



People of God's Peace - Part 7

Peace in Practice

Wildwood Mennonite Church // November 15, 2020

Worship Leader: Teresa W // Music Leader: Linda G // Sermon: Heather P and Ben B

Welcome to Wildwood!

Good morning! Welcome to all who have joined us in worship.

Hopefully God has healed your sore muscles and backs from shovelling earlier in the week after the "light dusting" we got last Sunday. It is lovely to have something else to focus on and talk about besides virus' and elections. The blanket of snow brought a calming stillness to the outdoors and people got out and served each other – how great is that!!

As well, we marked Remembrance Day on Wednesday, November 11. Keeping that in mind, our worship focus is peace and how reconciliation is that peace in action. In order for that action to take place, we need to ask God to soften our hearts and minds - to allow us to acknowledge hurt and pain – to have the courage to make the changes needed to bring about healing. As we seek to know and spend time with God, the "light shines in the darkness" of our hearts to reveal where we need to restore relationships. We can then reflect that Light to others needing hope and reconciliation. This is why we come to worship - seeking this Light. We will begin with music for meditation.

Thank you, Linda, for leading us with music today.

Music For Meditation // [*Be Still My Soul*](#) // Eclipse 6

Call to Worship

Our call to worship is a prayer that comes from "Sing the Journey" #121. Let's pray.

God of love,
light a flame of love in our hearts to you,
a flame of love to our families and friends,
a flame of love to our neighbours, a flame of love to our enemies.

Light a flame of love in our hearts to all,
from the lowliest thing that lives,
to the Name that is highest of all. AMEN.



Peace Candle

When I saw Heather's email on what her and Ben would be focusing on today, I recalled the devotion and prayer I had read Nov. 4th in Rejoice which was written by Nina Balmaceda. The scripture passage was from Acts 19:23-28 with the focus verse being verse 23 "About that time no little disturbance broke out concerning the Way." The title of the devotion is "God Inspires Us to Disturb". I would like to share with you some of her words.

"Christians are called to be peacemakers and to care for those who suffer... but to cause disturbance? Jesus of Nazareth said and did things that made certain people uneasy, angry, even violent. Jesus and his disciples were disruptive. Once, as a group of jealous individuals were attacking innocent people in their attempt to capture Paul and Silas, they declared, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also" (Acts 17:6). Yes, for right and wrong reasons, many people who opposed the gospel regarded Christians as troublemakers.

While we are not called to create unnecessary disturbance in order to have things go our way or to elevate our position, we must discern when God is inspiring us to disturb others for the cause of human dignity, justice, and compassion."

Let's pray:

Dear Lord, give us discernment, courage and a willingness to join you in your liberating work. Amen.

Spotlight on Service // Heather P

Heather will share about the work of the Saskatchewan Restorative Justice network and [National Restorative Justice Week](#) which is this coming week.

Song // [Whatever You Do](#) // Sing the Story #52

Offering Prayer

It is in this time of our service that we are mindful of God's goodness to us and we have the opportunity to give back. While we are not giving finances in person, there are options of sending funds by e-transfer or mailing in a cheque to the church. If you are a guest via Zoom, your presence is your gift to us.

Let's pray:

God, we are thankful for your generosity towards us in so many ways. We are coming close to the year end which is a good time to take stock of where we can be generous in our living – financially, with our time, and with the talents you have placed within each of us. May our ways of giving bring hope to others and praise to you. AMEN.

Children's Story // [Click here for video storytime with Kyla!](#)

This week's story is [Come Over to My House](#) by Dr Seuss with illustrations by Katie Kath.

Song // [How Can We Be Silent](#) // Sing the Story #61

Scripture // *Inclusive Bible* translation

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

And so from now on, we don't look on anyone in terms of mere human judgment. Even if we did once regard Christ in these terms, that is not how we know Christ now. And for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation. The old order has passed away; now everything is new!

All of this is from God, who ransomed us through Christ—and made us ministers of that reconciliation. This means that through Christ, the world was fully reconciled again to God, who didn't hold our transgressions against us, but instead entrusted us with this message of reconciliation. This makes us Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making the appeal directly through us. Therefore we implore you in Christ's name: be reconciled to God. For our sake, God made the One who was without sin to be sin, so that by this means we might become the very holiness of God.

