the map is not only problems that each group bring in and add up in Canada. It is also important to recognize that these groups are *gathered together*. The multicultural context in the view of peacemaking means that different groups – with their inter-related peace issues and history – are living together. The peace issues in this land cannot be dealt with and solved separately. They are complex and inter-connected. The four groups named in the map need to come together for the purpose of peacebuilding. There need to be conversation with the other, an increased awareness, sharing of resources, and cooperation.



b) Agencies and Individuals Involved in the Peacebuilding Work

The survey respondents have named organizations, educational institutions, and individuals that have been already working in the field of peace and reconciliation. The answers in the table 2 includes the institutions and people that are active in the field of peace and reconciliation. However, this table does not fully represent the current situation. It will take additional surveys or research to find out more that have been doing wonderful works of peacebuilding in Canada.

Table 2: Agencies and Individuals Involved in the Peacebuilding Work

Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North American Institutes for Indigenous Theological Studies (NAIITS) • Singing Waters • Indigenous Youth Employment and Training (NPAAMB) • Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) • Six Nations Polytechnic Institute • Singing Waters / Amplify Peace • Project Ploughshares / Citizens for Public Justice • Reconciliation Canada / Promise Keepers Canada • The Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network • Promise Keepers Canada • Truth and Reconciliation Commission • Institute for Religion, Peace & Justice • The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada • Aboriginal Youth Organization • Peace and Conflict Studies Association of Canada (PACS Canada) • KAIROS Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives (KAIROS Canada) • Market Place Solution Inc. / Glaude Project / Peace Commission • C2C / Multiply / InterVarsity Canada • The Jesus Network / TIM Centre • Wycliffe Canada / Envision Canada / Toronto City Mission • Federal Government / Power to Change
Education Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Paul's University in Ottawa • Canadian Mennonite University • Conrad Grabel University College • Renison University College • Royal Roads University • Tyndale University College and Seminary
Church and Denomination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Council of Churches (and its peace research institute) • Mennonite Organizations / Mennonite Central Committee • The Salvation Army • Christian Reformed Church • Christian and Missionary Alliance • The Anglican Church of Canada • The United Church of Canada • The Meeting House

Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter Noteboom, Canadian Council of Churches • Jonathan Schmidt • Terry LeBlanc • Derek Parenteau • Murray Sinclair (Justice Sinclair)
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c) Activities of Peacemakers in Canada

The survey respondents listed activities currently being implemented by the peacemakers in Canada.

Table 3: Current Activities in the field of peace and reconciliation

Category	Activities
Education and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Programs • Publish books • Educational Resources • Research • Theological Reflection
Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry Initiatives • Prayer and Spiritual Practices / Discipleship • Developing Resources • Support programs
Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with Systemic racism; First Nations Issues • Fundraising • Social Media Advocacy • Arts and Theater Productions • Publish Books • Lobbying Government • Policy Revamping
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forums • Conferences • Consultations • Seminars
Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue and Communication • Creating Space for Encounter • Social Aid • Build Friendship

Note: The activities were answered in the level of keywords. The details of the activities were not identified by this survey.

d) Further Needs and Possibilities of a Peace and Reconciliation Movement

Christian Leaders also answered about how a peacebuilding movement might assist their ministries. They specified how a peace and reconciliation movement could enrich the communal life and the witness of Canadian Church. The possible contribution of a peace and reconciliation movement include education, training, resource, and ministry partnership to work on the tangible and practical issues. The table 4 below summarizes these answers.

Table 4: Possible contribution of a peace and reconciliation movement

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from the broader church what is being done • Increasing awareness of issues in the neighborhood that require peace and reconciliation • Trainings for practical and tangible involvement • Removing fear of Muslim people • Understanding refugee realities and getting rid of misconceptions and fears of refugees • Providing resource and training • Evangelical commitments and theological reflection on peace and reconciliation • Providing tools for response • Empowering pastors and leaders who deal with cultural and theological differences • Repentance and acknowledgement of the First Nations realities • Partnership and bridgebuilding between peace-making organizations • Raising awareness about peace and reconciliation among Evangelicals • Finding out the need of fellowship among diaspora leaders • Working on the marginalization of black churches • Collaboration with like-minded groups • Identification and repentance should come first. • Working together to form a team that would take healing seminars among the First Nations people • Awareness and biblical calls to the ministry of reconciliation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most Canadian Christians do not feel its need. ○ Reconciliation is a rarely a part of discourse in the Canadian church. • Creating a space 1) to celebrate diversity, 2) to innovate collaboration, 3) to transform conflict, 4) to embrace forgiveness and reconciliation, and 5) to serve together. • Interaction among different groups and ethnic people • Seeking healthy community life in a multicultural setting • An integral part of refugee ministry and trauma healing • Sharing resources and training on how to navigate reconciliation efforts with indigenous neighbours, refugees, the LGBTQ community, and in racial issues • Establishing prayer ministry • Immigrant families learn Canadian culture, a new environment of raising their children • An understanding of historical context of peace and reconciliation |
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Summary

