

Murray Sinclair

The United Church mourns the passing of Hon. Murray Sinclair



(Murray Sinclair photo by Sara Stratton)

The United Church of Canada marks with deep respect the passing of The Honourable Murray Sinclair. We give thanks for his life, for his service to Indigenous communities across Turtle Island, and for the challenge he put to Canada as a whole.

Senator Sinclair was dedicated to achieving justice for Indigenous peoples. He did this as a mentor, as a lawyer and judge, and as the Chief Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. It was as Commissioner that The United Church of Canada knew him best. He pushed us to tell the truth, and to act with integrity in the TRC process. In so doing, he helped to shape the vision of the

reconciling and anti-racist church that we aspire to be.

As Commissioner, he heard many difficult things. This must have been a heavy load, even for a man with such broad shoulders. He also spoke very clearly and directly of the obligations that Canada, the churches, and other institutions owe to those we have harmed, and continue to harm. He was encouraging of the difficult work of reconciliation, saying most notably, “We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you the path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing.”

As Murray Sinclair now journeys back to the Creator, we send prayers for him, his children, and all his family. We include in those prayers our intention, as individuals and as a church, to continue the path he has marked out for us.

Statement from the family of Murray Sinclair on his passing - November 4, 2024

TREATY 1 TERRITORY/WINNIPEG — Peacefully and surrounded by love, The Honourable Murray Sinclair passed away early this morning, Monday, November 4, 2024. Mazina Giizhik (the One Who Speaks of Pictures in the Sky) committed his life in service to the people: creating change, revealing truth, and leading with fairness throughout his career.

The impact of our dad’s work reached far across the country and the world. From Residential School Survivors, to law students, to those who sat across from him in a courtroom, he was always known as an exceptional listener who treated everyone with dignity and respect. We know that stories of his kindness, generosity, and fairness will circulate for generations to come.

In lieu of flowers, and if you are able, please donate to The Murray Sinclair Memorial Fund at The Winnipeg Foundation. Our dad loved and supported many community organizations and your funds will prioritize Indigenous women, children, families, and Survivors.

For those who wish to pay their respects, a sacred fire to help guide Mazina Giizhik's spirit home has been lit outside the Manitoba Legislative Building. Everyone is welcome to visit his sacred fire to make an offering of tobacco and send him your best wishes. Out of respect for his journey for the next few days, the family respectfully asks others across the country to please DO NOT light any other fires for him.

Additional information about public ceremonial events will be available in the coming days.

Our family asks for privacy in this time of mourning.

Sunday memorial at downtown Winnipeg arena

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/murray-sinclair-residential-school-survivors-remember-1.7374669>

A memorial will be held this weekend at the Canada Life Centre, organized by the federal and Manitoba governments. It will be held at the downtown arena on Sunday, with a ceremony slated to begin at 2 p.m.

A public visitation will also be held on Wednesday, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Caboto Centre on Wilkes Avenue in Winnipeg.

Starting Wednesday, a book of condolences will be placed at the base of the grand staircase in the Manitoba Legislative Building, which members of the public can sign through to Sunday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The flags at the Manitoba Legislative Building and Parliament in Ottawa will remain at half-mast until after the Sunday memorial.