November 15 – Discussion Questions

1. Understanding the Message

1. The speaker described MCC's work through three words: *Relief*, *Development*, and *Peace***.** Which of these three areas stands out to you most? Why do you think all three are important?

2. The story of the young girl and her brother in the Dzaleka refugee camp illustrated how practical acts of compassion can communicate God's love. What stood out to you about this story? What does it teach us about seeing and responding to human need?

3. The speaker suggested that emergency relief is sometimes like putting a band-aid on a much larger wound. What is the difference between responding to an immediate need and addressing the root causes of that need? Where do we see this in the life & ministry of Jesus?

2. Peacekeepers vs. Peacemakers

4. **Read Matthew 4:14-30.** The speaker made a distinction between being a *peacekeeper* and a *peacemaker*. Based on the example(s) of Jesus, how would you explain the difference in your own words?

5. Why do you think we are sometimes more interested in keeping the peace than making peace? What makes us reluctant to challenge the status quo or address difficult situations?

6. Jesus challenged injustice (Mt. $21^{12\text{-}13}$), confronted religious and political authorities (Mt. $23^{13\text{-}39}$), welcomed outsiders (Luke 15) and forgave enemies (Lk. 23^{34}). How does this picture of Jesus challenge some of our assumptions about what it means to be a peaceful person?

3. Reconciliation in Action

7. **Read Colossians 1:19-20.** How extensive was/is God's peace plan? Why?

8. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:17–20**. Paul says that God has given us the "ministry of reconciliation." What do you think this ministry looks like in everyday life?

9. The story from the Ethiopian prison was particularly powerful. What challenged you most about this reconciliation story?

4. Bringing It Home

10. The speaker gave several examples of peacemaking:

- Having a difficult conversation to begin healing a relationship.
- Acknowledging the dignity of someone experiencing homelessness.
- Speaking up for people who have no voice.
- Examining how our business decisions affect others and creation.
- Choosing to see people who are different from us through the lens of shared humanity rather than fear.

Which of these examples challenges you most? What other example(s) would you add?

11. Where is God calling you to be a peacemaker—in your family, workplace, neighbourhood or community? What is one thing you could do this week?