

LET JUSTICE ROLL #13

The picture on our cover page is taken from a 1911 poster in which the U.S. Dept. of the Interior offers “*Indian Land for Sale*”. Such advertisements helped perpetuate the idea that “*uninhabited/unused*” land was cheaply and readily available to prospective American settlers. Canada's own promotion of white/settler migration to vacant farmland on the Prairies was similar, beginning in the late 19th century. This poster frames our main theme for LJR#13 -- *Reconciliation with First Nations!* The feature article, by **Elaine Enns**, a Canadian historian, tells the story of how her Mennonite family, violently displaced from their farmlands during the Russian revolution, eventually resettled on the traditional lands of the Cree in Saskatchewan. Enns' “*alternate settler voice*” is truly powerful! (See Pp. 9–11.) Other articles in this issue will hopefully help St. John's readers to better appreciate Canadian land-claim struggles and the on-going quest for justice by aboriginal people globally. The Sinclair, Betasamosake, Mills and Hancock contributions, along with a unique poem and song of apology, will serve to reinforce the importance of persevering on the road to reconciliation in our Victoria parish.

If we Protestants had saints, Dietrich Bonhoeffer would surely top the list! St. John's congregants -- Pat Payne and David Buckman -- have collaborated to bring us some insights into the intriguing life of this 20th-Century giant of the faith in their review of Eric Metaxas' book – “*Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy*”. Sara Chu's review of a new book on climate justice by Seth Kline, entitled: “*A Good War*”, initiates a deeper discussion on climate justice. LJR#13 also highlights other topics, including Covid 19 recovery and faith and violence (precipitated by the US election and Capitol assault). Last, but not least, incisive reflections by Fr. Richard Rohr book-end this Lenten Issue #13. Again, we are in debt to Karyn Lehmann, Carol-Ann Zenger, and Karen Coverett for LJR's roll-out and dissemination.

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We acknowledge with respect the Ləkʷəŋən 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.

Participating in Movements for Justice - - R. Rohr *

I think there are three basic levels of social ministry, and none is better than the other. I believe all are the movement of the Holy Spirit within us for the sake of others. I like to imagine a river flooding out of control—symbolizing the circumstances and injustices that bring about suffering—overflowing its banks and sweeping those in its path off their feet.

At the first level, we rescue drowning people from the swollen river, dealing with the immediate social problem right in front of us: someone hungry comes to our door and we offer them some food, or invite them inside. These are hands-on, social service ministries, like the familiar soup kitchen or food pantry. Such works will always look rather generous, Christian, charitable, and they tend to be admired, if not always imitated.

At the second level, there are ministries that help people not to fall into the swollen river in the first place, or show them how to survive despite falling in. In general, these are the ministries of education and healing. Most of the religious orders in the Catholic Church in the last three hundred years went in that direction, filling the world with schools, hospitals, and social service ministries that empowered people and gave them new visions and possibilities for their lives.

Finally, on the third level, some ministries build and maintain a dam to stop the river from flooding in the first place. This is the work of social activism and advocacy, critique of systems, organizing, speeches, boycotts, protests, and resistance against all forms of systemic injustice and deceit. It is the gift of a few, but a much-needed gift that we only recently began to learn and practice. It seeks systemic change and not just individual conversion.

I don't think most people feel called to activism; I myself don't. It was initially humiliating to admit this, and I lost the trust and admiration of some friends and supporters. Yet as we come to know our own soul gift more clearly, we almost always have to let go of certain "gifts" so we can do our one or two things well and with integrity. I believe that if we can do one or two things wholeheartedly in our life, that is all God expects.

The important thing is that we all should be doing something for the rest of the world! We have to pay back, particularly those of us born into privilege and comfort. We also must respect and support the other two levels, even if we cannot do them. Avoid all comparisons about better or lesser, more committed or less committed; those are all ego games. Let's just use our different gifts to create a unity in the work of service (Ephesians 4:12–13), and back one another up, without criticism or competition. Only in our peaceful, mutual honoring do we show forth the glory of God.

* December 4, 2020 – CAC Daily Meditations

"Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy" - By Eric Metaxas

Thoughts on the Book From Pat Payne & David Buckman *

A Personal Response by Pat Payne:

What drew me to this text? Over the last 38 years, Bonhoeffer's name has come to my attention through various spiritual readings -- for example, Richard Rohr's daily meditations. The quotes from Bonhoeffer's work and life are always profound. "*Who is this man*", I asked?

