

Acknowledging Indigenous Territory in Church



This guide is intended to assist congregations and courts of the church to incorporate an acknowledgement of traditional Indigenous territory into worship, meetings and other gatherings. Acknowledging the territory where we gather and the people who called it home for thousands of years is one way to live out [The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Confession](#) to Aboriginal peoples (1994). (Located at <http://tinyurl.com/mv64qva>)

Examples

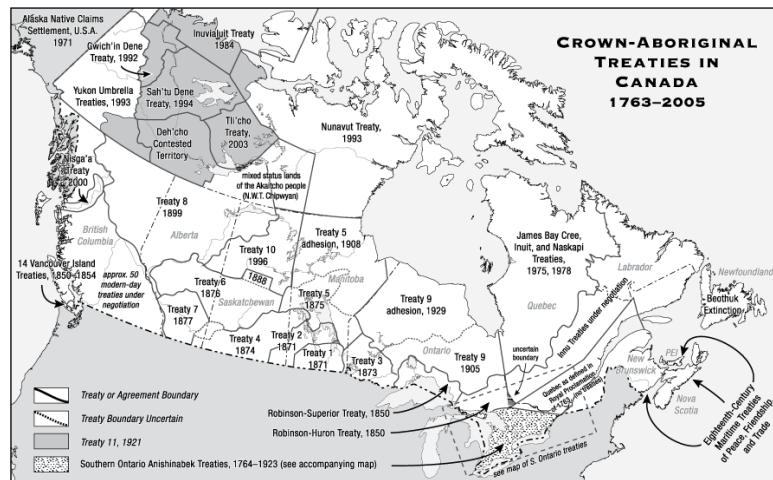
Where	Territorial Acknowledgement	How
The Presbyterian Church in Canada General Assembly, York University, Toronto	We are respectfully mindful of the fact that we have been on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit, and we extend our greetings and gratitude to Chief R. Stacey Laforme.	Spoken at the 142nd General Assembly, June 2016.
Church of Saint David, Halifax	Gathering on the traditional territory of the M'ikmaq people.	Written in the weekly bulletin.
Meeting at the National office in Toronto	We acknowledge that we meet on the traditional lands of the Mississauga. We acknowledge this territory's significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it and whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today.	Spoken at the Life & Mission Agency Committee meeting, March 2016.
Crieff Hills Conference Centre, Puslinch	We acknowledge that the land we are meeting on was inhabited by the Attawandaron before Europeans settled here. We also acknowledge other First Nations neighbors including the Haudenosaunee, the Anishnaabe and the Métis nation.	A suggested way to open meetings at the Centre.

Territorial Acknowledgements

These resources can help you find information on which treaty and/or Indigenous communities to acknowledge where your church or meeting is:

- aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100028574/1100100028578
- native-land.ca
- The nearest Friendship Centre
- The Indigenous or Aboriginal Student Centre at a university or college in your community

Acknowledgements may be printed, spoken, projected, or posted on your website. You might also include the recognition on a sign at the entrance of the building.



(<http://www.mediaindigena.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/treaties.png>)

Definitions

Aboriginal and Indigenous people are First Nations (Indians), Inuit and Métis.

First Nations are Indigenous peoples who are neither Métis nor Inuit. This term is generally used to replace the term Indian. First Nation can refer to a band, a reserve-based community, or a larger tribal grouping. There are 634 First Nation governments or bands across Canada.

Inuit are the Indigenous people of the north (from the Arctic land and waters from the Mackenzie Delta in the west to the Labrador coast in the east and from the Hudson's Bay coast to the islands of the High Arctic).

Métis are recognized Indigenous people who have both First Nation and European ancestry.

Treaties are nation-to-nation agreements between Aboriginal people and the Canadian government (Crown). Treaties set out responsibilities, agreements and benefits for both. There are 70 recognized treaties in Canada. However, some First Nations never negotiated treaty so the land remains unceded (not surrendered).

Justice Ministries
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
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Resource references from the United Church of Canada, with gratitude for their assistance.