

LET JUSTICE ROLL!

An Occasional Newsletter Produced & Distributed
by the Social Justice & Action Group (SJAG)
at St. John the Divine Anglican Church - Victoria, B.C.

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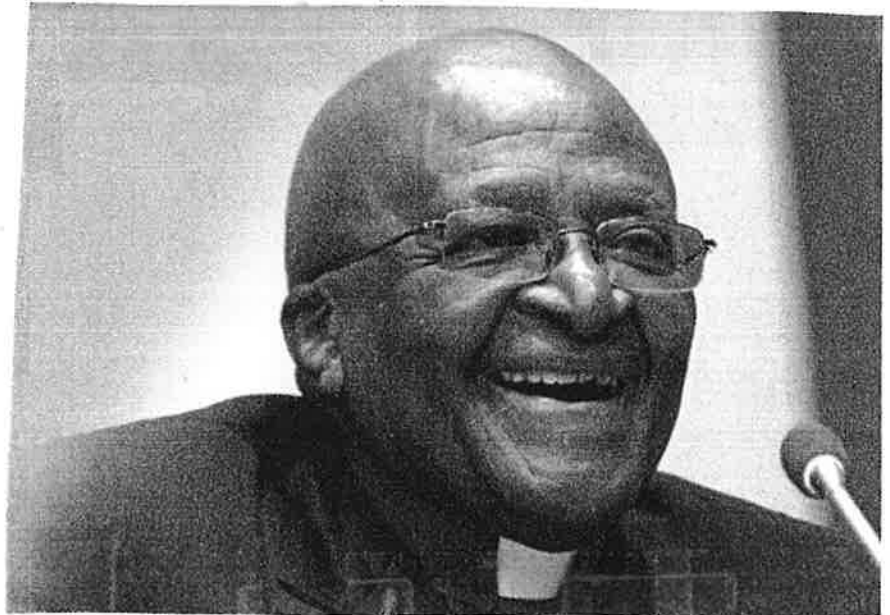
*“But let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness
like a never failing stream.”* Amos 5:24 (NIV)

“LET JUSTICE ROLL!” is intended to educate, inform and challenge readers regarding important issues and ideas at the intersection where faith and justice meet. For the most part, the themes offered here are viewed through a Christian lens. The topics chosen focus on social concerns that many of our parishioners currently share. The short articles selected cover a diversity of issues -- FROM poverty/economic inequality, peace and human/LGBTQ rights, First Nations reconciliation, -- TO climate change/environmental stewardship, refugees, food security and community/international development. The political is never far away from the topics we choose. As Cornel West reminds us: *“Justice is what love looks like in public!”*

R.I.P.

Desmond Mpilo Tutu
S. African Activist /
Priest / Archbishop
Born: 7 Oct. 1931
Died: 26 Dec. 2021

See Tribute: P. 2 - 3



The ideas and opinions expressed, and or positions articulated, in the newsletter may not officially be those of the Parish or the Diocese. Your feedback is encouraged! Please address your comments to either Murray Luft (Editor) murrayrae@yahoo.com or John McLaren (SJAG) jpsmamclaren@gmail.com. We invite readers to submit provocative articles (already published or original) for inclusion in future *“Let Justice Roll!”* newsletters. SJAG’s intention is to produce the newsletter three (or four) times per year. During Covid 19, LJR is only available via the St. John’s web-site: <https://www.stjohnthedivine.bc.ca/programs/let-justice-roll>

LET JUSTICE ROLL #16

Welcome readers to our 16th issue! Again, we have opted to give priority to two complex issues: **Reconciliation with First Nations** and **Climate Change** -- employing what is essentially “*a Christian, social justice lens*”. As is our custom, we have chosen incisive articles that encourage theological reflection and ask (and hopefully answer) important questions about social justice and the life of the spirit in these uncertain times. Our hope is that you will find the content of this newsletter to be both thought-provoking and faith-challenging.

Issue #16 of LJR begins with a tribute to one of the true heroes of the Church, the South African anti-apartheid leader **Rev. Desmond Tutu**. In addition, we include poems, short reflections, cartoons, photos and quotes which might enhance your overall understanding of social justice. (Note that we are giving COVID-19 a rest in this issue!) After reading LJR, feel free to drop us an e-mail and let us know if this our first 2022 edition has been of some value to you on your faith journey.

Again, **Karyn Lehmann, Carol-Ann Zenger, Sara Chu and Karen Coverett** have brought their diverse skills to the design, production, roll-out and dissemination of LJR#16. Many thanks to them!

M.L., Editor

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We acknowledge with respect the Lək'wəḡən speaking peoples on whose traditional territory we work, play and worship, represented today by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations in their continuing relationship with this land we call our home.

DESMOND TUTU -- ANTI-APARTHEID HERO **HE NEVER STOPPED FIGHTING FOR "RAINBOW NATION"**

BY REUTERS – DEC. 26/21 *

"Like falling in love" is how Archbishop Desmond Tutu described voting in South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, a remark that captured both his puckish humour and his profound emotions after decades fighting apartheid. Desmond Mpilo Tutu, the Nobel Peace laureate whose moral might permeated South African society during apartheid's darkest hours and into the uncharted territory of new democracy, died on Sunday. He was 90.

The outspoken Tutu was considered the nation's conscience by both Black and white, an enduring testament to his faith and spirit of reconciliation in a divided nation. He preached against the tyranny of white minority and even after its end, he never wavered in his fight for a fairer South Africa, calling the Black political elite to account with as much feistiness as he had the white Afrikaners.

In his final years, he regretted that his dream of a *"Rainbow Nation"* had not yet come true. On the global stage, the human rights activist spoke out across a range of topics, from Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories to gay rights, climate change, and assisted death — issues that cemented Tutu's broad appeal.

Tutu *"was a prophet and priest, a man of words and action,"* said the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, the symbolic head of Tutu's Anglican Communion. British billionaire Richard Branson called him *"a brave leader, a mischievous delight, a profound thinker, and a dear friend."* Just five feet five inches tall and with an infectious giggle, Tutu was a moral giant who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his non-violent struggle against apartheid. He used his high-profile role in the Anglican Church to highlight the plight of Black South Africans. Asked on his retirement as Archbishop of Cape Town in 1996 if he had any regrets, Tutu said: *"The struggle tended to make one abrasive and more than a touch self-righteous. I hope that people will forgive me any hurts I may have caused them."*

Talking and travelling tirelessly throughout the 1980s, Tutu became the face of the anti-apartheid movement abroad while many of the leaders of the rebel African National Congress (ANC), such as Nelson Mandela, were behind bars. *"Our land is burning and bleeding and so I call on the international community to apply punitive sanctions against this government,"* he said in 1986. Even as governments ignored the call, he helped rouse grassroots campaigns around the world that fought for an end to apartheid through economic and cultural boycotts.

Former hardline white president P.W. Botha asked Tutu in a letter in March 1988 whether he was working for the kingdom of God or for the kingdom promised by the then-outlawed and now ruling ANC. Among his most painful tasks was delivering graveside orations for Black people who had died violently during the struggle against white domination. *"We are tired of coming to funerals, of making speeches week after week. It is time to stop the waste of human lives,"* he once said.

Tutu said his stance on apartheid was moral rather than political. *"It's easier to be a Christian in South Africa than anywhere else, because the moral issues are so clear in this country,"* he once told Reuters. In February 1990, Tutu led Nelson Mandela on to a balcony at Cape Town's City Hall overlooking a square where the ANC talisman made his first public address after 27 years in prison.

He was at Mandela's side four years later when he was sworn in as the country's first Black president. *"Sometimes strident, often tender, never afraid and seldom without humour, Desmond Tutu's voice will always be the voice of the voiceless,"* is how Mandela, who died in December 2013, described his friend. While Mandela introduced South Africa to democracy, Tutu headed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that laid bare the terrible truths of the war against white rule. Some of the heartrending testimony moved him publicly to tears.

But Tutu was as tough on the new democracy as he was on South Africa's apartheid rulers. He castigated the new ruling elite for boarding the *"gravy train"* of privilege and chided Mandela for his long public affair with Graca Machel, whom he eventually married. In his Truth Commission report, Tutu refused to treat the excesses of the ANC in the fight against white rule any more gently than those of the apartheid government.

Even in his twilight years, he never stopped speaking his mind, condemning President Jacob Zuma over allegations of corruption surrounding a \$23 million security upgrade to his home. In 2014, he admitted he did not vote for the ANC, citing moral grounds. *"As an old man, I am sad because I had hoped that my last days would be days of rejoicing, days of praising and commending the younger people doing the things that we hoped so very much would be the case,"* Tutu told Reuters in June 2014.

In December 2003, he rebuked his government for its support for Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, despite growing criticism over his human rights record. Tutu drew a parallel between Zimbabwe's isolation and South Africa's battle against apartheid. *"We appealed for the world to intervene and interfere in South Africa's internal affairs. We could not have defeated apartheid on our own,"* Tutu said. *"What is sauce for the goose must be sauce for the gander too."* He also criticised South African President Thabo Mbeki for his public questioning of the link between HIV and AIDS, saying Mbeki's international profile had been tarnished.

A school teacher's son, Tutu was born in Klerksdorp, a conservative town west of Johannesburg, on Oct. 7, 1931. The family moved to Sophiatown in Johannesburg, one of the commercial capital's few mixed-race areas, subsequently demolished under apartheid laws to make way for the white suburb of Triomf —Triumph in Afrikaans.

Always a passionate student, Tutu first worked as a teacher. But he said he had become infuriated with how the system educated Black people in the country, once described by a South African prime minister as aimed at preparing them for their role in society as servants. Tutu quit teaching in 1957 and decided to join the church, studying first at St. Peter's Theological College in Johannesburg. He was ordained a priest in 1961 and continued his education at King's College in London.