I was first introduced to Bonhoeffer in my graduate research class nearly forty years ago. My professor was explaining the paradigm shift taking place in Education: a shift from counting (statistical research) to describing (providing rich description of lived experience). He explained that one needed a thorough understanding of both approaches, but most of all, one needed courage -- courage like Bonhoeffer's, to speak one's truth (new paradigm) to power (established academic community) so that these new understandings would benefit future generations of students. To achieve this goal, one would need to translate this knowledge into action. Bonhoeffer had the courage to do this. His action ultimately cost him his life, but his legacy had continuing influences on both Germany and Christianity.

As a young student I found this lecture daunting -- "Give my life for action research? I don't think so!" Many years later, the import of my professor's statements resonated as I experienced "Trumpism" and its consequences. Lack of courage and integrity of politicians to speak their truth to power resulted in insurrection and death.

Bonhoeffer's courage to speak his truth and act upon it was illustrated throughout his life. A couple of examples are given below:

1. In July 1933, Bonhoeffer suggested the German Churches go on strike against the state to assert their independence. Hitler was trying to install a "*Reichsbischof*" at the time. If the state did not stop meddling in church affairs, "*the church would cease behaving like the state church and would, among other things, stop performing funerals.*" (p.179) The conciliatory and theologically compromised Protestant leaders balked. Hitler once remarked: "*You can do anything you want with them. They will submit.*" Gradually, the Nazi ideology gained support within the German Church through lies and propaganda. When most church leaders did not speak truth to power, Bonhoeffer raised the voice of church resistance to Hitler's persecution of the Jews. He openly and publicly supported the movement within the church to affirm God's fidelity to the Jews. In 1934, he also supported the "Barmen Declaration", drafted by Karl Barth, who insisted that Christ, not the Fuhrer, was head of the church. Bonhoeffer's continuing opposition to the state's influence over the church culminated in his book -- "***The Cost of Discipleship***", a study of the Sermon on the Mount. He made it abundantly clear that what Christ said was in stark opposition to many of the fundamentals of National Socialism. His subsequent involvement in the German resistance during the war (including his association with those who conspired to assassinate Hitler), sealed his fate. He was condemned to death by hanging on April 8th, 1945. His trial, only one month before the war with Germany ended, was without witnesses or a defence.

2. On June 4, 1934, Bonhoeffer and his friend Bishop Bell of Chichester (England) got the full, damning text of the "***Barmen Declaration***" published in the Times (p. 226). When Bonhoeffer was working as a pastor in London, he became friends, and worked closely with, George Bell. They were engaged in ecumenical activities to

warn Europe against the designs of the Nazis. Bonhoeffer was a fearless and persistent voice telling Bell - and through Bell, the world - the truth about what was really happening in the German Church. The Times release of *"The Barmen Declaration"* was an example of their sustained efforts. Indeed, Bonhoeffer did translate his ideas into action, as exemplified by his various activities: pastoral work, ecumenical work, and the establishment of the **"Confessing Church"** (which followed on from the *"Barmen Declaration"*).

Early Influences

Bonhoeffer was born in 1906, a twin and one of eight children. His parents and their lineage were very well educated. Academics, scientists, theologians, politicians, artists, doctors, pastors and musicians were all part of the family milieu. The family lived both in the countryside and Berlin. The author Eric Metaxas provides photographs and personal anecdotes which illustrate Bonhoeffer's privileged, happy, and secure childhood. His father, a psychiatrist, is portrayed as a stern, but fair-minded, man who encouraged his children to discuss their ideas. He impressed upon them the importance of precise thinking, and only to speak when one had something significant to say...no fuzzy thinking, no frivolous chat! Bonhoeffer honed his discourse of presenting his critiques and arguments in this familial setting and continued to do so as a very confident young student in an academic setting with revered professors. One fellow student commented (p. 59): *"I had the experience of hearing a young fair-haired student contradict.....contradict again and again, politely but clearly on positive theological grounds."* Bonhoeffer was debating with a 73-year old living legend, Adolf von Haenack.

His mother, Paula, was also a great influence on her young son. She supervised the running of the house, including home schooling *all* her eight children until they were seven. She was remembered for her Saturday musical evenings at which Bonhoeffer shared his musical gifts. She was responsible for his Christian upbringing. Her reminder of *"faith without action is no faith at all"* seems to foreshadow Bonhoeffer's concept of **"Cheap Grace"** developed in later years. Paula also prodded her son to speak out publicly against the Nazis and take action.

In the early part of the book, the author skillfully weaves the stories of these early influences and connects them to his later life. Bonhoeffer was intellectually and musically gifted, described as confident yet humble, with strong relationships with his relatives. These connections are depicted through his correspondence, particularly with his twin sister who was married to a Jewish Christian. Because of Bonhoeffer's anticipation of Nazi policy towards Jews, he used his international contacts to arrange safe passages for them to England.

