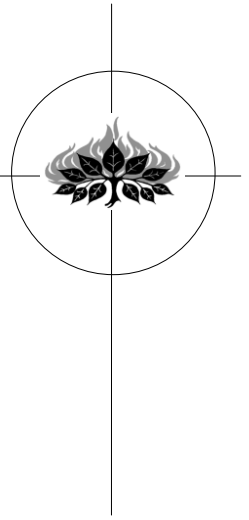


The Presbyterian Church in Canada L'Église presbytérienne au Canada



MODERATOR OF THE 140TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
The Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Farris, B.A., D.Min., Th.M., Ph.D.

Friday, January 23, 2015

The Hon. Bernard Valcourt,
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada,
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Valcourt,

I bring greetings from the 140th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada which met May 30 - June 2, 2014 in Waterloo, Ontario.

The General Assembly considered a report on the state of affordable, adequate housing in Canada and the impact and importance of housing for people's health and well-being.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is aware of the housing challenges facing many First Nations on reserves and many Inuit people.

The church acknowledges the \$1.3 billion allocated by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to First Nations housing for the 2006-2007 to 2011-2012 period, plus funding from Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation.

The housing crisis that affects so many Aboriginal people is a long standing one and will not be solved in the short term. It will require close cooperation involving First Nations, the Inuit, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, and the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation.

The Senate Committee on Aboriginal People is currently studying on-reserve housing conditions. This work will include fact finding missions to remote and fly-in communities. The report, we trust, will offer helpful recommendations to address the housing needs in many First Nations communities.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is not involved in housing programs on First Nations reserves, but through its Winnipeg Inner City Missions' *Anishinabe Place of Hope*, 20 transitional units are provided for mainly Aboriginal people between the ages of 30 and 55 who have completed a treatment program.

The journey of truth and reconciliation is a journey that invites all Canadians to chart a new course in the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. An

Clerks of Assembly: The Rev. Stephen Kendall, The Rev. Donald Muir, The Rev. Dr. Tony Plomp

important dimension to this journey is providing clean and safe housing for First Nations on reserves and for Inuit people.

Acknowledging the scale of the challenges, our General Assembly would like to inquire about the AANDC's plans to cooperate with the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation over the next three to five years to improve the quality of current housing stock and to build new homes on First Nations reserves and in Inuit communities.

I look forward to your response. Rest assured of our continuing prayers for your work and your wellbeing.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Farris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S' and a stylized 'F'.

The Rev. Dr. Stephen C. Farris,
Moderator,
140th General Assembly,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

CC: Jean Crowder, NDP critic on Aboriginal Affairs, Hon. Carolyn Bennett Liberal Party critic on Aboriginal Affairs, M. Mario Beaulieu, Chef du Bloc Québécois, Ms. Elizabeth May, Green Party leader.