From the exploration survey, we learn about the status and possibilities of a peacemaking movement in Canada; the answers of Christian leaders help us discern crucial issues and what need to be done additionally in the field of peace and reconciliation. Having listened to Christian leaders of various engagements and backgrounds, we get a better understanding and a renewed call for peace and reconciliation in the Canadian context:

Seeing Peacebuilding as Mission

We recognize the urgent needs of peacemaking in our midst; we see deep and particular pain of our neighbors and of each other. In the situation of divisions and destructive conflicts, the peacebuilding should be an integral part of the Church's missionary witness. In this regard, the Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 51, "Reconciliation as the Mission of God" states as follows: "The alienation of divided peoples and the suffering of the afflicted cries out from our world's brokenness. These conditions call the church to listen to the pain and to God, to lament the divisions, to repent and forgive where necessary, and to be transformed as agents of healing, Christian witness and positive change."

The hurts and divisions in this land are exactly where the Church is called to engage in mission. Canadian Church is called to preach the gospel among those who have been wronged and marginalized, the uprooted and needy, the discriminated and ashamed, and those who long for justice and reparation. When the Church comes along these people and follow the lead of God, God Himself will make known the power of the Gospel and the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. We as the Church will learn and experience that the hope for peace rests on Jesus Christ, who actualized peace through his cross.

Seeing Each Other as Teachers and Partners

One African Christian boy, who immigrated to Canada from his home country that suffered civil war and ethnic violence, described as follows God he had experienced: "God stops war. God stops stealing. God is peaceful. And He is beautiful." It is by collective wisdom that we gain a better understanding of the peace of God. In this sense, the multicultural context of Canada is a blessing as we can learn from brothers and sisters of different culture and history; the insights and wisdom of the Global Church are present, here in Canada.

Reviewing the survey answers around the peace issues we see how we could complement each other in the understanding and practice of peacebuilding. In Canada God has brought together Christian communities from various backgrounds – the First Nations, European Canadians, and various Diaspora and Majority world peoples. We might have our own hurts and issues of divisions. But, we also have our unique strengths, culture and experiences. When we come together with a posture of learning and a mindset of collaboration, we will acquire a greater knowledge of the peace of God and how God wants to use Canadian churches, mission organizations, and research institutions at this time.

Seeing that We are Called to Work Together

God desires us to be united and to work together. “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. (1 Cor. 12:12 ESV) The peacebuilding is an important area where Christians in Canada can experience the unity of the Church and the productivity of collaboration.

The practice of peacebuilding cannot be done alone. Peace and reconciliation need to address complex causes and different parties related. It is also a long and costly process. We need each other for support and collective efforts. Also, a peace and reconciliation movement can take place only on the basis of relationship and trust. We need safety and community in order to share our experience and thoughts, and to work together.

At the Global Diaspora Hub Toronto, it is our goal to facilitate conversation and support collaboration for the peacemaking in Canada. We desire to contribute to the training, research, and practice of peacebuilding. We want to see churches, mission organizations, and educational institutions work together for the ministry of reconciliation: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us...” (2 Cor. 5:17-20a)

Appendix

Table 5: Key Issues of Peace and Reconciliation in Canada (Original Answers)