At the time of Bonhoeffer's birth, Germany was a unified country with a strong Christian Church, united by a common language, thanks to Luther's translation of the Bible. The language of this Bible translation unified the German language, replacing various dialects. People engaged more fully with their faith as Luther wrote hymns and introduced hymn-singing as part of worship, fostering a sense of Nationalism. This strong German Church was later manipulated by the Nazi propaganda machine, as were the words of the revered Reformation theologian, Martin Luther. The Nazis began to select parts of Luther's later writings (written when he was sick). Constant repetition of Luther's ugliest statements that *"being a German and being a Christian were incompatible with being Jewish"* served to convince the German people of this *"truth"*.

All his life Bonhoeffer applied the same logic to theological issues that his father applied to scientific ones. He believed that every Christian must be *"fully human"* by bringing

God into his whole life (p. 361). As his mother often repeated to him, *"faith without action is no faith at all"*. To be an ethereal figure who merely talked about God, but somehow refused to get his hands dirty in the real world in which God had placed him -- this for Bonhoeffer was bad theology.

A Personal Response by David Buckman:

The word *"Spy"* in the title intrigued me. I knew something of Bonhoeffer's integrity in the face of Nazism, but *"Spy"*? I also grew up in the same area of London during the war where I discovered Bonhoeffer actually was a Lutheran Pastor prior to the war.

The word *"Spy"* became clearer in the later stages of the book, when Bonhoeffer returned from England and America and realized his faith called him to stand fast against the evils of Nazism. He even joined the plot to assassinate Hitler in 1944.

He was aided, of course, by his international colleagues, but declined to stay in safety in America. As war started, he thought of chaplaincy or hospital service, as he would never fight for the Nazi's after his battles with them and their racism.

He lost over half the young seminarians he had taught during the war, but was always supportive of them, even though he disagreed with their decisions to fight.

The last couple of hundred pages of the book (of the total 542, excluding notes) detail his engagement to Maria and long imprisonment in Berlin in 1943, following the first failed plot to kill Hitler, and his transfer to Buchenwald, and finally, Flossenburg, his place of Martyrdom in April 1945, just before the Allies liberated the camp.

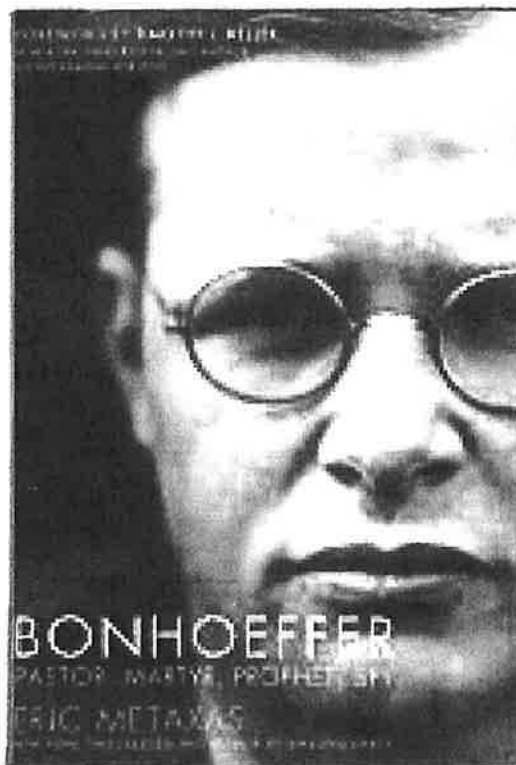
Late in 1945, a Memorial Service for Bonhoeffer organized by Bishop Bell was held in Holy Trinity, off Brompton Road in London. This was incomprehensible to some, and even disturbing to others who had suffered losses in the War. That it was held on British soil, and broadcast on the BBC and into Germany, was a shock to many, not least to an elderly couple in Berlin – who knew nothing of his death.

When the service ended, Karl and Paula Bonhoeffer turned off the radio.

Pat Payne is originally from Edmonton. She has been an active member of St. John's for six years. Pat is a lay reader who also volunteers with SJAG, GVAT, PWRDF and Out of the Rain.

David Buckman is the Treasurer at St. John's. Originally from England, David moved to Canada in 1969, and he has lived in B.C. since 2003. David's wide range of interests include -- business, music (singing with Victoria Arion MC) and sports (lawn bowling and squash).

Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy
By: Eric Metaxas - 608 pages
Published by Thomas Nelson (2010)



A New LJR Feature CHURCHES WALKING THE TALK!!

In each issue of LJR we intend to share stories which demonstrate the faithful witness of Churches around the world as they seek justice by doing innovative things while standing with the oppressed. Who said Churches weren't political? Here are our first two stories.