Sermon // "Reconcile. Everyday Conversations" // Heather P and Ben B

(If you'd rather watch than read, the link to the video version will be posted to wildwoodmennonite.org, and included in the congregational email on the Tuesday following)

Heather:



As you may remember from our MCC service a month ago this is MCC's 100th year. I'm going to read a section from the MCC Centennial Worship Resource.

From MCC Centennial Worship Resource:



2 Corinthians

All of this is from God, who ransomed us through Christ—and made us ministers of that reconciliation. This means that through Christ, the world was fully reconciled again to God, who didn't hold our transgressions against us, but instead entrusted us with this message of reconciliation.

Wildwood Mennonite Church - Reconcile

In this centennial year at MCC, we reaffirm our Christ-led commitment to the ministry of reconciliation. Reconciliation and peace are distinctives of our Anabaptist faith and encompass all aspects of life. This year, MCC invites you to reflect on your vision for reconciliation – in your life, your work, your community and your world.

Reconciliation, as it's presented in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, has three parts:

1. God is reconciled to the world through Christ;
2. We are called to be reconciled to God personally;
3. We then become God's ambassadors of reconciliation to let the rest of the world know that they too can be reconciled to God.

This message resonates with MCC's purpose as a "worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, which shares God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice. MCC envisions communities worldwide in right relationship with God, one another and creation."



From MCC Principles and Practices:

"Amid human brokenness; violence along ethnic, political and religious divisions; and environmental degradation; by God's grace, we are called in our ministry to embody a foretaste of a restored creation and a reconciled humanity."

2 Corinthians

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Wildwood Mennonite Church - Reconcile

In MCC's "Principles and practices," MCC's understanding of its reconciliation ministry is explained in several places, including the following paragraphs: "While recognizing that the creation God pronounced as good has fallen away from its created purposes, we

joyfully confess that through Jesus Christ, humanity and the world has been reconciled to God. As an arm of the church, we have been given the ministry of reconciliation, proclaiming through word and deed the good news that in Christ there is a new creation. Amid human brokenness; violence along ethnic, political and religious divisions; and environmental degradation; by God's grace, we are called in our ministry to embody a foretaste of a restored creation and a reconciled humanity."

This is not another MCC service. But we will be highlighting a MCC project that we have been working on over the past few years. It is a way we are attempting to be ambassadors of reconciliation here in Saskatchewan. Today Ben and I will be introducing you to, or reminding you of, the podcast Reconcile. Everyday Conversations.

Since Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission work across the country the term reconciliation has become prevalent in our news cycles, educational institutions and within community-based organizations.



Churches, who have preached the biblical ministry of reconciliation, have also been grappling with the term "reconciliation" being used in broader ways, in particular towards Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.

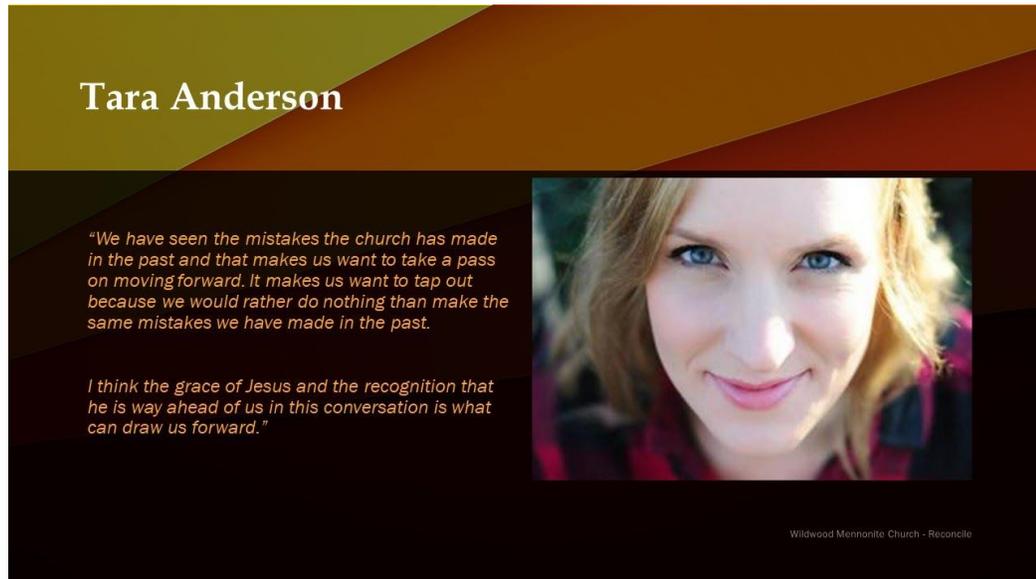
As part of my role as the Peacebuilding Coordinator for Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan I was also tasked with doing reconciliation work. But what did this actually mean?

