

Go and Be Reconciled

Individual and collective evil separates us from God and, as Romans 5:10 makes clear, the only way back to a restored relationship is through Jesus' death on the cross. Reconciled to God, we are given a ministry of reconciliation, peace-making and healing.

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).



That means we have a lot to do. For Christians in Canada, our right relationship with God is incomplete unless we reconcile with First Nations people who were historically wronged by the Canadian government and by churches acting on our behalf. During that chapter in Canadian history, treaties and protections were ignored, rights were denied and more than 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were taken by force to residential schools in an effort to destroy the culture of the Aboriginal people. This trauma has broken the relationship between 1.4 million Aboriginal people and other Canadians. The result of Canada's collective faults has, for Aboriginal people, been a legacy of poverty, broken families, high suicide rates, substance abuse, reduced opportunities for education and jobs, and many other social wounds.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) has revealed much of the truth about our history of residential schools and made 94 recommendations to bring about a new future together. Churches like First Baptist in Prince Albert, SK, New Life Community Baptist in Duncan, BC, and a new church plant among the Musqueam people in Vancouver, BC, are responding by sharing God's love through reconciliation. Christians with a heart for God's justice know reconciliation is spiritually important for ourselves and our nation, and that until there is reconciliation, our relationship with God is broken.

Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift (Matthew 5:23-24).

As this passage from Matthew encourages us, broken relationships can be healed. After encountering God in prayer and self-reflection, we can say, in effect, "Excuse me just a minute — but I'll be back once I sort this out." We get up off our knees and make things right with those we have wronged before returning to worship God, confident in a restored relationship with Him and with all His people. As God's servants who reveal His character and healing, we can be reconciled:

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves (Philippians 2:3).

Will you join this ministry of reconciliation?

Go and Be Reconciled

Individual and collective evil separates us from God and, as Romans 5:10 makes clear, the only way back to a restored relationship is through Jesus' death on the cross. Reconciled to God, we are given a ministry of reconciliation, peace-making and healing.

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).



That means we have a lot to do. For Christians in Canada, our right relationship with God is incomplete unless we reconcile with First Nations people who were historically wronged by the Canadian government and by churches acting on our behalf. During that chapter in Canadian history, treaties and protections were ignored, rights were denied and more than 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were taken by force to residential schools in an effort to destroy the culture of the Aboriginal people. This trauma has broken the relationship between 1.4 million Aboriginal people and other Canadians. The result of Canada's collective faults has, for Aboriginal people, been a legacy of poverty, broken families, high suicide rates, substance abuse, reduced opportunities for education and jobs, and many other social wounds.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) has revealed much of the truth about our history of residential schools and made 94 recommendations to bring about a new future together. Churches like First Baptist in Prince Albert, SK, New Life Community Baptist in Duncan, BC, and a new church plant among the Musqueam people in Vancouver, BC, are responding by sharing God's love through reconciliation. Christians with a heart for God's justice know reconciliation is spiritually important for ourselves and our nation, and that until there is reconciliation, our relationship with God is broken.

Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift (Matthew 5:23-24).

As this passage from Matthew encourages us, broken relationships can be healed. After encountering God in prayer and self-reflection, we can say, in effect, "Excuse me just a minute — but I'll be back once I sort this out." We get up off our knees and make things right with those we have wronged before returning to worship God, confident in a restored relationship with Him and with all His people. As God's servants who reveal His character and healing, we can be reconciled:

Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves (Philippians 2:3).

Will you join this ministry of reconciliation?



What You Can Do

- PRAY for reconciliation, healing and friendship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- RECOGNIZE that reconciliation begins with you.
- READ the TRC Report and its 94 recommendations at www.trc.ca.
- INVITE Aboriginal people into your homes for a meal or social occasions.
- MAKE your own ribbon to show your support for reconciliation, as requested by the TRC.
- TEACH your children about what happened in the residential school system.
- ENGAGE Rev. Jodi Spargur (spargurj@gmail.com) as a resource on reconciliation. Jodi is being made available by Grandview Calvary Baptist to CBWC churches.
- VOLUNTEER with community groups that work for positive change.
- LEARN about the residential school system and Canada's treatment of Aboriginal people throughout history.
- ACKNOWLEDGE that we are guests on First Nations peoples' land.
- INVITE Aboriginal speakers and leaders to your church for workshops and worship services.
- READ books, website and blogs by Aboriginal people.
- ENJOY Aboriginal music, art and culture.
- MENTOR Aboriginal youth.
- START or TAKE PART in ministries serving the needs of Aboriginal people.
- ATTEND Aboriginal events as a guest.



This bulletin insert was created by the Justice and Mercy Network which is a committee of the CBWC Board.



What You Can Do

- PRAY for reconciliation, healing and friendship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- RECOGNIZE that reconciliation begins with you.
- READ the TRC Report and its 94 recommendations at www.trc.ca.
- INVITE aboriginal people into your home for a meal or social occasions.
- MAKE your own ribbon to show your support for reconciliation, as requested by the TRC.
- TEACH your children about what happened in the residential school system.
- ENGAGE Rev. Jodi Spargur (spargurj@gmail.com) as a resource on reconciliation. Jodi is being made available by Grandview Calvary Baptist to CBWC churches.
- VOLUNTEER with community groups that work for positive change.
- LEARN about the residential school system and Canada's treatment of Aboriginal people throughout history.
- ACKNOWLEDGE that we are guests on First Nations peoples' land.
- INVITE Aboriginal speakers and leaders to your church for workshops and worship services.
- READ books, website and blogs by Aboriginal people.
- ENJOY Aboriginal music, art and culture.
- MENTOR Aboriginal youth.
- START or TAKE PART in ministries serving the needs of Aboriginal people.
- ATTEND Aboriginal events as a guest.



This bulletin insert was created by the Justice and Mercy Network which is a committee of the CBWC Board.