A. Four Dozen Faith Institutions Announce Divestment From Fossil Fuels

Julia Conley - Common Dreams Staff Writer *

Climate action campaigners applauded the news that 47 faith institutions from 21 countries announced they would divest from fossil fuels, marking the largest-ever joint divestment by religious leaders in history. 350.ORG gives credit to campaigners in the fossil fuel divestment movement, who in recent years have pressured banks, universities, and other entities to cut financial ties with the fossil-fuel sector in an effort to help mitigate the planetary emergency.

"While government leaders cling to the economic models of yesterday, faith leaders are looking ahead to the energy future we share," said 350.org. "With renewables now growing at a faster pace than fossil fuels," the group noted, "institutional investors are increasingly moving toward sustainable investments in the clean energy economy. Faith investors help lead this movement, constituting the single-largest source of divestment in the world, making up one-third of all commitments. To date, nearly 400 religious institutions have committed to divest."

The institutions which announced their divestment include the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union, Irish religious order the Sisters of Our Lady Apostles, the American Jewish World Service, and the Claretian Missionaries in Sri Lanka. Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish organizations joined the coalition.

"Today's announcement demonstrates that people of many faith traditions are committed to a better future in clean energy," 350.org said in a statement, noting that under Pope Francis, the Catholic Church has gone to new lengths to end its own participation in the polluting of the Earth. The Pope convened an "Economy of Francesco" conference in Nov. at which leaders and young climate action campaigners discussed ways for the Church to help develop a sustainable world economy.

The American Jewish World Service said it had decided to divest from fossil fuels earlier this year. The decision allows the organization, CEO Robert Bank said, to *"align fully how we invest our funds with our global grant-making to combat climate change and secure climate justice for the most vulnerable people in the world, ensuring that we live our Jewish values and take up our enduring commitment to repair our broken world."*

Inger Andersen, executive director of the U.N. Environment Program, said: *"The economic power of faiths, turned to responsible investments and the green economy, can be a major driver of positive change, and an inspiration to others, as we rebuild better."*

* November 16, 2020 by Common Dreams, a free on-line alternate news source [www.commondreams.org]

On the following page, we illuminate the work of the "POOR PEOPLES' CAMPAIGN" in the United States. Its Co-Chairs are: Dr. William Barber II (Protestant Minister) and Dr. Liz Theoharis (Greek Orthodox Theologian). Although primarily a Christian-led coalition, it also welcomes atheists, agnostics, Jews, Buddhists and Muslims into its ranks!

Churches Walking the Talk! continued:**B. U.S. Church Coalition Presents 14 Bold Policy Priorities to Heal the Nation
- A Moral and Economic Agenda for Biden's First Ninety Days -****December 1, 2020**

"If America does not address what's happening with visionary social and economic policy, the health and well-being of the nation is at stake. What we need is long-term economic policy that establishes justice, promotes the general welfare, rejects decades of austerity and builds strong social programs that lift society from below."

Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II & Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis

On behalf of the 140 million poor and low-income people in the country, the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival – and our 45 state coordinating committees, thousands of religious leaders, scholars, economists, advocates and hundreds of supporting organizations – insists that the following 14 policies from the *Poor People's Jubilee Platform* take precedence during the first 50-100 days of the new administration and 117th Congress.

We are encouraged by the commitment of the President-elect. When he joined the "Moral Monday Mass Assembly" on the voting power of the poor on September 14/20 in front of over 1 million viewers, Joe Biden said that under his presidency ...

"... ending poverty will not just be an aspiration, it will be a theory of change — to build a new economy that includes everyone, where we reward hard work, we care for the most vulnerable among us, we release the potential of all our children, and protect the planet!"

Fourteen Key Policy Priorities:

- 1. Enact comprehensive, free and just COVID-19 relief;**
- 2. Guarantee quality health care for all, regardless of any pre-existing conditions;**
- 3. Enact a federal jobs program to build up investments, infrastructure, public institutions, climate resilience, energy efficiency, socially beneficial industries and jobs in poor and low-income communities;**
- 4. Protect and expand voting rights and civil rights;**
- 5. Guarantee safe, quality, equitable public education; with supports for protection against re-segregation;**
- 6. Work with the "Poor People's Campaign" to establish a Presidential Council to fulfill this agenda;**
- 7. Ensure all of the rights of indigenous peoples;**
- 8. Enact fair taxes;**
- 9. Use the power of executive orders;**
- 10. Raise the minimum wage to \$15 / hour immediately;**
- 11. Update the poverty measure;**
- 12. Guarantee quality housing for all;**
- 13. Implement comprehensive and just immigration reform;**
- 14. Redirect the Pentagon budget towards these priorities.**



Learning From Indigenous People: How to Be Stewards of Nature

TREVOR HANCOCK -- JANUARY 17, 2021 – TIMES COLONIST (ISLANDER)

The 2019 Human Development Report from the UN focused on inequalities in the Human Development Index, but did not look at an inequality that is particularly important in Canada: the HDI of Indigenous people. Happily, Indigenous Services Canada has done this, at the request of the Assembly of First Nations, although only for “Registered Indians,” which misses Inuit and Métis people. Shockingly, the report notes that while Canada ranked 12th on the HDI internationally in 2016, the Registered Indian population as a whole would have ranked 52nd out of 189 countries (the same as Bulgaria, Montenegro and Romania that year), while the on-reserve population ranked 78th, the same as Grenada and about the same as Thailand, Brazil or Colombia.