After four years abroad, he returned to South Africa, where his sharp intellect and charismatic preaching saw him rise through lecturing posts to become Anglican Dean of Johannesburg in 1975, which was when his activism started taking shape. *“I realized that I had been given a platform that was not readily available to many Blacks, and most of our leaders were either now in chains or in exile. And I said: ‘Well, I’m going to use this to seek to try to articulate our aspirations and the anguishes of our people,’”* he told a reporter in 2004.

By now too prominent and globally respected to be thrust aside by the apartheid government, Tutu used his appointment as Secretary-General of the South African Council of Churches in 1978 to call for sanctions against his country. He was named the first Black Archbishop of Cape Town in 1986, becoming the head of the Anglican Church, South Africa's fourth largest. He would retain that position until 1996.

In retirement he battled prostate cancer and largely withdrew from public life. In one of his last public appearances, he hosted Britain’s Prince Harry, his wife Meghan and their four-month-old son Archie at his charitable foundation in Cape Town in September 2019, calling them a “genuinely caring” couple. Tutu married Nomalizo Leah Shenxane in 1955. They had four children and several grandchildren, and homes in Cape Town and Soweto township near Johannesburg.

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(1) In 1986, South African activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu receives the *Martin Luther King Jr. Nonviolent Peace Award* for his commitment and role during the long struggle against apartheid from Coretta Scott King, her own daughter Christine King Farris and Tutu's daughter Nontombi Naomi Tutu.

(2) Desmond Tutu delivering a sermon in Soweto in 1985. Gideon Mendel/AFP/Getty Images

(3) Retired Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, interact with children at the Tibetan Children's Village School, Dharmasala, India, in 2015. The two Nobel laureates jointly wrote, *The Book of Joy*. Ashwini Bhatia/AP

“We Are Stronger Together Only If Guided By Respect!”

By Chief Ron Sam and Chief Rob Thomas -- Victoria Times-Colonist - June 15, 2021

A commentary by Ron Sam and Rob Thomas, the chiefs of the Songhees Nation and Esquimalt Nation, regarding the acts of vandalism on the statue of Queen Victoria situated on the grounds of the Legislature in June 2021. These acts are concerning, they point out, particularly from a cultural perspective. Charla Huber's postscript further elaborates a First Nations' perspective *.

The acts of vandalism on the statue on the grounds of the legislature last Friday are concerning, particularly from a cultural perspective. As the Lekwungen Peoples, the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, we have protocols and ways in which we conduct ourselves on others' territories. These protocols have proudly been passed on since time immemorial.

Without our permission or knowledge, this act of aggression and insult has crossed boundaries and a significant error of judgement has now led to serious misconception as to who may have written - "Lekwungen" on the statue. Anyone who participated in this recent act of vandalism has no cultural role or right to act or speak on our behalf. Such misrepresentation leads to assumptions that the Lekwungen Nations were complicit or responsible for this act. This is not the case. Assigning this act of disrespect to our two Lekwungen Nations is wrong and harmful.

We are proud of the relationships of trust and respect that we have developed with many organizations and individuals throughout the capital region. There are groups, however, approaching our Nations to work together, who erroneously assume that our presence, our trust and our offering of support gives them liberties to ignore our values and protocols. These misguided assumptions tokenize the understanding of our protocols, of who we are and what we stand for. A member of the Lekwungen Nation was invited to welcome everyone and open the work in a good way on the grounds of the legislature last Friday. Unfortunately, there was a complete disregard for the cultural guidance being provided and a lack of understanding of the intentions of our protocols.

This type of behaviour shows a lack of understanding of cultural safety from an Indigenous perspective and practice; and, more importantly, from a Lekwungen world view. We can all learn from this. We welcome shared concerns for the environment and sacred lands and waters. We do not, however, permit outsiders to speak or act on our behalf. Those who wish to work with us must first consider their relationship to our Nations and how they behave as they walk beside us and on our lands.

We ask that external groups witness, observe and learn to walk respectfully on our lands. We ask that they speak their concerns and allow us space to do our work so that we can affirm and reaffirm ourselves as Lekwungen, in our own voices and on our lands. Recent events have brought people together across cultures. We are stronger together, however, only if we can direct energy and our hearts to positive outcomes that are guided by respect. On Tuesday, June 8, we, the Lekwungen Peoples, demonstrated how to build unity and strength in a good way through sensitive and heartfelt work in honour of the burial site found by the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc. Let this good work define us.

* **NOTE:** In a follow-up article/letter to the Times Colonist (*TC, June 27/21*), Charla Huber, Director of Communications for the M'akola Housing Society, applauded First Nations Chiefs Sam and Thomas. She said: *"When offering support [to First Nations], it is important to connect with indigenous communities and peoples and ask how and if they would like to be supported. Find out what actions would be not only appreciated, but appropriate. ... When people are standing up and speaking for Indigenous communities, they need to be educated on Indigenous protocols and practices, such as honouring the traditional territory and asking permission!"*

The Ultimate Act of Letting Go of Privilege: Giving Up Land!

Settler Marion Cumming Is Bequeathing Her Oak Bay Home to the Victoria Native Friendship Centre.

By Katljà (Catherine) Lafferty - 25 Aug 2021 - | TheTyee.ca *

An intricate Coast Salish wooden gate carved by artist Charles Elliott (Temosen) welcomes visitors up the steep narrow road leading to Marion Cumming's house in Oak Bay. Her home is filled with beautiful Indigenous artwork and books, and you can catch a glimpse of its magnificent ocean view from nearly every window in the house. Stone steps lead to an outdoor seating area that also serves as a deer lookout; if you go further, you'll eventually see the Gonzales Hill Observatory, and Walbran Park. In the park, a cairn was erected nearly 100 years ago; its plaque claims that Capt. John Walbran's wife was the first woman to behold the strait of Juan De Fuca. The cairn should be removed, says Cumming, and the area restored to its rightful, pre-colonial name.

When it comes to restoring land to Indigenous stakeholders, Cumming is putting her money where her mouth is: her 100-year-old home on the hill is just the latest property she will be bequeathing to an Indigenous community, in this case the Victoria Native Friendship Centre. That's right: while many wouldn't give the shirt off their back, let alone give away a house, Cumming is doing just that.

Cumming was born in Toronto in 1936. From trying to stop the building of the Site C dam to protesting the construction of a pipeline on Wet'suwet'en land to attending demonstrations to protect old-growth forest in Pacheedaht territory at Fairy Creek, to sitting in at the cleanup of the steps of the legislature in honour of the residential school children, she has tried to live her life as an active, rather than a performative, ally. All the while, she has also been returning her privately owned land to Indigenous peoples.

Together Marion and her late husband Bruce Cumming moved into their Oak Bay home in 1992, after Marion's aunt passed away at the age of 98. They previously lived on a 280-acre farm on the edge of a river surrounded by lush trees in a place called Penniac, New Brunswick, just outside of Fredericton. Cumming has been working to help finalize plans for this New Brunswick acreage for over three decades. Soon, she hopes that it will be in the hands of the adjacent Sitansisk Wolastoqiyik (St. Mary's) First Nation. Cumming studied art at the University of the Americas in Mexico for one year, before moving back to Canada when she was finished school. For a time, she worked with the Argentine embassy in Ottawa following the overthrow of dictator Juan Perón, always with a sense of social justice in mind. In her early career, she'd considered becoming a social worker after volunteering on the Mississippi River, in a poor area of St. Louis. Eventually, at her father's insistence — he felt she needed a proper education — Cumming attended a teacher training course. She became an art teacher at a UNESCO school, which she says was “a lovely opportunity.”

In 1969, Cumming married her husband, who was also an educator. She was drawn to him because they shared so many similar views on justice. “It didn't take us long to suddenly realize that land that we consider our farm was unceded land on the Nashwaak River,” she says. Cumming herself didn't realize the magnitude of the impact of colonialism on Indigenous peoples in Canada until she watched the Oka Crisis unfolding in 1990. “Sometimes a crisis, even though it can be so painful and divisive, brings people together in a good way,” she says. With the recent uncovering of unmarked graves on the sites of former residential schools in Canada — settlers are becoming aware that not only was land stolen, but children's lives were stolen too, she says.

In April 2020, she returned the small acreage known as Qhahtumtun “House by the River” on the Koksilah River to the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, in collaboration with the Duncan House of Friendship. This rustic property has a small cabin, workshop, bunkhouse, a greenhouse, and even an old henhouse. “We called it land return,” Cumming says. “We didn’t consider it a gift.” Cumming notes that while Canadian governmental bodies are slowly waking up to the idea of returning land, this change is not coming fast enough. This is where private landowners and organizations come in, she says. “I think it’s lovely what she’s doing to support and bequeath her land to the Native Friendship society,” says Oak Bay Mayor Kevin Murdoch, who also happens to be Cumming’s neighbour.

In the future, when there’s a proposal for how the land will be used, Murdoch says the proposal will then go back to council for decision. At this point, though, he says, “It’s just a good news story that is a very lovely and generous gift that she’s making.” There have been gifts of land to different causes and parks in the history of Oak Bay, Murdoch says, but this would be the first of its kind to an Indigenous organization. Anecdotally, Murdoch says that what he’s heard so far about the bequeathment has been very positive. He adds that he looks forward to seeing what the Victoria Native Friendship Centre will do with the home once it is in their possession. Cumming, Murdoch says, also helped the municipality construct informational cairns throughout the area in order to identify key First Nations locations and histories within Oak Bay. Bequeathing her home, he adds, “is one of just so many ways that she has contributed both to our community and to raising awareness and knowledge of First Nations.”