Since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada concluded I have heard the challenge from Indigenous leaders that it is time for the settler community to step up. Creating a podcast that sought to deepen our understanding of reconciliation and invite people into the reconciliation journey felt like one way I could do reconciliation or at least find out what it meant.

In 2018 we started by interviewing 9 people – most of whom would identify as settlers, or non-Indigenous. Like, our title – Everyday Conversations – we talked with everyday people who came from a variety of different perspectives. All the people said that they didn't feel qualified to speak about reconciliation. All of the people provided valuable and insightful reflections.

At the beginning of 2020 I invited Ben, who we had interviewed for season 1, to cohost the second season with me and we have been talking with people who identify as Indigenous. Every time we finish a recording we look at each other and say, That was so good!

I am going to play 3 clips from our podcast to highlight some of the things that have come out of our conversations.



First, we will listen to Tara Anderson who attends Lakeview Church, works at the University, and has 2 children. This clip is from our very first episode and in it Tara talks about how her understanding of reconciliation grew out of her biblical interpretation of 2 Corinthians. [Here she is](#) answering the question, how do you define reconciliation?

Tara

- Thought of reconciliation in the context of 2 Corinthians
- In 2015 saw it bubble up in other contexts
- Reconciliation as complex, carries weight, we can use it in different ways
- Something I can grasp – building respectful relationships with Indigenous people

You can listen to Tara's full episode here:

<https://anchor.fm/reconcile-conversations/episodes/Tara-Anderson-eidv8t>



The next clip I want to play is from Harry Lafond. Many of you may know Harry from his connections with MC Sask and his work with the Walking the Path group. He lives at Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. As an educator Harry has taught in schools, universities, and the community. He served as Chief of Muskeg Lake for 10 years, Executive Director for the Office of the Treaty Commissioner for 11 years, and currently is the St. Thomas Moore Scholar in Indigenous Education at the University of Saskatchewan.

Here Harry is talking about how we can do reconciliation. [Let's have a listen.](#)

- Many years ago someone said, you are a good listener, and this is a beautiful complement because it meant I was practicing deep listening. And deep listening is critical part of reconciliation. It isn't just feeding back what you hear on the surface but taking things down to the depths of emotions, social understanding, intellectual understanding and moving into areas of empathy, respect and humility. Those Cree teachings that are important parts of who we are as a people.
- As a teacher I learned how to become a reconciliatory teacher. I started out being the residential school type of teacher, because I didn't know any better the strict, no nonsense type of teacher – and it never worked. You get slammed by your own practices. I learned the hard way.
- My wife helped me to understand to recognize the issues that were being passed down through the men in my family. My dad was damaged by the residential school. His dad was damaged by the residential school. And so there were missing pieces in becoming a father. So when I became a father my wife helped me. The two of us began to understand that reconciliation needs to be part of raising children. That means you need to know how to say I love you, you need to hug and touch and have a physical connection with children. That way of doing things translated in how I governed my community as a chief.

I really like this clip because it highlights that idea that reconciliation can be integrated into all aspects of life – how we parent, how we lead other people, and how we can address historical harms.