So it is more than a bit ironic that in his Dec. 2 speech on the state of the planet, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres discussed the important role of Indigenous people in protecting nature and helping us move toward a healthy, just and sustainable future. He noted that Indigenous peoples make up less than six per cent of the world’s population, yet are stewards of 80 per cent of the world’s biodiversity on land. Moreover, he said, natural areas managed by Indigenous peoples are declining less rapidly than elsewhere, even though their land is among the most vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation. We need, he said, to “heed their voices, reward their knowledge and respect their rights.”

His words were in part inspired, it seems, by the UN’s 2020 Human Development Report, which focuses on the Anthropocene and discusses the important contribution of Indigenous people to achieving sustainable development. A section in the report on Indigenous peoples as shapers and defenders of nature, for example, refers to their contributions through agro-forestry, protection of coastal ecosystems and sustainable land-use - management. But the report also addresses issues of the rights of Indigenous people, including their right to land, and the importance of Indigenous knowledge about land management and our relationship with nature.

Indigenous knowledge, which Mr. Guterres noted has been “*distilled over millennia of close and direct contact with nature,*” is receiving increasing attention. It is also emphasized in the 2019 report of the Inter-governmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (the ecosystems equivalent of the better known Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and recognized in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, which was recently passed into law in B.C. Here in B.C., we are learning from First Nations about clam gardens and other marine management practices, while there is growing interest in learning how Indigenous people in the Americas used fire in managing their lands. More broadly, the 2020 HDR emphasizes that Indigenous peoples’ knowledge systems reflect “*sophisticated governance practices that advance human well-being while maintaining biocultural diversity.*”

But perhaps the most important thing to learn from Indigenous people is to be found in an entire section of the 2020 HDR devoted to instilling a sense of stewardship of nature. “Recognizing our humanity as part of a larger network of connections that include all living things,” the report notes, is an important part of many philosophical and religious traditions. For many Indigenous peoples, it adds, “*well-being and development begin where our lives with each other and with the natural environment meet.*”

For me, this was beautifully summed up in *Waiora: The Indigenous Peoples’ Statement for Planetary Health and Sustainable Development*, which resulted from a global conference on health promotion held in Aotearoa, New Zealand in 2019. Strongly influenced by Maori traditions (“*Waiora*” is a Maori word for health that is derived from the words for water and life), the statement noted: “*Core features of Indigenous worldviews are the interactive relationship between spiritual and material realms, inter-generational and collective orientations, that Mother Earth is a living being — a ‘person’ with whom we have special relationships that are a foundation for identity, and the interconnectedness and interdependence between all that exists, which locates humanity as part of Mother Earth’s ecosystems alongside our relations in the natural world.*” This is the worldview we need if we are to achieve high levels of human development while remaining within the Earth’s ecological limits.

* Dr. Trevor Hancock is a retired professor and senior scholar at the University of Victoria’s School of Public Health and Social Policy. He is a regular contributor to the Times Colonist.

Unsung Heros - A Poem by Butch Gerbrandt *

**After the Cleveland Indians lost,
the Lone Ranger came on.
Tonto saved Kimo Sabe's ass,
but was left out of the credits.
Cochise saw red.
Quanah Parker and Big Bear changed the channel.**

* Butch Gerbrandt is a carpenter/poet living in Butte, Mt.

A Long Unpacking of a Short Poem:

Tonto - The Lone Ranger's "*faithful Indian companion*". The Canadian actor who played Tonto was Jay Silverheels (1912 – 1980), a member of the Six Nations Mohawks in Ontario. In Spanish, the word "*tonto*" means "*stupid*". Allegations of stereotyping and racism really never gained traction during the 1950's/60's TV series, but Disney's filming of "*The Lone Ranger*" in 2013 (with Johnny Depp as Tonto), created a wave of protest by Native Americans. Ironically, the Disney film was partially financed by Dan Snyder, owner of the NFL's **Washington "Redskins"**, who until recently resisted growing pressure to change the name of his franchise.