“Land Back” is a phrase that has been used most recently on social media platforms, one that can be loosely defined as a campaign that seeks to re-establish Indigenous peoples’ political and economic control over the lands that were their traditional territories prior to colonization. Although the home and land on which it sits is not being returned to the Songhees Nation, whose territories it encompasses, friendship centre executive director Ron Rice says the organization will do its best to put the house to good use for the community, including considering the Cummings’ original vision of converting it to a sanctuary for artists in the form of a residency, or possibly have a live-in facilitator who could help with co-ordinating seasonal or annual activities. Shortly after he started working at the centre three years ago, Rice got a phone call from Cumming’s executor asking him to stop by for tea to discuss the possibility of a donation. It was around that time that Cumming gave the news that she would like to bequeath her home.

In addition to the potential of an artist’s residency, the Victoria Native Friendship Centre is also considering making the home a meeting space for youth groups, writing or reading groups, or perhaps even a student housing space. Rice says that when the time comes, the centre will need to ensure they use the space for something that meets the mandate of the organization, but also adheres to the bylaws of Oak Bay, and the province’s tenancy act. “We are happy to be trusted with the legacy of Bruce and Marion Cumming and we are confident that we will be able to put this property to work for the people,” Rice says. Like Cumming, Rice hopes that the family’s generosity will encourage other settlers to consider pursuing their own forms of Land Back.

“A lot of the non-profit organizations that support Indigenous people in this city and all over this country are charitable organizations and can issue tax receipts,” Rice adds. “The idea of handing something over title and deed, it puts faith in the group that you are connecting with, not only in protecting your legacy but in doing good work.” “I hope that this has inspired other people to look at some creative ways to contemplate their legacy.”

* **Katljà (Catherine) Lafferty, a member of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, is Indigenous liaison for the Pacific Legal Education and Outreach Society and is pursuing a law degree at the University of Victoria.**

**REPARATIONS:
THIS LAND IS WHOSE LAND?**

Chelsea Luger -- YES! MAGAZINE *

You cannot find a corner of this continent that does not hold ancient history, Indigenous value, and pre-colonial place names and stories. And every place we occupy was once the homeland for other people, most of whom didn't leave willingly.

Whose land are you on? Start with a visit to native-land.ca. Native Land is both a website and an app that seeks to map Indigenous languages, treaties, and territories across Turtle Island. You might type in New York, New York, for example, and find that the five boroughs are actually traditional Lenape and Haudenosaunee territory.

On the website and in the app, you can enter the ZIP code or Canadian or American name for any town. The interactive map will zoom in on your inquiry, color-code it, and pull up data on the area's Indigenous history, original language, and tribal ties.

The project is run by **Victor Temprano** out of **British Columbia, Canada**. A self-described "settler," he said that the idea came to him while driving near his home—traditional Squamish territory. He saw many signs in the English language with the Squamish original place names indicated in parentheses underneath. He thought to himself, "*Why isn't the English in brackets?*"

Temprano emphasizes that Native Land maps are constantly being refined by user input, and he welcomes data submissions. On the website, he also cautions about the nature of mapping. "I feel that Western maps of Indigenous nations are very often inherently colonial, in that they delegate power according to imposed borders that don't really exist in many nations throughout history. They were rarely created in good faith, and are often used in wrong ways."

Reorientation to the Indigenous perspective, though, just might offer an entirely new way to experience this continent.

* [CHELSEY LUGER](#) is a journalist from the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa and Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Hymn of Remorse *

We covered over your colourful earth
with grey cement
We cut own trees and stripped the
soil wherever we went
We scarred the hills for gold and coal
Blind with greed inside our soul
Our goal to have complete control
Lord we repent.

Lord, have mercy. Can we be restored?
Lord, have mercy.

We have children we don't love so
the more we crave
From tender kiss to slamming doors
From sacred vows to lawyer wars
Break ours down to mine and your
With no remorse.

Lord, have mercy. Can we be restored?
Lord, have mercy.

What of the lands of tribes and nations
who lived here first?
Who took the best with broken treaties
and left the worst?
By whom were slaves bought, used
and sold?
Who valued people less than gold?
Who told us racist lies until our hearts
went cold?

Lord, have mercy. Can we be restored?
Lord, have mercy.

The noise of traffic is drowning out
the songbird's song.
Your voice within us telling us that
we've gone wrong.
You call us from our selfishness,
To be blessed and to bless.
To turn to you, begin anew.
Lord we say yes.

Lord, have mercy. Can we be restored?
Lord, have mercy.

* FROM: Songs For a Revolution of Hope, 2007.
Words and music by Brian McLaren and Tracy Howe.
Publishing, Revolution of Hope Music Group,
All rights reserved. Registered with CCLI

HOW INDIGENOUS PIPELINE RESISTANCE KEEPS EMISSIONS IN THE GROUND *

CBC – What On Earth? - Nov. 2021*

Since the latest RCMP raid on Wet'suwet'en land defenders and their allies in northern B.C., questions have been swirling about legal rights, excessive police force and the timing of the first round of arrests, which occurred right after B.C. declared a state of emergency for flooding and landslides in southern parts of the province.

But there's another question surfacing from the longstanding Wet'suwet'en conflict with Coastal GasLink as well as broader Indigenous opposition to pipelines across North America: What impact are these actions having on the climate? According to a new report by the Indigenous Environmental Network, Indigenous resistance to oil and gas projects in North America over the past decade has saved nearly 1.6 billion tonnes of annual greenhouse gas emissions. That's about a quarter of what Canada and the U.S. release together each year, the report states, or the amount of pollution from roughly 345 million cars.

"The most direct way for us to avoid further climate chaos is to keep fossil fuels in the ground," said Dallas Goldtooth, the Dakota and Diné lead author of the report, who some may know from the TV series *Reservation Dogs*. *"It's far past time that we recognize that these movements are making a difference."*

The report looked at avoided emissions from fossil fuel projects that have been cancelled, such as the Keystone XL pipeline, along with struggles still underway, like opposition to the 670-kilometre Coastal GasLink pipeline. If completed, it would transport fracked gas from Dawson Creek to a proposed \$40-billion liquified natural gas (LNG) processing facility near Kitimat. The report estimates that direct action by Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs and their supporters alone has saved roughly 125 million tonnes of planet-warming greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere.

Taking this climate benefit into account makes the violent raid of land defenders — including Sleydo' Molly Wickham, a Gidimt'en clan chief, and Shay Lynn Sampson from the Gitksan Nation, who were both removed from a cabin at gunpoint — all the more disturbing, Goldtooth said. *"I'm disgusted,"* he said. *"It's absurd but not surprising that we are in the year 2021 and Canada is still asserting colonial violence upon Indigenous peoples and then saying it's doing something good for climate at the same time."*

Gordon Christie, a professor at the University of British Columbia's Peter A. Allard School of Law, said what's going on in Wet'suwet'en territory is a clash between legal systems: that of Canada versus the hereditary system of the Wet'suwet'en, which, like nearly all First Nations in B.C., never surrendered their territory or signed a treaty. *"It's their territory and their law, so it should really trump Canadian law in that context,"* said Christie, who specializes in Crown-Indigenous relations.

This idea was acknowledged in the 1997 Supreme Court ruling in Delgamuukw v. British Columbia, which suggests that the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs have authority, or title, over the traditional territory. Band council chiefs — many of whom have signed on to support the Coastal GasLink pipeline — only have jurisdiction over reserves.

But the Supreme Court stopped short of establishing where exactly the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs have title, opting to send that question to a future trial. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) offers guidance for conflicts like this, but both B.C. and Canada have said they plan to embrace UNDRIP for future decision-making and not apply it to existing projects.

This leaves people like Freda Huson, Chief Howihkat of the Unist'ot'en House Group, no choice but to resist. Huson was arrested in early 2020 alongside two other Wet'suwet'en matriarchs, which sparked solidarity protests across Canada that shut down railways and ports.

Huson was recently named a winner of the international Right Livelihood Award "for her fearless dedication to reclaiming her people's culture and defending their land." She accepted the award on Dec. 1 in Stockholm. Huson said she hopes the award will help raise awareness about Indigenous peoples around the globe fighting to preserve lands, waters and the climate — and inspire others to join them. "It's all of our responsibility to protect future generations ... to find alternative energy sources that don't destroy the land," Huson said.

Until then, members of Unist'ot'en and neighbouring clans like the Gidimt'en are standing up against the pipeline and delaying emissions in the process. "I don't see [the Coastal GasLink] project going," Huson said, citing public opposition and rising tension about cost overruns. "We know these delay tactics are working."

* *Serena Renner* - CBC | What on Earth? <info@newsletters.cbc.ca>



The Contemplative Call to Nature -- “One Life – One Breath”

April 22, 2021 - CAC*

On Earth Day, Sherri Mitchell, a Native American attorney and sacred activist for environmental protection and human rights shared two particular terms which offer us some much-needed Indigenous wisdom and compassion:

N’dilnabamuk—“**all my relations.**” Many people have heard Native people say “*all my relations*” after speaking or offering prayers. But what does it really mean? All societies organize around some sort of core principle. The core principle for Wabanaki societies is relationship. Our story begins with an understanding that we are related to all beings within creation. The two legged, the four legged, the winged, the beings that crawl and slide along the ground, the plants, the trees, and the living Earth are all our relatives. Everything is interconnected and interdependent; the well-being of the whole determines the well-being of any individual part. We recognize that connection in our prayers, and the understanding that the whole is shifted by every action of each individual. There is one life, one breath that we all breathe. Therefore, when we take any action out in the world, even when we pray for ourselves, we impact all life. This belief forms the foundational understanding [that] weaves through all of our other values. It’s the thread that ties them all together. . . .

