

Highlights and Observations from JTRAG Survey March to May 2025

Background and Process

- Michael Cooke and Anya Hageman led the design of the survey with input from all JTRAG members
- Survey promoted on e-news in April and May 2025
- Each congregation promoted the survey through their regular channels and provided time in one (or two) of their services in May to respond to the survey.
- 202 people participated: 51 (25%) completed online surveys. 151 (75%) completed paper surveys, which Michael Cooke and Juliet Huntly entered into Survey Monkey.
 - SSUC completed 58 surveys with an average Sun participation of 79 = 73%
 - Chalmers - 23 with an average Sun participation of 30=76%
 - Faith - 23 with an average of 20 +100%
 - Edith Rankin - 27 with an average of 109 = 25%
 - St Mark's - 48 with an average of 44 = 100%
 - e-news readers 12 of 100 (many of whom are members of the above congregations) = 12% (If you assume that 50% of our readers are members of participating congregations, the participation rate of non-members is about 25%)
- Age profile of respondents:
 - Under 40: 4.92%
 - 40-60: 9.29%
 - 60+: 81.42%
 - n/a: 4.37%
- Responses pointed to a few small design flaws in the survey structure. Likely minimal negative impact on the survey results.
- Unanswered questions – i.e. incomplete surveys ranged from 2/202 (1%) to 36/202 (17.8%); the highest occurrence was on paper surveys where respondents may have failed to turn the pages and/or ran out of time
- Good potential for regression analysis by congregation and by other co-relations.

Observations from JTRAG members

- Good to see the overall positive response.
- Quite a few people have Indigenous friends and have visited reserves socially. And there are some Indigenous members in our congregations.

- Many respondents don't know what JTRAG is – an opportunity to build awareness.
- 48% don't know enough about JTRAG to offer an opinion on our priorities.
- Great to see the number of respondents to the survey and the seriousness that it appears they gave to the survey. This suggests a surprising reach of the newsletter and its audience as well as the interest and commitment of congregational members in JTRAG-associated churches.
- There also appears to be a few contradictions in the responses, not surprising but they suggest the strong and continuing need for guided education in the area. For example, 74 percent of respondents reported that they were moderately informed on the issues while only 35 percent have attended a pow-wow, 90 percent would be comfortable doing so (a difference of 55 percent on the latter). The data suggests opportunity and interest, at least from time to time, on related interest among a large group of respondents.
- There is general support/affirmation for JTRAG and its activities, which are closely aligned to its mandate.
- Many respondents interested in issues of right relations, reconciliation and justice are looking for direct engagement with Indigenous peoples, i.e. inviting them as speakers. We need to be sensitive to placing the burden of our education on others.
- Excellent response; it seems that a large majority of surveys were completed during a worship service, hence the value of that method of collection
- Encouraging that a majority of non-Indigenous respondents have Indigenous friends or relatives (56%) and about 3/4 have visited a reserve, 2/3 other than to buy gasoline or cigarettes! It would be interesting to know how much interaction people have with their non-Indigenous friends and what they do together.
- A third have attended a Pow-wow but 90% were, or would be, comfortable doing so—another sign of openness
- Surprising that 1/3 feel issues regarding Indigenous rights are pretty straightforward, though 58% feel the issues are very complex. We should seek to know more of the basis for thinking the matter is straightforward.
- A strong indication that JTRAG's work needs to continue, but with more emphasis on effective change
- A real challenge for us to draw on those who are acting (45%) to join us to encourage those who aren't.

Possible actions

1. Review all the written comments and create a synopsis.

2. Combine dinner and education and some worship aspects...but maybe not on Sunday morning.
3. Open our self-education online discussions to others.
4. Gather and share information on events hosted by Indigenous groups within a day's travel that are open to all and provide opportunities to connect with others and learn directly about Indigenous cultural practices.
5. Organize group visits to some of these events and other cultural events, such as art exhibits, etc.
6. Work with *All Our Relations Land Trust* to investigate opportunities to promote seasonal visits to the land for teaching and learning.
7. Offer the blanket exercise again. It has changed significantly since SSU and Chalmers hosted this event, nearly a decade ago.
8. Host an online book discussion group that gives voice to Indigenous peoples, without placing an undue burden on Indigenous leaders, and advances the self-education of those who are interested.
9. Host an online or in-person teaching session on land acknowledgements that speaks to their historic and contemporary significance in indigenous culture/communities and invites participants to write their own land acknowledgement and share it with others in a follow-up event.
10. Host an event, perhaps as long as a day, with guest speakers, focused on allyship, for settler descendants who have engaged in self-education and are committed to responsible, active ally ship and advocacy.
11. Collect all of the suggestions advanced by the survey respondents into a single file and review them together at a future JTRAG meeting to determine what, if any, ideas we might adopt within our existing mandate.
12. Hire a student to do regression analysis and present it to JTRAG.
13. Seek an opportunity to present the results to the Board of each congregation.

14. Seek an opportunity to present results within a service at each congregation.

Decisions

1. Make a plan to share the results with
 - a. the Ministers of the respective congregations
 - b. participants and congregation members
 - c. e-news readers
 - d. East Central Regional Council (UC)
 - e. General Council (UC)
 - f. Sister congregations – e.g. St James
 - g. Broadview magazine
 - h. Others?
2. Prioritize actions.
3. Determine if we want to undertake regression analysis? If so, what are the key questions we want to explore?