

Session One: Have a Heart

Welcome to our Messy Church Reconciliation for Home Use. This session focuses on our response to Indian Residential Schools and how as families we can take first steps in living out our call from God to be reconcilers with First Nations in our communities.

1. Land acknowledgement - written by children of Immanuel, Wetaskiwin.

We are all Treaty 6 people.
We are First Nations.
We are people who are welcomed to live here.
We know that we share the land.
We respect those who were here first.
We will live together with love.

2. Residential School Story: Take out the colouring page and give it to the children. Talk for a moment about the image - a mother with her children giving the whole family roots. Have the children colour the picture while you are sharing with them these poems are from a survivor of residential schools. Read each poem slowly and carefully. Joanne Jones is a member of St. Faith's, Edmonton.

Prairie Woman

I am from the prairie
Born a Cree
Strong and free
But only to a degree.

They came and took me away
For being a Cree was a
Threat to some.

Strong and free I will stand.
I am from the prairie you see.

But to no avail
This Cree will prevail.
Just to show that they
Could fail. Fail to take

The Cree away from the prairie.

I will be strong and free.

I am from the prairie you see.

- Willow Woman (Joanne Jones), November 30th, 2008

Torn

A family torn is a family

That needs to be reborn

When will you take

Out the thorn

For when we were born

We were adored

Where did it go wrong

Let's be strong and

Let the thorn be torn

Away.

And make our family strong

And let the wrong be gone

To be torn is like a

Storm so strong

Let our family be reborn

To form a strong family bond

- Willow Woman (Joanne Jones)

After having read the poems have everyone say a word or two about what they heard and how they are feeling about what happened in Canada.

3. Heart Craft

Materials needed: card stock, markers, ribbons, stickers, wooden skewer (like the ones used for barbecuing kebabs), tape, scissors

Instructions: Cut out a heart for everyone and explain that today they are going to decorate a heart that remembers the children who went to residential schools and especially those children who didn't return to their families. Suggest they may want to write **We are Sorry, You are Loved, We will Remember**, or something like that on their heart. Let them decorate their hearts as they want and then have them tape the skewer to the back of the heart.

4. Action:

Take your heart to your parish and plant it in the ground around the chokecherry tree. Over time there should be a number of hearts planted around the tree. Say the following prayer together after you have put your hearts in the ground.

Four Directions Prayer

Have everyone turn to the east

Creator, thank you for this day

Have everyone turn to the south

Creator, thank you for teaching us this day

Have everyone turn to the west

Creator, thank you for the four seasons

Have everyone turn to the north

Creator, thank you for being in our circle

Have everyone turn back to the east to complete the circle

Amen.