You can listen to Harry's full episode here:

<https://anchor.fm/reconcile-conversations/episodes/Harry-Lafond-el2v9b>



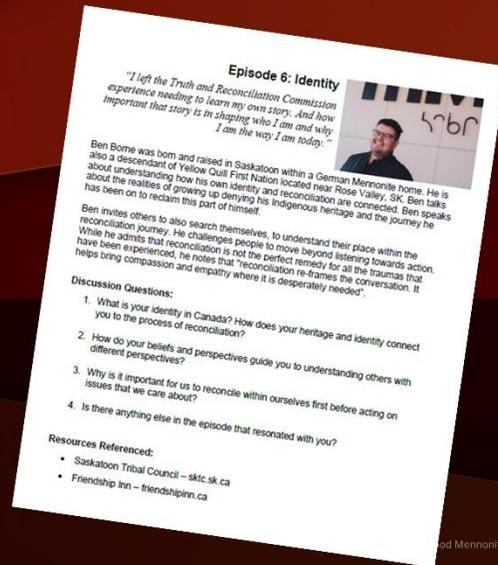
The last clip is a sneak peak for all of you. This episode will be released on Wednesday and it features Jenny Lessard who is a chef at Wanuskewin. In our conversation Jenny talks about decolonizing the kitchen. It is really interesting.

The part of our conversation that I chose to highlight is a sentiment we have heard over and over again. And I hope that it is an encouragement for you to never stop learning about reconciliation. [Listen here.](#)

- I would encourage people to do too, is there are no stupid questions. So if you're talking to you and did an indigenous person say who had the, you know, who grew up traditionally ask them what they grew up eating and how they got it, where it came from and, and listened to those details because it's the history of the land here. And we should know that. And if you can actually get that from someone don't, you know, never think you're asking a stupid question because you're trying to inform yourself, that's how I've grown and learned is by asking questions that I'm sure I should probably know the answer to you. And I'm embarrassed that I don't, but just ask and also don't be afraid. I'm sure I hope there are indigenous people listening to this. Don't be afraid to let people know when they're doing it wrong. Like if you come in and you say, you're calling this that, well, this should be something else. You are the authority on that. I'm not like I cannot speak to every kind of indigenous cookery. And I think we need to teach each other and learn,

Study Guide

Explore reconciliation with your friends, family and neighbours.



In a spirit of learning and teaching together we have written a study guide that you can access on the [MCC website](#). I should mention that we received funding from MC Sask for part of this project as well. And since you are part of MC Sask- this is your project! We encourage you to use the study guide and to be ambassadors of reconciliation.

Ben:

In response to the stories we've heard from the clips today, and the scripture from second Corinthians, I have a few thoughts I'd like to share to wrap us up today.

Paul writes in second Corinthians that God, through Christ, has reconciled us to God's self, and we are tasked with a ministry of reconciliation – of restoring relationships.

We have all experienced broken relationships.

Broken relationships are painful. Broken relationships hurt us. Broken relationships hurt the other person we are in relationship with. Broken relationships make us feel un-whole, or incomplete.

These relationships might be our marital relationships, former dating relationships, our parents, siblings, friends, people who attend our church, or even co-workers.

Paul is writing that as a church body, as followers of Jesus:

We have been entrusted with a message of reconciliation.

We have been entrusted with the task of restoring relationships.

We have been entrusted to be the hands and feet that move and shape reconciliatory work.

On one hand I think as a national, regional and local church body we do reconciliation well through the various programs we participate in and offer through our various arms like MCC. But on the other hand, I am also not afraid to admit that I think there's more we can do, and I think that's why this podcast has been so important. It's a tool to learn how we can further reconciliatory action in our own lives. This podcast is important in acknowledging the broken relationships we have on the home front with our Indigenous brothers and sisters, and how we can work to address that brokenness.

I think everyone has had the experience of a broken relationship before. The break, the coming together, and the reconciliation. It feels so good when things are right again. I can only hope that one day we can experience that same restoration with our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

As members of one body, we are entrusted with striving towards this reconciled ideal in all of our individual and communal relationships. We are being challenged to live into the mission of reconciliation, to dialogue with each other and to find a way to eat and celebrate together again.

As we close the zoom chat – I encourage us all to remember that we have been reconciled with God and be challenged to not just consider if we're going to reconcilers or not, but how we're going to be reconcilers.

Song of Response // [Let Justice Roll Like A River](#) // Sing the Story #33

Sharing Time

Not hearing from one another in person through the Sharing Time is a significant loss for many of us. Sharing items can be emailed to the church office or the pastors to be shared with the congregation. If you're able, join us for our Sunday Morning Zoom gatherings, or check your email for the sharing items from last Sunday. Or maybe now would be a good time to pause your reading to call someone from church or elsewhere that you haven't heard from this week.



Congregational Prayer // Eileen Klaassen

Gracious and compassionate God,

You are a great God, and while you protect us from nothing, you support us in everything, and at all times.