Kciye—“**Harmony with the natural world.**” This teaches us that it is not enough to know that we are part of one living system. We must also take active steps to live in harmony with the rest of creation. This means that we cannot adopt attitudes or beliefs that place us above the natural world. We cannot see ourselves as having dominion over the land, the water, or the animals. We can’t even see ourselves as being stewards of the Earth. We are only keepers of a way of life that is in harmony with the Earth. Every day, we must act in ways that acknowledge that we are part of one living system, a unified whole.

This understanding is very different than the belief that human beings are chosen above all others. That view creates countless distortions that not only elevate [humanity] inappropriately, but also diminish the rest of creation. The world is one unified system. It cannot be separated into fragmented, saleable parts. The Euro-centric view of property ownership requires us to see the land as being disconnected from us. This view separates us from the source of life. The Indigenous view recognizes the land as kin [*as did my spiritual father, St. Francis*], as part of the lineage of life that we are all connected to. Thus, we have an obligation to care for the land in the same way that we would care for our human relatives.

The only way for us to regain our balance within creation is to once again find our balance with the natural world. ***Kciye*** is just a word, but it’s a word that reminds us of our deeper connections and our deeper obligations to life.

Reference:

* Sherri Mitchell, *Sacred Instructions: Indigenous Wisdom for Living Spirit-Based Change* (North Atlantic Books: 2018), 188, 191–192.

Richard Rohr is director of CAC – Centre for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, N. M.

PWRDF FUNDS 3 NEW RECONCILIATION PROJECTS IN CANADA

PWRDF has launched a new grant program to support Indigenous-led organizations in their communities working in Community Health, Climate Action, Empowering Youth and Safe Water. The Responsive Programs grant was launched with the objective of partnering with more Indigenous organizations to broaden Anglican reconciliation efforts. Since then, donors have given more than \$62,000 to support the program. Grants will be awarded on an ongoing basis and donations can be made anytime during the year at pwrdf.org/indigenousgrants. M.L.

1. Indigenous Food, Farming Practices and Culture Knowledge Recovery

Métis Nation of Ontario – Highland Waters Metis Council – \$10,000

Project Goals: *To reconnect Indigenous food and farming practices to Indigenous culture and knowledge recovery; teaching the community on land stewardship and protection of nature and the environment.*

Description: The Indigenous and wider community will learn about ecosystems, how to steward the land and to reclaim traditional ways of working with plants. The programming will ensure women can attend with children to learn ways to keep them involved in land stewardship. Métis Nation Ontario will work with the nearby First Nations communities. Chief Doreen Davis from the Shabot Obaadjiwan (formerly Sharbot Lake Algonquins), and the Tyendinaga community will help facilitate family gatherings. This collaboration will ensure participants have access to traditional teachings, space for ceremony and opportunities to practise the language. The local seed sanctuary in Mohawk territory will also be studied as a model for growing a seed catalogue at the site.

2. Elder-in-Residence and Harm Reduction Program

1JustCity, Winnipeg – \$10,000

Project Goals: *To support community members who have experienced inter-generational trauma, are survivors of residential or day schools, or who are coping with addiction.*

Description: 1JustCity supports three drop-in community centres in the core neighbourhoods of West Broadway, the West End and Osborne Village. The program will fund an elder-in-residence and a Harm Reduction/Outreach program, to distribute safer drug use supplies on the streets in those three neighbourhoods. The Elder-in-residence will be present at each of the 1JustCity's sites one afternoon per week to build relationships. They will also provide occasional informal programming that may include smudging, drumming, sharing circles and more. The Harm Reduction program worker will visit the three drop-in sites one morning per week, distributing safer drug use supplies and information, and building relationships.

3. Kahnawà:ke Capacity Development for Community Well-Being

Kanien'keha:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Center (KORLCC) – \$15,000

Project Goals: *To increase the knowledge pool of people skilled in Mohawk language and culture, for new cultural facility.*

Description: KORLCC works to preserve and reclaim the language and culture for the community of Kahnawake, Quebec. Its Ratiwennahní:rats (*Their Words Are Strong*) Immersion Program was developed in 2002 to ensure availability of Mohawk speakers. KORLCC also teaches language skills to young people through their Tóta tánon Ohkwá:ri (Grandma and Ohkwari/Bear-name of Grandson) puppet television show, with particular emphasis on health and the environment. is in the planning stages of acquiring a new facility that will also house a Community Theatre and Community Museum. The project will ensure access to local talent with needed expertise and skills (i.e., cultural interpreters, museum curators and playwrights), and Indigenous knowledge keepers. Participants will learn land-based survival skills, beading, traditional singing, wood carving and silver-smithing in an immersion setting.

Jesus and John Wayne:

How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation

By Kristin Kobes Du Mez *

Book Reviewed by Sara Chu

The author begins and ends her book with reference to the strange era of Donald Trump. In between, she gives a thorough history and explanation of the white evangelical movement in the United States which contributed greatly to Trump's successes.

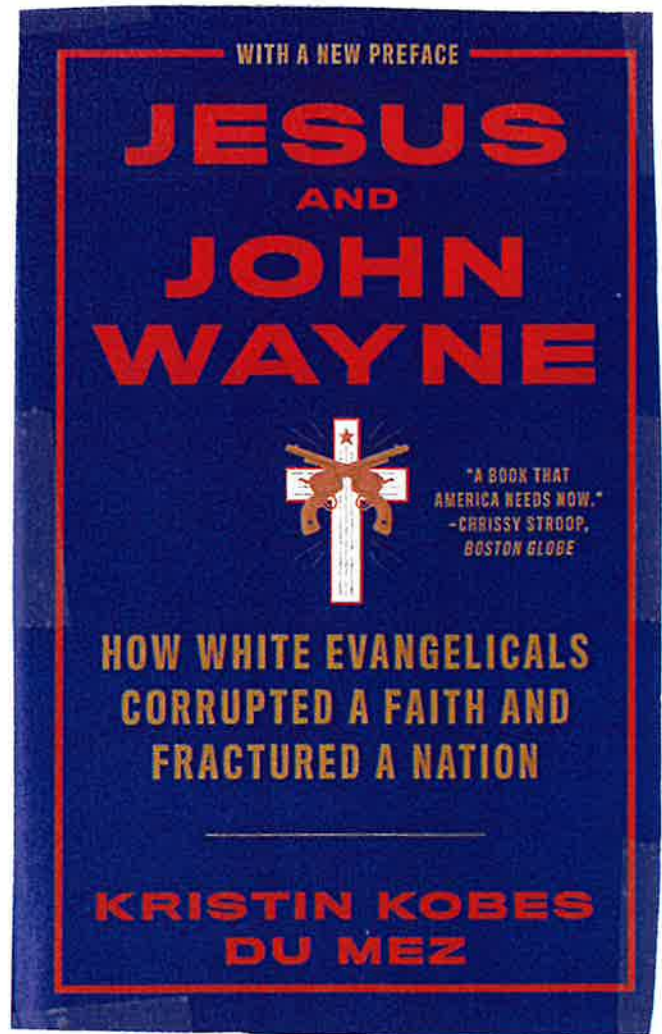
Kobes Du Mez clearly argues that this brand of extreme right wing evangelism is not derived from religious theology. Rather it is a cultural and political phenomenon that blurs the lines between denominations. She lists historical events that seemed to threaten the evangelical ideal of white masculine power: the end of World War II, the move away from blue collar jobs that relied on physical strength, the move toward urban office jobs with employee status, the end of the Cold War, the scandals of the Viet Nam war that blemished the reputation of the US armed forces, the rise of feminism, the gay and civil rights movements. The evangelical response was a scramble to protect white male power. The evangelicals embraced "family values" based on authoritarian patriarchy in the home, clearly defined gender roles (the male dominant but protective, and the female submissive), sexual purity (at least for unmarried women) and home schooling or private schooling. Public education was seen as undermining the authority of the patriarch. On a wider front they espoused militant nationalism at home and abroad. They supported a Christian national identity. And they glorified Jesus as a Warrior not a gentle pacifist.

Yet Kobes Du Mez also details the many ways in which evangelicals have compromised their stated ideals. Many are theologically illiterate. Biblical passages have been used freely to justify all sorts of otherwise embarrassing facts about the leadership and the movement's actions. The evangelicals became masters at justifying their often contradictory stands on many issues.

Ultimately the author makes the case that this extremist movement is based on fear of loss of white male power and the resultant anger. These emotions lead evangelicals to seek enemies on which to focus. Over time the enemies have been communism, secular humanism, feminism, multi-lateralism, Islamic terrorism, gay rights, civil rights. These have offered convenient enemies and a sense of embattlement that draws people to right wing evangelism.

John Wayne has long been touted as the masculine ideal by evangelicals. His failings as far as sexual purity and religious faith are glossed over. Mel Gibson is also idolized for his movie roles as William Wallace and as Christ. Pat Boone contributed to the appeal of the movement. The author gives comprehensive detail about the marketing aspects of the movement and the wide cultural and financial ramifications. Books, movies, clothing have made millions for their promoters. Donald Trump is the new rugged, raucous hero of the movement. His sexual misdeeds and breaking of laws are excused as necessities in an America which has declined morally. His misdeeds are part of his passion, courage, and leadership in evangelical eyes. The internet and television contribute hugely to the spread of evangelical ideas.

However, Kobes Du Mez does not address the future or how this toxic movement can be controlled or reduced. One can only hope there will be a future book on that subject.



* Sara Chu is a regular contributor to LJR. She is a member of St. John the Divine's Social Justice and Action Group. Sara's latest cartoon also appears in this issue on P.).

** Kristine Kobes du Mez is a professor of History at Calvin University. Her book was published by Liveright in 2021.

There is one copy of Jesus and John Wayne in the Greater Victoria Public Library system.