Peace Topics	Related Answers in the Survey
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal issues, First Nations, First Nations people, • Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, • Indigenous peoples • Indigenous versus Settler • First Nations reconciliation • Right relationship with the Indigenous communities (vis a vis The Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It is important for newcomer communities to understand the history and develop partnership with Indigenous communities.) • Indigenous justice • As it pertains to the First Peoples, 81 Indigenous communities still do not have clean drinking water coming out of their taps. Second issues is the lack of nutritious food that is affordable. A head of iceberg lettuce costs \$7.09 in the norther communities so cheap junk food is purchased to fill hungry children. Suicide is ten times the national average due to the above reasons which won't go away until food, water and self-determination are common place. • Healing of past historical trauma, forgiveness, partnership • Building understanding and reconciliation between euro Canadians and 1) First Nations and 2) Immigrants. • Cultural safety is a must. Systemic racism must be addressed. • Murdered missing Indigenous women, youth, and men • Disparity in education allocations • Indigenous children should have access to education that is on pare with main stream schools. • Recognition and utilization of Indigenous champions • Indigenous and non-Indigenous reconciliation • Solving challenges currently faced by aboriginal in Canada • First Nation issues
Immigration and Refugee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration & cultural identity – Issues of segmented assimilation, intergenerational challenges, societal response and attitude • New immigrants • Refugee issues • Refugees fleeing from war zones like Christians and Yazidis • Refugee rights • Poverty in some ethnic communities • Immigration and Social Peace • Migration and hospitality • Understanding and reconciliation between newcomers particularly between historic, ethnic, and national enemies. • Immigration issues • Intercultural reconciliation for newcomers who have serious tribal discord in their history

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refugee resettlement • How to help public to eradicate negative stigma on refugees? • Refugees
Ethnic Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French-English cultures • Racism • Ethnic Prejudice • Systemic racism – White privilege • Issues related to anti-black racism • Racial reconciliation
Religious Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fear of Muslims • Christians and Jews • Islamophobia • Fears regarding violent extremism • Creating Civility among the growing and diverse world religions in Canada • Christian – Muslim relationship beyond rhetoric • Healthy interfaith dialogue
Humanitarian Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence against humanity – human trafficking, domestic violence, child/senior neglect and endangerment • Youth violence in urban centres • Nuclear Disarmament • Land and food systems • Community building • Gang issues • Workplace harassments
Church Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Among denominations • Moral and spiritual commitment to peace • Equipping leaders to handle diverse theology; developing a culture of multiethnicity; identifying and strengthening next generation non-white leaders • Some Diaspora churches feel marginalized from broader Canadian church. • Helping Diaspora make a positive contribution to P & R back in their home country • What about P & R between 1st & 2 & 3 generations – helping to create dialogue so the exodus of younger leaders can be addressed • The majority church is disconnected with Muslim and First Nations communities. • Godly conflict resolution • How to install the Gospel in a full swing back to Canadian society? For only the power of the Gospel can bring in genuine peace & reconciliation.
Sexuality and Gender Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human sexuality – homosexuality, gender identity, gender role • Helping churches navigate the changing Canadian context when dealing with controversial issues like LGBT community • Issues related to sexual and gender identities • LGBTQ reconciliation within the church
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and children relation • Fatherless in families
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Change

The Survey Questionnaire

Exploration Survey around the topic of peace and reconciliation

This survey is a joint activity of the Tyndale Intercultural Ministry Centre of Tyndale Seminary (TIM) and Peace and Reconciliation Network of the World Evangelical Alliance (PRN).

Why are we doing it?

- In short: Who is doing what, and what is needed still?
- TIM and PRN are developing a Diaspora Missiology Hub located in Toronto, Canada, with a focus on peace and reconciliation. By reaching out to Christians in Toronto and beyond, the Hub strives to equip the church for ministry in our Canadian multicultural urban centres. This survey shall increase the insight into the areas of work going on already, further needs and wants to help building up a network of people of interest and/or expertise. The findings will be presented at a consultation in spring where a summary will be presented and further steps for developing teaching and training courses, material and resources will be discussed.

How will we use the data?

- TIM and PRN will use the data for the purpose described above. Personal contact information if shared by you will not be used other than contacting you for feedback or invitation for the consultation.

[Survey Questions]:

1. Please share what you see as the 3-4 top issues or topics related to peace & reconciliation in the Canadian context at the moment?
2. To your knowledge which individuals, organizations, colleges etc. are already working in the field of peace & reconciliation in Canada?
3. What are these groups actually doing in regard to peace & reconciliation? Research, Resources, training, websites etc.
4. In your ministry context what might be some ways a peace & reconciliation movement might be of assistance? i.e. what might be some felt needs be in regard to peace & reconciliation and how might we be of assistance?
5. If we were to gather 30 leaders in Canada for a peace and reconciliation round-table discussion who would be 3-4 networkers or leaders you would recommend? What would each person bring to the discussion of peace & reconciliation?
6. Which organization do you affiliate primarily?
7. Is there anything you would like to add that hasn't been asked surrounding peace and reconciliation?