



ELCIC Resolution on the Doctrine of Discovery

Motion passed at the 2015 ELCIC National Convention

That the ELCIC in convention repudiates and renounces the Doctrine of Discovery as fundamentally opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ and our understanding of the inherent rights that individuals and peoples have received from God.

We confess that this doctrine encourages patterns of domination and oppression that continue to afflict Indigenous peoples today. The ways of life, identities, well-being and very existence of Indigenous people are threatened by the continuing effects of colonization and national policies, regulations and laws that attempt to force Indigenous peoples to assimilate into the cultures of dominant societies.

We confess that this doctrine encourages patterns of domination and oppression of land and environment which continue today. These patterns discourage healthy and holistic relationships with God's whole creation. The doctrine continues to inform national policies, regulations and laws thereby becoming a detriment to addressing urgent environmental challenges such as climate justice, responsible resource extraction and establishing sustainable lifestyles.

Liberated by God's Grace, we will:

- Pray for wisdom, humility, courage and God's guidance towards action as we live into the reality that salvation is not for sale, human beings are not for sale and creation is not for sale.
- Encourage all members and congregations to reflect upon our own national and church history, and seek greater understanding of the issues facing Indigenous peoples.
- Walk with Indigenous peoples in their ongoing efforts to exercise their inherent sovereignty and fundamental human rights and renew our commitment to truth, reconciliation and equity.
- Reflect on how the church's policies and programs have been impacted by the Doctrine of Discovery, and work toward transforming policies, program and structures in order to promote equality, self-determination and respect for the land.
- Urge governments to transform legal structures and policies based on the Doctrine of Discovery and dominance, so as better to empower and enable Indigenous peoples to identify their own aspirations and issues of concern.
- Support the continued development of theological reflections by Indigenous peoples which promote indigenous visions of full, good and abundant life and which strengthen their own spiritual and theological reflections.

This convention asks the National Bishop to:

- Communicate this action to our key ecumenical partners, including The Lutheran World Federation, the World Council of Churches, the Canadian Council of Churches, our Full Communion partner: the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Episcopal Church.
- Communicate this action to key national aboriginal organizations, including the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council.
- Communicate this action to the United Nations, the Government of Canada, provincial and territorial governments.