Cleveland Indians: For much of its history, this Major League Baseball team had as its mascot a caricature of a Native American warrior named "*Chief Wahoo*". The Indians' management bowed to public pressure and retired Chief Wahoo in 2018, then surprised fans by vowing to drop the name "*Indians*" from their franchise before the 2022 season.

Cochise (1805 – 1874): leader of the Chiricahua Apache. A key war leader during the Apache Wars, Cochise led an uprising against the U.S. government which began in 1861 and persisted until a peace treaty in 1872.

Quanah Parker (1848 – 1911): a Comanche leader who mounted an unsuccessful war against white expansion in Northwestern Texas (1874–75). He later became the peacetime leader of Native Americans in the region, a role he performed for 30 years.

Big Bear (1825 -- 1888): a Cree Chief on the Canadian Prairies who mediated growing tensions between First Nations and White settlers that ultimately culminated in the North West Rebellion. He initially refused to sign Treaty 6, because it meant "giving up the land", the basis of the Crees' nomadic lifestyle. As starvation and disease gripped his people in Saskatchewan, Big Bear eventually signed, while pleading with the Crown to honour its treaty obligations. In spite of his list of grievances, he refused to join Riel, Dumont and Pound Maker in their armed 1885 insurrection. Nonetheless, Big Bear was arrested, convicted and imprisoned for three years. He died shortly after his release.

I've been considering the phrase "*all my relations*" for some time now. It's hugely important. It's our saving grace in the end. It points to the truth that we're all related, that we are all connected, that we all belong to each other. The most important word is "*all*". Not just those who look like me, sing like me, dance like me, speak like me, pray like me or behave like me. All my relations. That means every person, just as it means every rock, mineral, blade of grass, and creature. If we were to choose collectively to live that teaching, the energy of our change of consciousness would heal each of us -- and heal the planet.
From Embers - by Richard Wagamese

"Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral." Paulo Freire, Brazilian educator

HEALING FAMILY HISTORIES ENTANGLED WITH COLONIZATION

CHRISTIANS OF EUROPEAN DESCENT MUST FACE THE HARD STORIES OF THEIR PAST

BY ELAINE ENNS – SOJOURNERS MAGAZINE, JAN. 2021 *

A FEW YEARS AGO, Ched Myers and I discovered this graffiti in my old suburban neighbourhood in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, scrawled across a fence just a block from where I grew up: “... *as long as the sun shines, as long as the waters flow downhill, and as long as the grass grows green ...*” It is a venerable phrase from the Two Row Wampum of 1613, an agreement between the Five Nations of the Iroquois and representatives of the Dutch government in what is now upstate New York, which affirmed principles of Indigenous self-determination, rights, and jurisdiction. The phrase has been reiterated in most subsequent treaties between European settlers and Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

Sixty miles due north of my old neighbourhood is *Opwashemoe Chakatinaw* (named Stoney Knoll by settlers), nestled between the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers. A spiritual centre for the Young Chippewayans, it was part of Reserve 107, assigned to this Cree tribe in 1876 under Treaty 6. A decade later, Métis, Cree, and Assiniboine communities joined as allies in the Northwest Resistance of 1885 to protest the Canadian government’s lack of good faith in upholding treaties and continuing settler encroachment throughout the region. Centered in nearby Batoche, the uprising was led by Louis Riel, a religiously inspired Métis political leader who sought to preserve the rights, land, culture, and survival of his people. The insurrection was squashed by the Canadian military, and Riel and several Indigenous leaders publicly hung.

Less than a decade after that, the first Mennonites began to arrive in Saskatchewan. These settlers built their first church in 1896 at Eigenheim, just 14 miles from *Opwashemoe Chakatinaw*; its founding pastor was Peter Regier, my brother-in-law’s great-grandfather. The following year, the Young Chippewayans had their reserve taken away by the Canadian government without compensation or consultation and opened to the new Mennonite (and Lutheran) settlers.

A generation later, between 1923 and 1929, some 22,000 Mennonite refugees from the Russian Revolution came to the prairies, the largest influx of Mennonite immigrants in Canadian history. These *Russländer*—which included all four of my grandparents—were fleeing horrific violence, leaving behind many family members who did not survive the Soviet regime. Though grateful to have escaped, these refugees carried significant trauma—and were entirely unaware of the violent Indigenous displacement a few decades prior that had made “available” the lands some of them occupied. Many Mennonites, including some of my relatives, still live in the Stoney Knoll area.