As we talk with people, we can't help but notice that on top of the fears of these days, is the stress of trying to avoid Covid, of trying to protect both ourselves and others, the strain of living in a world where it feels like everything has changed... On top of all this, we can't help but notice that the troubles, the stresses, the griefs of what we have called "normal life" have not gone away; they continue – and they continue with the added burden of dealing with them in the middle of a pandemic.

Covid is taking its toll, and this week we particularly remember Sean and Tiffanie, and Sean's parents and grandma on the death of his grandpa, Jake Baergen. We remember them in their grief, and at the same time, pray that the spread of this virus will be contained, that it will not spread, and that those who have contracted it will be healed.

We remember Debbie in the unexpected death of her good friend, Emily, whom she will miss so much. Death is such a stark reality where Debbie lives, and I pray that she will be comforted by the care of those around her. And so we pray for her and also for the family who are experiencing this loss.

This morning we bring before you those who are struggling with health issues, both physical & mental; who have lived difficult and challenging lives and held on. We pray that they will receive Your strength, and the encouragement of friends and family to carry on.

We pray for children, for teens and young adults who struggle with anxiety and suicidal ideation. May they know how much value their lives hold and how much they are loved by those around them.

This past week, during Remembrance Day services, we were reminded of those who have seen, firsthand, the atrocities of war, who suffer with depression and PTSD. We pray that they find the courage to speak up; to seek help. We pray that they will find support and we pray for the healing of memories.

We have been reminded also, of the many vulnerable persons in our city, who are desperate for shelter and food, those basics of life that we take so for granted. Open our mouths to speak to these injustices, open our hearts to be love in action. Open our hands to let go of our greed and the give generously where it is so needed.





And then we remember also our governments. Grant them wisdom as they lead us. We pray that they will “do the right thing”, as has been suggested; that they turn from material concerns and prioritize safety and the value of the lives of the people!

We remember healthcare workers and police, and all who work with a vulnerable population. We remember teachers and EA’s and all staff in our schools – as well as the children. They are all stressed and we pray for peace of mind and the safety of them all. We pray for parents who are juggling work and parenting, especially when their children are sick or when children need to stay home to stay safe. We ask that you continue to give them strength, one day at a time.

We pray for Grace and Marni in lockdown in their home, and for those of our congregation in personal care homes, and in seniors’ complexes who are lonely and who already know cabin fever all too well.

We pray for strength for them all – and that all will see the need to follow the precautionary measures that have been recommended.

We pray also for those who have so very much on their plate these days. We pray for those in hospital – for Doris and her family, for Dion’s grandmother, Susanna Reddekopp, and all of her family. We pray that they will know they have not been forgotten; that they will feel Your nearness, Your peace and comfort and feel You holding them closely in love.

This morning we especially remember our sister church, Nutana Park Mennonite, who are grateful for the care that has been taken in reopening safely for worship and in some small groups, as well as establishing their worship livestream. We pray for their pastors Patrick Preheim and Susanne Guenther Loewen, and for continued creativity and patience in their efforts to remain connected as a community through what will feel to many like a long winter.

This morning we are grateful too - for people like Phyllis, who write letters to our government in support of the homeless and vulnerable and encourage us to do the same. We are grateful for those, like Josephine, who work at educating the public about LGBTQ issues and do so from a positive perspective.

God we are grateful for the things we can still do, the outdoor activities we can enjoy, for even the tiny bubbles in which we may live, for technology that helps us stay in touch and still feel like we are a part of a community. We are grateful for good neighbours, who help with shoveling and push each other’s vehicles out of snowbanks. For those who drop off a jar of soup or fresh baking. We pray that we can come to a much better understanding of the value of interpersonal relationships and never again take them for granted. We pray that we can be open to the possibilities that still exist, including the possibility of learning things about ourselves and our world that we might not have recognized previously.

Gracious and compassionate God, grant us compassion and lead us on the right path. We offer ourselves to work for justice on the path to peace. We offer ourselves to you that Your will may be done on earth. And we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God. Amen.

Song // [*Make Me A Channel of Your Peace*](#) // Sing the Journey #56

Benediction

“Now to God who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to God’s power that is at work within us, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.” Ephesians 3:20-21