For Jesus, such teachings as forgiveness, healing, and justice are not just a spiritual test or obstacle course. They are quite simply the necessary requirements for a basic shared life. Peacemaking and reconciliation are not some kind of box seat tickets to heaven. They are the price of peoplehood. They express the truth in the heart of God, the truth that has been shared with us in the Holy Spirit, the union in Jesus the Christ who is reconciling all people to God.

Richard Rohr – Jan. 6/22

Julie Rodgers on Queer Christian Survival

By Dan Clendenin, JwJ, Dec. 5/21 *

This past summer Julie Rodgers released her book **Outlove: A Queer Christian Survival Story** (2021), in conjunction with the movie **Pray Away** (on Netflix) in which she is featured. Rodgers was ten years old when she thought she was gay. She was sure of it by the time she hit middle school. She eventually came out to her fundamentalist mother her junior year of high school. It eventually took about about twenty years, until she was thirty, to make peace with her body, and to fully embrace her homosexuality. Her memoir chronicles her long journey into the light.

For those twenty long years, Rodgers worked and prayed hard to be a good Christian in what she was told was a bad body. She did everything her evangelical mentors told her to do. It's hard to imagine anyone more deeply committed to becoming straight: *"my entire life revolved around trying not to be gay."* She spent ten years as a leader in Exodus International, which was founded in 1976 and then closed in 2013 after its leaders acknowledged how *"completely wrong"* they had been in their efforts to convert gays, the *"crushing realization"* about the horrible damage they had done to the people they thought they were helping, and how they had *"lied about their [own] continued same sex attractions"* (while claiming to be "healed"). She also endured what she calls a *"debacle"* as the first openly gay chaplain at the deeply conservative Wheaton College near Chicago (see below).

Rodgers paid a horrible personal price, as have many thousands of gays, for trying to *"pray away the gay,"* namely, eating disorders, burning herself, and a self-loathing after being told for twenty years that she was an abomination to God for sexual desires that she did not choose and could not change. Rodgers finally listened to her own experience, to the stories of gays who were similarly damaged by conversion therapy, and to the voice of her conscience over shame-based religious authority.

This isn't an angry book like it might have been. Rodgers merely asks readers to consider her story: *"Maybe anti-gay Christians just don't understand. Maybe if someone like me told the truth about myself and stayed in the Evangelical church, they would see the humanity of queer people and be moved to embrace us. Maybe we could grow in love together."*

* Dan Clendenon is editor of the web-site -- Journey with Jesus: A Weekly Web-zine for the Global Church. There is a 50-minute PODCAST INTERVIEW with Rodgers on "Common Good Podcast" with hosts Laura Truax (senior pastor of LaSalle Street Church in Chicago) and Stephany Spaulding (pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Colorado Springs, associate professor of Women's and Ethnic Studies at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS) and former U.S. Senate candidate for the state of Colorado.

10 Reasons To Be Optimistic About Climate Change (Without Being Naive)

These are dark times, but hope is not lost nor foolish, and change has already begun!

BY JEFF GOODELL -- NOV 5, 2021 – YES! MAGAZINE *

The 26th U.N. Climate Change Conference got underway in Glasgow this week, and it already looks like a slow-motion train wreck. The leaders of three of the biggest polluting nations—Russia, Brazil, and China—aren't there. The national pledges that have already been made to cut emissions won't be met—and even if they were, they aren't enough to avoid catastrophic warming. Rich nations of the world are woefully behind in their commitment to pay \$100 billion a year into the Green Climate Fund to help poor nations adapt to climate impacts and transition to clean energy. The conference runs through Nov. 12 and new deals and commitments will emerge. But right now, given the scale of the crisis we face, signs of urgency, ambition, and leadership are hard to find.

As Rob Larter, a scientist with the British Antarctic Survey, put it in a tweet: “I think that in the main what’s going on is a lot of politicians from many countries are trying to work out how they can come out of it looking good without really committing themselves to doing much.” But the climate fight is a big and complex war that’s being carried out on many fronts. Even for experienced climate warriors, it’s hard to keep the whole picture in your head at once. The apathy and self-dealing in Glasgow are obvious. What’s less obvious are signs of real progress.

Here are ten reasons for optimism:

1. The worst-case scenarios for climate warming have so far been averted.

It’s often argued that the nearly 30 years of climate talks since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 have led to nothing. But that’s not true. A decade ago, we were heading for a world 4°C (or more) warmer by 2100, which would have been catastrophic for life as we know it. But now, with the policies that are already in place, we’re heading for just under 3°C, perhaps a little lower. With the official pledges updated last month—if successfully translated into effective policies—we would limit warming to around 2.5°C. And since then, another 25 countries have updated their pledges. 2.5 C of warming is still horrific, but it’s far less horrific than 4 C.

2. The price of clean energy is falling fast.

A decade ago, the virtue of coal was that it was cheap and plentiful. No more. Utility-scale solar power declined in cost by 90% between 2009 and 2021. The cost of onshore wind power declined by 70% over the same period. Even in Big Coal states like Ohio, electricity from solar power will overtake coal by the end of the decade.

3. The Age of Accountability for Big Oil has begun.

Last week, the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Reform grilled Big Oil CEOs for knowingly spreading lies about the risks of climate change. Republicans on the committee, led by James Comer of Kentucky, trotted out 30-year-old myths about energy independence and how fossil fuels are the elixir of working families. But Democrats were merciless. Kati Porter of California used M&Ms and bags of rice to make a point about how much land the oil companies have tied up in land leases. New York’s Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez was typically sharp about the dangers of life in a rapidly warming world: “Some of us have to actually live the future that you all are setting on fire for us.” The CEOs squirmed, fidgeted, and blustered. Maybe it was all theater. Or maybe it was a foreshadowing of climate accountability to come.

4. President Biden’s climate agenda is big, smart, and serious.

It’s been downsized and cut up. It’s been ransacked and shanghaied by West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin. But Biden’s Build Back Better Act, which includes \$500 billion for climate funding, would still be the biggest investment in clean energy and climate adaptation the U.S. has ever made. It includes investments for virtually every aspect of the economy, from clean energy transmission and storage to tax credits for

electric vehicles and the production of low-carbon steel. Can Biden get it through congress? That remains to be seen, especially after the drubbing Democrats took in this week's elections. The good news is that the U.S. is pressing forward on other fronts, including new rules to limit methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas. Thanks in part to a big push from the U.S., more than 100 nations signed a Global Methane Pledge in Glasgow, vowing to cut methane emissions by 30% by 2030.

5. Scientists are getting their game on.

Michael Mann, Katharine Hayhoe, Gavin Schmidt, Andrea Dutton and Andrew Dessler are all top climate scientists who have a knack for calling out bullshit when they see it. And they're calling it out more and more. Mann has been particularly aggressive. "Look no further than Australia, a country that deserves better than the feckless coalition government that currently reigns," he wrote in The Los Angeles Times last week. As Mann points out, Australia's commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 26% to 28% by 2030 is half what other industrialized nations such as the U.S. and the European Union have committed to. Mann also roasted Saudi Arabia and Russia for making a mockery of the Glasgow negotiations by agreeing to "a laughably delinquent" date of 2060 for reaching net zero emissions.

6. The fossil fuel divestment movement is snowballing.

As activist and writer Bill McKibben noted in The New York Times last week, \$40 trillion in endowments and portfolios has vowed to abstain from investing in coal and gas and oil. "That's bigger than the GDP of China and the U.S. combined," McKibben wrote. There is still a lot of money sloshing around out there for fossil fuel development, but slowing the flow from the spigot sends a powerful signal. Here's one sign of how well divestment campaigns are working: the West Virginia Coal Association called divestment "the dumbest movement in history."

7. Increased focus on the link between the climate crisis and public health.

A rapidly warming world, researchers wrote in The Lancet, a prestigious British medical journal, is exposing humans to searing heat and extreme weather events; increasing the transmission of infectious diseases; exacerbating food, water and financial insecurity; endangering sustainable development; and worsening global inequality. "Health is the vector for climate action," Johan Rockstrom, the director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, said in Glasgow. "It is what people care about, and what motivates them to take action."

8. The war on coal is getting serious.

China has vowed to stop funding new coal plants abroad. Billionaire Michael Bloomberg just launched a new crusade to shut down coal plants in 25 countries. Bloomberg has already waged war against coal in the US, helping to shut down 280 plants. Coal's demise can't happen fast enough, but it is happening.

9. Climate justice takes centre stage.

What do the rich polluters owe the poor who are suffering the worst climate impacts? This has always been an issue at previous climate talks. In Glasgow, it's the issue. And climate justice leaders, who see their very existence at stake in these negotiations, are in no mood to play footsie with the leaders of rich nations. As Fiji's Prime Minister, Voreqe Bainimarama put it: "We Pacific nations have not travelled to the other end of the world to watch our future to be sacrificed at the altar of appeasement of the world's worst emitters."

10. Writers and artists are finding their voices.

"Nothing will be saved without you." That's the first line of a poem by Yrsa Daley-Ward, a writer of mixed Nigeria-Jamaican heritage, which she read in the opening ceremony in Glasgow. If there's a better one-sentence call to action for the climate movement, I haven't heard it.

* This story originally appeared in Rolling Stone and is part of *Covering Climate Now*, a global journalism collaboration strengthening coverage of the climate story.

What Does 'Regeneration' Mean To You? - Scientist Paul Hawken (Tyee) *

Regeneration means placing life at the centre of every action and decision. I was asked to come up with guidelines or principles by a friend, and in 15 minutes this is what I came up with. Others can make their own guidelines. These seem obvious to me, and I think they are common sense to anyone who wants to create a meaningful life on this planet:

1. Does the action create more life or reduce it?
2. Does it heal the future or steal the future?
3. Does it enhance human well-being or diminish it?
4. Does it prevent disease or profit from it?
5. Does it create livelihoods or eliminate them?
6. Does it restore land or degrade it?
7. Does it increase global warming or decrease it?
8. Does it serve human needs or manufacture human wants?
9. Does it reduce poverty or expand it?
10. Does it promote fundamental human rights or deny them?
11. Does it provide workers with dignity or demean them?
12. In short -- is the activity extractive or regenerative?