It is a place where two traumatized peoples lived side by side, though mostly segregated from and ignorant of the other. Mennonites, with their long history of religious dissidence and persecution, fled another round of violence in Europe, settled on Cree land, and set about building prosperous farms. Cree communities, on the other hand, resident here for thousands of years, struggled to survive waves of settlers, as well as continuing subjugation, discrimination, and racist injustices from Canadian colonial society. Today, Young Chippewyan leaders are still organizing for federal recognition and repatriation. Cree elders use the term *kihci-asotamâtowin* to describe sacred promises made to one another in treaty. The little hill of *Opwashemoe Chakatinaw* is one of countless places around North America where the settler state broke its promises. It is a haunting microcosm of the wider settler colonial story—a past and continuing struggle over history, identity, and justice—that has left no corner of Turtle Island untouched.

Cultural Genocide

A discipleship of decolonization tackles the oldest and deepest injustices on this continent. These violations inhabit every intersection of settler and Indigenous worlds and have generated wounds that are inextricably woven into the fabric of our own personal and political lives. We believe the work of decolonization is about healing those wounds and confronting the “ghosts” (such as the graffiti mentioned above) that haunt the places, peoples, and traditions that have shaped us all. Take, for example, the following braid of my personal narrative:

1) An estimated 20,000 Indigenous children were removed from their families during the “Sixties Scoop” (which actually ran from the late 1950s into the 1980s) in Canada, during which they were placed in foster homes or adopted, primarily by white middle-class families.

This included many Mennonites, including some of my relatives. I grew up with two Indigenous cousins, unaware of the significant dark side to the Adopt Indian Métis program. My aunt and uncle were never told what band their Indigenous children were from, nor given any cultural competence, education, or training. I remained oblivious to what my cousins were experiencing; one died young and the other has distanced himself. In January 2019, Premier Scott Moe apologized for Saskatchewan’s role in the Sixties Scoop, long after studies had shown that the actions of the child welfare system during this period represented “cultural genocide.” Yet such matters were never discussed in our family until very recently.

2) As a child, I knew something horrible had happened to my grandparents during the Russian Revolution.

At age 13, I interviewed my Grandma Margreta Schulz, recording her on a cassette tape. She spoke at length of the beauty and abundance her family had enjoyed during her childhood years in Ukraine. But as her account approached her teenage-years, she began to weep and could not continue. It was only later that I learned that Grandma Schulz, then 14, survived a two-week home invasion. This episode was part of a continuous climate of violence, plundering, rape, and killing endured by Mennonites and other German-speakers during the Russian Civil War from 1917 to 1921. Over Christmas 1918, her home was commandeered by Ukrainian revolutionary forces under the command of Nestor Makhno. The Mennonite men had fled into the forest, while my grandma, her older sister, and girl cousins were hidden in the attic. Margreta’s mother, Anna, tried to respond to the violence with courage and compassion, bandaging the wounds and feeding the rough peasant soldiers. Anna’s response may have warded off the worst; later her sister and three other relatives were brutally murdered in their home. I experienced my grandmother as a joyful person, full of laughter; seeing her cry during my interview left an indelible impression, planting in me seeds of both curiosity and trepidation. I eventually came to learn how many of her generation suffered from PTSD, how the silence around their experiences negatively impacted our community, and how unresolved trauma inhibited our ability to connect with our even more profoundly traumatized Indigenous neighbours.

3) In my final year of college, I volunteered with the Big Sisters/Little Sisters program in Manitoba.

I was paired with a 13-year-old Cree girl who had just been released from juvenile detention. She was living in a group home, pregnant for the second time, with twins. Her “crimes” had been sniffing glue, stealing food and clothes, and getting into fights—behaviors I now understand as reactions to a racist system that did not meet her basic human needs. Despite my lack of race or economic analysis at the time, she helped me see that the criminal justice system was unable to address the injustices she faced. She described to me the pain of being forced to give up her first child and of not knowing

where he was, and vowed her twins would be raised “by an Indian family.” This encounter raised a new set of questions for me about how her ancestors had been displaced by mine.

Such experiences growing up were my first tutorials in the hard truths of colonization and planted seeds of disillusionment in my otherwise insular suburban white existence. It was almost impossible to metabolize these glimpses of the violent legacy of settler colonialism in the absence of any real engagement or explanatory framing. So I repressed these memories; they festered below my consciousness, awaiting an awakening that has unfolded over my three decades in the restorative justice field. This has brought me to the work of *Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization*.

Facing Our History With Courage

The great writer-activist Audre Lorde challenged white folks to “*do our own work.*” We who are settler and white must heal from internalized and externalized patterns of both racism and settler colonialism. Though there are vast differences in the experiences of European immigrant descendants, we are each and all shaped by socialization into myths of superiority and assimilation into a race/class regime that privileges some and marginalizes others.