What Advice Would You Give to Young People Re: Reversing Climate Change?

I would probably crib a commencement speech I gave 12 years ago. I mentioned during the talk that **Ralph Waldo Emerson** once asked what we would do if the stars only came out once every thousand years. Good question. I said people would stay up all night and be ecstatic, but what we actually do is watch television every night. I recently ended a college commencement speech like this:

"This extraordinary time when we are globally aware of each other and the multiple dangers that threaten civilization has never happened, not in a thousand years, not in 10,000 years. Each of us is as complex and beautiful as all the stars in the universe. We have done great things, and we have gone way off course in terms of honouring creation. You are graduating to the most amazing, stupefying challenge ever bequeathed to any generation. The generations before you failed. They didn't stay up all night. They got distracted and lost sight of the fact that life is a miracle every moment of your existence. Nature beckons you to be on her side. You couldn't ask for a better boss. The most unrealistic person in the world is the cynic, not the dreamer. Hope only makes sense when it doesn't make sense to be hopeful. This is your century. Take it and run as if your life depends on it."

* **From:** The Tyee – Aug. 9/2021

Note: Paul Hawken is an environmentalist, entrepreneur, author and activist who has dedicated his life to environmental sustainability and changing the relationship between business and the environment. His recent books included *Blessed Unrest* (2019) and *Regeneration: Ending the Climate Crisis in One Generation* (2021).

Looting By Other Means

By George Monbiot *

What the rich nations owe the poor is not climate aid or climate loans. It's climate reparations.

The story of the past 500 years can be crudely summarized as follows. A handful of European nations, which had mastered both the art of violence and advanced seafaring technology, used these faculties to invade other territories and seize their land, labour and resources.

Competition for control of other people's lands led to repeated wars between the colonizing nations. New doctrines – racial categorization, ethnic superiority and a moral duty to “rescue” other people from their “barbarism” and “depravity” – were developed to justify the violence. These doctrines led, in turn, to genocide.

The stolen labour, land and goods were used by some European nations to stoke their industrial revolutions. To handle the greatly increased scope and scale of transactions, new financial systems were established that eventually came to dominate their own economies. European elites permitted just enough of the looted wealth to trickle down to their labour forces to seek to stave off revolution – successfully in Britain, unsuccessfully elsewhere.

At length, the impact of repeated wars, coupled with insurrections by colonized peoples, forced the rich nations to leave most of the lands they had seized, formally at least. These territories sought to establish themselves as independent nations. But their independence was never more than partial. Using international debt, structural adjustment, coups, corruption (assisted by offshore tax havens and secrecy regimes), transfer pricing and other clever instruments, the rich nations continued to loot the poor, often through the proxy governments they installed and armed.

Unwittingly at first, then with the full knowledge of the perpetrators, the industrial revolutions released waste products into the Earth's systems. At first, the most extreme impacts were felt in the rich nations, whose urban air and rivers were poisoned, shortening the lives of the poor. The wealthy removed themselves to places they had not trashed. Later, the rich countries discovered they no longer needed smokestack industries: through finance and subsidiaries, they could harvest the wealth manufactured by dirty business overseas.

Some of the pollutants were both invisible and global. Among them was carbon dioxide, which did not disperse but accumulated in the atmosphere. Partly because most rich nations are temperate, and partly because of extreme poverty in the former colonies caused by centuries of looting, the effects of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are felt most by those who have benefited least from their production. If the talks in Glasgow are not to be experienced as yet another variety of oppression, climate justice should be at their heart.

The wealthy nations, always keen to position themselves as saviours, have promised to help their former colonies adjust to the chaos they have caused. Since 2009, these rich countries have pledged \$100bn (£75bn) a year to poorer ones in the form of climate finance. Even if this money had materialized, it would have been a miserly token. By comparison, since 2015, the G20 nations have spent \$3.3tn on subsidizing their fossil fuel industries. Needless to say, they have failed to keep their wretched promise.

In the latest year for which we have figures, 2019, they provided \$80bn. Of this, just \$20bn was earmarked for “adaptation”: helping people adjust to the chaos we have imposed on them. And only about 7% of these stingy alms went to the poorest countries that need the money most. Instead, the richest nations have poured money into keeping out the people fleeing from climate breakdown and other disasters. Between 2013 and 2018, the UK spent almost twice as much on sealing its borders as it did on climate finance. The US spent 11 times, Australia 13 times, and **Canada 15 times more**. Collectively, the rich nations are surrounding themselves with a climate wall, to exclude the victims of their own waste products.

But the farce of climate finance doesn’t end there. Most of the money the rich nations claim to be providing takes the form of loans. Oxfam estimates that, as most of it will have to be repaid with interest, the true value of the money provided is around one third of the nominal sum. Highly indebted nations are being encouraged to accumulate more debt to finance their adaptation to the disasters we have caused. It is staggeringly, outrageously unfair.

Never mind aid, never mind loans; what the rich nations owe the poor is reparations. Much of the harm inflicted by climate breakdown makes a mockery of the idea of adaptation: how can people adapt to temperatures higher than the human body can withstand; to repeated, devastating cyclones that trash homes as soon as they are rebuilt; to the drowning of entire archipelagos; to the desiccation of vast tracts of land, making farming impossible? But while the concept of irreparable “*loss and damage*” was recognized in the Paris agreement, the rich nations insisted that this “does not involve or provide a basis for any liability or compensation”.

By framing the pittance they offer as a gift, rather than as compensation, the states that have done most to cause this catastrophe can position themselves, in true colonial style, as the heroes who will swoop down and rescue the world: this was the thrust of Boris Johnson’s opening speech, invoking James Bond, at Glasgow: “*We have the ideas. We have the technology. We have the bankers.*”

But the victims of the rich world’s exploitation don’t need James Bond, nor other white saviours. They don’t need Johnson’s posturing. They don’t need his skin-flint charity, or the deadly embrace of the bankers who fund his party. They need to be heard. And they need justice.

* George Monbiot, published in the Guardian - 5th November 2021 - and Posted in “Climate Breakdown”. www.monbiot.com

On William Shatner, Jeff Bezos
and Deciding Whether We Live in Heaven or Hell

Jim McDermott - America Magazine (on-line) *

On Wednesday, William Shatner went to space. Woo-hoo!! I guess? I know, I know. It's Captain Kirk, he's 90, give the man his moment. I mean no disrespect, even if Kirk was a 23rd-century Ronan Farrow exposé waiting to happen and watching old school "Star Trek" is like trying to find something nice to say about your nephew's Mars diorama. *"Wow, you got the dirt so red, Dylan."*

But if I am being honest, I was appalled to hear that we have apparently now reached the stage where not only billionaires but others are starting to take joy rides into space. And my feelings stem from a pretty straightforward reason: Most of the world remains unvaccinated, with no end to that state of things in sight. If you are vaccinated, do you remember what being unvaccinated felt like? Not only having to wear a mask everywhere but not being able to see your parents or grandchildren or your friends, not being able to take vacations or really go much of anywhere? It was pretty horrible, wasn't it?

But you know what would make it worse? Being trapped in that same endless purgatory of solitude and Netflix and Zoom meetings while a lucky few enjoy the rich-guy version of a roller-coaster.

To be clear, I am not one of those people who think we absolutely should not be exploring outer space until we have dealt with all the social issues facing humanity. I find the stories and insights of actual astronauts like Chris Hadfield to be challenging and inspiring. If people *"could see the whole world every 90 minutes and look down on the places where we do things right,"* he said in a 2013 NPR interview, *"and look down where we're doing stupid, brutal things to each other and the inevitable patience of the world that houses us—I think everybody would be reinforced in their faith, and maybe re-address the real true tenets of what's good and what gives them strength."*

But what Jeff Bezos, Elon Musk and others are doing is the opposite of that: Their rockets seem like a slap in the face to the overwhelming majority of humanity who cannot safely take a ride on a bus, let alone fly into space.

To be fair, Amazon's founder, Mr. Bezos, has promised 13 billion dollars to various charitable ventures. But at this point he has actually given only \$1.5 billion, and much of what is to come will be distributed over long time frames. Elon Musk has promised to give half of his fortune away. As of a year ago, that would mean he would be giving away \$34 billion; yet so far he has only given \$34 million (yes you read that right). Meanwhile Bezos' ex-wife, MacKenzie Scott, has donated \$8.5 billion to a total of almost 800 different groups, with much of it given in response to various crises caused by the pandemic.

So yeah, I was not a fan of this idea. But then, perhaps like you, I watched Mr. Shatner weep like he had seen the face of God when he got back to Earth. *"I'm so filled with emotion about what just happened,"* he said to Mr. Bezos. *"It's just extraordinary. I hope I never recover from this.... It's so much larger than me and life."*

Mr. Shatner, who in addition to being an actor has written books, poetry and games and has a new album out called "Bill," spoke with great eloquence about the experience of seeing our atmosphere fly by. *"Is that the way death is?"* he asked, wondering at how instantaneously the "blanket" of blue sky that we take for granted disappeared in flight. *"Whoop, and it's gone? Jesus!"*

Some were distracted by seeing the listening Mr. Bezos turn away from Mr. Shatner as he was talking to grab a bottle of champagne and spray it, seemingly oblivious to the profoundness of the experience of going into space, despite having done so himself just months ago. *"I think this is what you act like when you have \$200 billion,"* opined late night host Jimmy Kimmel.

But the wonder that Mr. Shatner shared in describing just the sky, this fundamental element of our existence, was compelling. When it is especially pretty we might take note of it; in Los Angeles people stop on the beach every evening just to watch the sun set. But more often than not, we do not even take the time to notice it is there. And yet it is all so amazing, really, as the writer Danielle Weisber noted in a tweet just the other day: *"I can't believe I exist on a planet with like aurora borealis and coral reefs and f— snow capped alps and mossy stones and sparkling waterfalls and I have to do like a career."*

Ms. Weisber's tweet unexpectedly led many other people to share their own extraordinary, ordinary, beautiful things: photographs of the aurora borealis and the leaves changing colour in New England; stories of being chased by bears and seeing ducks in real life for the first time; and the crazy truth that we spend our lives buying furniture and pressing plastic buttons while fungi *"eat literal lightning, immortal if lucky, trees give sugar all day, lives in ground."* But there was one comment that hit me right between the eyes: *"Heaven is everywhere,"* someone tweeted, *"and humans act like it's hell."*

In the end, there are always going to be narcissists out there narcississ-ing. But even if some of them really may wind us up—Jeff Bezos, when the old man you put in a space capsule starts weeping, put the champagne down!—it is still our decision whether or not to fixate on them. As a little cartoon boy once said to his stuffed tiger, Hobbes, *"There's treasure everywhere."* And better pay attention to it now, because one day, *"Whoop, and it's gone."*

* Jim McDermott, S.J., is an associate editor at America. From the Oct. 15/21 on-line edition.

ANGLICANS WALK THE TALK!

First the bad news! The WHO recently reported that 36 countries still have less than 10% of their people vaccinated! What happened to COVAX? One African leader said: *“What is going on right now is ... a result of the world's failure to vaccinate in an equitable, urgent and speedy manner ... it is a result of hoarding of vaccines by high-income countries, and quite frankly, it is unacceptable!”* It goes without saying, if we are going to definitively defeat this pandemic, hoarding must end and vaccinations must be rolled out equitably on a worldwide basis.

Now for some good news! The Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (PWRDF) stepped up the plate in 2021, launching an initiative to make Covid vaccines available to the world's poor. *“The Vaccine Equity Fund”* encourages Anglicans from across Canada to contribute to a worldwide effort to vaccinate *“all”* people against COVID-19. With the roll-out of vaccines across Canada largely completed, Anglicans can now *“pay it forward”* by contributing to the VEF.

Archbishop Linda Nicholls challenges us: *“We must ask how we can share the benefits of health care and vaccinations that many of us enjoy, with others who need it.”* At a time when Covid-19 shows little sign of easing-up on us, LJR commends PWRDF and Canadian Anglicans in general for showing true global leadership!



TOP ANGLICAN JOINS OTHER CHURCH LEADERS IN CALL FOR CLIMATE ACTION BY GINA CILIBERTO | – SEPT. 8/21 – SOJO.NET *

For the first time, the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the **Anglican Communion** came together to issue a joint statement. In *“A Joint Message for the Protection of Creation,”* **Pope Francis**, Ecumenical **Patriarch Bartholomew I**, and **Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury** stressed that Christians need to take part in mitigating climate change. The statement urged individuals and public leaders to play their part in *“choosing life”* for the future of the planet, and warned of the urgency of environmental sustainability, its impact on poverty, and the importance of global cooperation.

The ecumenical statement comes less than a month after the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change found that held humans “unequivocally” to blame for near-catastrophic global warming. The leaders highlighted the importance of advocating for environmental justice for people living with poverty, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Nature is resilient, yet delicate. We are already witnessing the consequences of our refusal to protect and preserve it We must pursue generosity and fairness in the ways that we live, work and use money, instead of selfish gain.”

“We also face a profound injustice. The people bearing the most catastrophic consequences of these abuses are the poorest on the planet and have been the least responsible for causing them.”

They also urge individuals to make meaningful sacrifices for the sake of the planet, to work together and take responsibility for how they use their resources. They called on those *“heading administrations, running companies, employing people or investing funds”* to choose *“people-centred profits”* and lead the transition to just and sustainable economies.

**Gina Ciliberto is a writer living in Minneapolis.*

Because We Hunkered Down

by Malcolm Guite

These bleak and freezing seasons may mean
grace

When they are memory. In time to come
When we speak truth, then they will have their
place,

Telling the story of our journey home,
Through dark December and stark January
With all its disappointments, through the murk
And dreariness of frozen February,
When even breathing seemed unwelcome
work.

Because through all of these we held together,
Because we shunned the impulse to let go,
Because we hunkered down through our dark
weather,

And trusted to the soil beneath the snow,
Slowly, slowly, turning a cold key,
Spring will unlock our hearts and set us free.

Ayodeji Malcolm Guite is an English poet, singer-songwriter, Anglican priest, and academic. Born in Nigeria to British expatriate parents, Guite earned degrees from Cambridge and Durham universities.

**Love isn't a state of perfect caring.
It is an active noun like struggle.**

- Fred Rogers, *Wisdom from the World According to
Mister Rogers* (2003)

*"We encounter God in the face of a stranger.
That, I believe, is the Hebrew Bible's single
greatest and most counter-intuitive
contribution to ethics. God creates difference;
therefore it is in one-who-is-different that we
meet God."*

**Rabbi Jonathan Sacks,
*The Dignity of Difference***

The climate crisis is ongoing.
And, also, a bird is building a nest
in the eaves outside my window.
Come spring, there will be new birth.

In shaky hands,
I hold these two truths together.

BY MORGAN FLORSHEIM , YES

Epiphany

By Walter Brueggemann

On Epiphany day, we are still the
people walking.
We are still people in the dark, and the
darkness looms large around us,
beset as we are by fear, anxiety,
brutality, violence, loss —
a dozen alienations we cannot manage.
We are — we could be — people of
your light.
So we pray for the light of your glorious
presence
as we wait for your appearing;
we pray for the light of your wondrous
grace
as we exhaust our coping capacity;
we pray for your gift of newness that
will override our weariness;
we pray that we may see and know and
hear and trust in your good rule.
That we may have energy, courage,
and freedom to enact your rule
through the demands of this day.
We submit our day to you and to your
rule, with deep joy and high hope.

Walter Brueggemann (1933 --)
Protestant Old Testament theologian who
says the Church must provide a counter-
narrative to the forces of consumerism
militarism, and nationalism.

Oh Lord – How Long?

Congressman Causes Outrage by Posting ‘Insensitive’ Tweet Just Days after Michigan School Shooting

5 Dec. 2021

The Guardian *



A US congressman has posted a Christmas picture of himself and what appears to be his family, smiling and posing with an assortment of guns, just days after four teenagers were killed in a shooting at a high school in Michigan. Thomas Massie of Kentucky tweeted: ***“Merry Christmas! ps. Santa, please bring ammo.”***

Massie, who represents a solidly Republican district, posted the picture of him-self and six others holding firearms resembling machine guns and semi-automatic weaponry, some of which are made to look almost identical to fully automatic weapons. Under US law, weapons such as machine guns are restricted to the military, law enforcement and civilians who have obtained special licenses for weapons made before May 1986. Jonathan Van Norman, a campaign manager for Massie, did not immediately reply to a request for comment via Twitter.

The Democratic US Representative John Yarmuth condemned his fellow Kentuckian’s post. *“I’m old enough to remember Republicans screaming that it was insensitive to try to protect people from gun violence after a tragedy,”* Yarmuth tweeted, apparently referring to calls for gun control laws.

* This article appeared in The Guardian (UK) on 5th of Dec. 2021. It has been excerpted.

A Christian Vision of Social Justice

Social Change Can Be Pursued With Mercy and Hope

March 18, 2021 - By David Brooks - Opinion Columnist -- New York Times *

Like a lot of people, I've tried to envision a way to promote social change that doesn't involve destroying people's careers over a bad tweet, that doesn't reduce people to simplistic labels, that is more about a positive agenda to redistribute power to the marginalized than it is about simply blotting out the unworthy. I'm groping for a social justice movement, in other words, that would be anti-oppression and without the dehumanizing cruelty we've seen of late.

I tried to write a column describing what that might look like — and failed. It wasn't clear in my head. But this week I interviewed Esau McCaulley, a New Testament professor at Wheaton College and a [contributing writer for New York Times Opinion](#). He described a distinctly Christian vision of social justice I found riveting and a little strange (in a good way) and important for everybody to hear, Christian and non-Christian, believer and nonbeliever.

This vision begins with respect for the equal dignity of each person. It is based on the idea that we are all made in the image of God. It abhors any attempt to dehumanize anybody on any front. We may be unjustly divided in a zillion ways, but a fundamental human solidarity in being part of the same creation.

The Christian social justice vision also emphasizes the importance of memory. The Bible is filled with stories of marginalization and transformation, which we continue to live out. Exodus is the complicated history of how a fractious people comes together to form a nation.

Today, many Americans are trying to tell the true history of our people, a tale that doesn't whitewash the shameful themes in our narrative nor downplay the painful but uneven progress — realist but not despairing.

McCaulley doesn't describe racism as a *problem*, but as a *sin* enmeshed with other sins, like greed and lust. Some people don't like "sin" talk. But to cast racism as a sin is useful in many ways.

The concept of sin gives us an action plan to struggle against it: acknowledge the sin, confess the sin, ask forgiveness for the sin, turn away from the sin, restore the wrong done. If racism is America's collective sin then the tasks are: tell the truth about racism, turn away from racism, offer reparations for racism.

A struggle against a sin is not the work of a week or a year, since sin keeps popping back up. But this vision has led to some of the most significant social justice victories in history: William Wilberforce's fight against the slave trade, the Rev. Dietrich Bonhoeffer's and the Confessing Church's struggle against Nazism. And, of course, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement.

From Frederick Douglass and Howard Thurman to Martin Luther King Jr. on down, the Christian social justice movement has relentlessly exposed evil by forcing it face to face with Christological good. The marches, the sit-ins, the nonviolence. "You can't get to just ends with unjust means," McCaulley told me. "The ethic of Jesus is as important as the ends of liberation."

He pointed me to the argument Thurman made in "*Jesus and the Disinherited*," that hatred is a great motivator, but it burns down more than the object of its ire. You can feel rage but there has to be something on the other side of anger.

That is the ethic of self-emptying love — neither revile the reviler nor allow him to stay in his sin. The Christian approach to power is to tell those with power to give it up for the sake of those who lack. There is a relentless effort to rebuild relationship because God is relentless in pursuit of us.

“He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love,” King wrote. *“We can never say, ‘I will forgive you, but I won’t have anything further to do with you.’ Forgiveness means reconciliation, a coming together again.”*

McCaulley emphasizes that forgiveness — like the kind offered by the congregants of the Emanuel A.M.E. church in Charleston, S.C., and family members after parishioners were murdered in 2015 by a white supremacist — is not a stand-alone thing. It has to come with justice and change: “Why is Black forgiveness required again and again? Why is forgiveness heard but the demand for justice ignored?”

But this vision does not put anybody outside the sphere of possible redemption. *“If you tell us you are trying to change, we will come alongside you,”* McCaulley says. *“When the church is at its best it opens up to the possibility of change, to begin again.”*

New life is always possible, for the person and the nation. This is the final way the Christian social justice vision is distinct. When some people talk about social justice it sounds as if group-versus-group power struggles are an eternal fact of human existence. We all have to armour up for an endless war.

But, as McCaulley writes in his book “Reading While Black,” *“the Old and New Testaments have a message of salvation, liberation and reconciliation.”*

On the other side of justice, we reach the beloved community and multi-ethnic family of humankind. This vision has a destination, and thus walks not in bitterness, but in hope.

* David Brooks has been a columnist with *The Times* since 2003. He is the author of “*The Road to Character*” and, most recently, “*The Second Mountain*.” @nytdavidbrooks A version of this article appears in print on March 19, 2021, -- Section A, Page 25 of the New York edition with the headline: A Christian Vision of Social Justice.

Right now, much work waits to be done. In politics, we’ve been studying war for centuries. We must now study how to create the conditions for deep and lasting peace. In many sectors of religion, we’ve been obsessed for centuries with escaping this day-to-day life on earth for an afterlife in heaven (or an experience of personal bliss). We must now cherish life on earth and engage with it by focusing our best energies on learning to love neighbour, self, earth, and God, who is Love. In education, for centuries we’ve been focused on basic morality, technology, and critical thinking. Now we must learn how to teach our children not just to know right from wrong, and not just to be able to make a living, and not just to be able to think critically, but also to live well with ourselves, one another, and the earth, discovering and cherishing the “sound of the genuine” in all things.

Brian D. McLaren, *Faith After Doubt: Why Your Beliefs Stopped Working and What to Do about It* (St. Martin’s Essentials: 2021), 200–201. (CAC Meditation, Dec. 30/21)

The Christmas Story at the U.S. Border

By [Keara Hanlon](#) -- December 13, 2021 - America Magazine, Dec. 2021*

“How goodly are your tents, O Jacob; your encampments, O Israel! They are like gardens beside a stream, like the cedars planted by the LORD. A star shall advance from Jacob, and a staff shall rise from Israel”

(Nm. 24: 5-7)

The Kino Border Initiative, a Jesuit ministry in Nogales, Mexico, is a pop of colour in a bland desert landscape. For a photographer like myself, the contrast here is thrilling. Volunteers in sunflower-yellow aprons serve food to the hungry, legal experts offer counsel to migrants behind purple doors, and *Estrella* the grey cat rubs up against children’s legs to say hello.

But some of the most striking images cannot be captured by camera—we cannot photograph the children without express permission. They are too vulnerable. Unlike the Israelites in the reading, these migrants do not even have tents. Instead, they sit in metal chairs just outside, waiting for the call that “*desayuno esta listo*”—“breakfast is ready.” On the other side of the wall, cartel members loiter, watching like hawks, searching for the most vulnerable.

Mexico’s Patron Saint La Virgen de Guadalupe



My visit is an excellent reminder of God’s closeness to those on the margins. For the Israelites in exile and these migrants at the southern border, I am sure that hope may feel far away. But in reality, these people live closer to the truth of the Christmas story than someone as privileged as me ever could. Having travelled far, they long for a safe place to rest. Some are pregnant, others have small children in tow. They have followed their north star through the desert and find themselves staring up at a brown-slatted fence that seems to tell them there is no room at the inn. And yet the hope and faith of these people is as palpable as their suffering. Inside, a woman stops to take a photo of her daughter in front of a shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Many people in the region have a deep devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, but I wonder if this woman feels a special kinship with her, another mother willing to do anything to protect her child. Her daughter dances up to the statue, twirling under the Christmas lights that decorate the hall. She is the future. This Advent I am praying for the brothers and sisters in Christ that I met down in Nogales, and displaced persons everywhere. I pray that, like the Israelites, they too will be guided home.

* Keara Hanlon is an O’Hare Fellow at America. She is a graduate of Boston College, where she majored in Communication and minored in Marketing and American Studies. America is a Jesuit publication from Georgetown U. In Washington, D.C.

Walking Together *

In **Isaiah 1: 2-4** we hear the prophet's stern rebuke against the sins of Judah: ***"The people are unmerciful and practice injustice!"*** Isaiah's prophetic indictment implies that because of Jerusalem's lack of concern for suffering people -- the poor, widows, and orphans -- Yahweh's punishment will be meted out! Who are the suffering ones in our midst today? As a Canadian, I have become increasingly aware of the ongoing anguish of our *"First Nations"* brothers and sisters [i.e., *"Native Americans"* in the USA]. I am also more sensitive to the direct role that we as *settlers*, and our Churches (including my Anglican denomination), have played in perpetrating historical injustices upon First Nations in Canada, including here in my adopted province of BC.

In May, 2021, Canadians woke to the disturbing news that 215 unmarked child graves were located (using ground-penetrating radar) at the site of a former Residential School (RS) near Kamloops, BC. In July, we were shocked by a second discovery of 751 unmarked graves near the site of another former RS in Saskatchewan. Although both findings were at former Roman Catholic school sites, my own Anglican denomination also participated in the Canadian government's policy of *"forced assimilation"* of Indigenous children. Numerous observers have described Canada's RS policy as *"a deliberate strategy to kill the Indian in the child!"* As a former National Chief remarked: *"It was a breakdown of self; the breakdown of family, community and nation!"*

A fuller picture of the dehumanization inflicted on First Nations' children in RSs, and the resulting *"inter-generational trauma"* emerged in 2012 when the Canadian government launched a national *"Truth and Reconciliation Commission"* (TRC) to hear the stories of Indigenous peoples -- Aboriginal, Metis and Inuit -- who were victimized by our nation's policy of forced assimilation between 1874 and 1996. Anglicans participated fully in the TRC, publicly acknowledging responsibility for its role in RSs across Canada, including St. Michael's at Alert Bay on Vancouver Island. Indeed, the final TRC Report in 2015 concluded that *"cultural genocide"* was a product of the RS system. Of the 94 TRC Calls to Action, several pertained to the four Church denominations which operated RSs. The TRC process and report had a huge impact on Canadian Christians, Anglicans included. Our Bishop in the Diocese of B.C. embraced the need for joint healing with our Indigenous brothers and sisters. He attended the demolition ceremony at the St. Michael's facility (closed since 1975), and in 2016, walked from Victoria to Alert Bay (351 kms.), in a powerful, symbolic act of repentance. Along the way, he asked for permission from First Nations to cross their unceded territories. On this pilgrimage, our Bishop not only demonstrated remorse for our Church's role in the RS *"legacy of inter-generational trauma"*, but pledged Anglicans to an on-going journey of reconciliation.

In a new era of respect, engagement and social justice, difficult and challenging days still lie before us. Support for

**Hand of
Welcome
& Face of
the Future**



"decolonization" in my own inner-city Victoria parish of St. John the Divine moves ahead slowly in the firm hope that our common *Creator* will one day make us true and equal neighbours. To this end, we initiated a symbolic reconciliation project in 2017 which established the *"Walking Together Chapel"* -- *A Place for Truth-Telling* -- where Anglican *"settlers"* and local First Nations could safely dialogue in a spirit of openness and trust. The project commissioned a West-Coast aboriginal artist to decorate the space using traditional designs. Before all parish gatherings, including worship, St. John's offers a *"territorial acknowledgement"* which honours our on-going relationship with First Nations on the lands we jointly call our island home: *"We acknowledge with respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory we work, play and worship, represented today by the*

Songhees and Esquimalt Nations." Such symbolic actions and rituals are only a beginning. Reconciliation is complicated, but it is our chosen road towards a more just future for all of us living in BC.

Mission Action Today: As a *settler community*, how do we best bear witness to the grief and anger of our aboriginal neighbours? During Lent, Jesus' powerful words remind that our Biblical faith compels us to create a new world in which authentic inter-human relationships are an imperative: ***"The greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted."*** (Mt. 23: 11-12)

Creator God - Humble us! Make us merciful and just! *Keep sending us back to serve our most vulnerable neighbours!*

* This reflection is part of the United Methodist Church (USA) 2022 Lenten Series. Murray Luft is a retired program manager / international development consultant who worked for 20 years in Latin America with agencies such as Mennonite Central Committee, Save the Children-Canada and Catholic Relief Services. He lives in Victoria, BC, Canada.