Canadian decolonization theorists diagnose a settler “*epistemology of ignorance*” and “*luxury of forgetting.*” “*Absolution by amnesia*” makes us afraid of our own history. The term “agnosia” refers to a refusal to know or care about the violations of colonization past and present. We believe that our decolonization work must sort through the damage: our ancestral trauma; historical silences; narratives of innocence; entanglement in policies that dispossessed Indigenous land, life, and culture; and moral injury. Only such work will enable and empower us to recognize and redress past (and continuing) injustices.

We invite other settlers to engage our “*Landlines*” (revisiting where and how our ancestors settled and how we reside on the land today), “*Bloodlines*” (reversing the agnosia perpetuated in our familial and communal narratives), and “*Songlines*” (traditions that empower us to make things right by embracing restorative solidarity and working to redistribute wealth, land, and power. This journey requires a determined dance between critically demythologizing our own narratives while genuinely encountering those of Indigenous and other historically oppressed communities. If we focus only on our family stories, in the way hobby genealogists do, for example, this will only be another instance of centring whiteness. But neither can we attach ourselves to other people’s stories—as some white solidarity activists do—in ways that would either dissociate from our own responsibilities to delineate the cultural strength of others.

For settler Christians, a discipleship of decolonization is both demanding and liberating: facing ghosts past and present, healing the disease within and around us, and struggling for justice and building relationships with Indigenous communities in the places impacted by our people’s settlement. This is how we honour covenants for “*as long as the sun shines.*” To do this work is to embrace the hope articulated by poet Maya Angelou that “*history, despite its wrenching pain cannot be un-lived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.*”

* This Sojourners article is adapted from Elaine Enns’ and Ched Myers’ new book, **Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization** | wipfandstock.com, 2020. Elaine Enns, a Canadian, is co-director of Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries in Oak View, Calif.

"LEADERSHIP IS DEFINED BY HUMILITY"

12.

Senator says a leader's responsibility is to offer the best, most truthful advice to the people

KARL MOORE
WAHIKATSTE DIOME-DEER

In a moment of doubt, Senator Murray Sinclair, a member of the Ojibwe First Nation, thought he wanted to be a carpenter. But an elder told Manitoba's first Indigenous judge and former chief commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that the law would never leave him. As a politician, jurist and community activist, he has dedicated his life to highlighting the power of conversation as a means of educating Canadians about a more complete version of their country's history. Later this week, Mr. Sinclair will step down from the Senate after almost five years of service. He plans to mentor young lawyers in Indigenous law and to write his memoir.

What is a leader from an Indigenous viewpoint?

I don't know that there's a word for leader in our language. The closest thing that we have is [an] all-embracing word that means someone who helps the people. Whenever I meet a traditional leader, I see that they are the ones who sit quietly by and wait to be asked. They don't stand up and grab the microphone. They don't grandstand. They know that their responsibility is to give the best and most truthful advice to those who come to them and ask for it. There's a humility in leadership.

How has your Indigenous identity given you strength?

In spending time with an elder of my community named Angus Merrick, I learned an important lesson that I still think about to this day. As a young man, I went to see him in a moment of despair, and he told me this:

"Your problem is you've spent all these years learning about how to work in this white man's system, to be as much like them as you can be and to be even better than they are at what they do.

But in doing that, you have lost yourself. You have to find yourself because you don't know yet how to even be a good husband or how to be a good father, because you don't know our teachings. When you learn all of that, then you will be able to do whatever it is that you want to do. You spent all this time learning to be a white man, but now you have to learn what it means to be Anishinaabe."

From that moment on, that's what I've been doing. I've been spending my time learning what it means to be Anishinaabe. Now, I feel an obligation to pass that source of strength on to the young people. It's important for our youth to understand what it means to be Indigenous in their own right.

What lasting effects did residential schools have on your family and your community?

My grandmother went to residential school. My aunts went to residential school. My uncles went to residential school. My dad went to residential school. They never had a chance to learn their own history, their language, their elders' teachings or grow up as part of their family or community.

“

We all have to recognize that we are part of a heritage and ongoing reality of colonialism. ... We have to understand how we have been impacted by this dominant system.

MURRAY SINCLAIR
SENATOR

Being part of the next generation after those residential school survivors, we all had parents and grandparents who could speak the language but who would not teach it to us. The only language that I was allowed to speak at home was English. The older generations were taught that if they tried to hang onto their culture and their language, they would burn forever in hell. It became common practice for children of residential school survivors to speak English and to never be exposed to traditional ceremonies or teachings thereafter.

My family managed to rise above the trauma of residential schools. They taught us that we had a lot to offer and that it was our obligation to do what we could in the best way that we could. So, I grew up with that belief. But I also grew up knowing that we were never going to be seen as equals by the rest of the world, and that always weighs you down.

How did your experience growing up as an Indigenous youth in a predominantly non-Indigenous community affect you?

We were always looked down upon in society. In school, we were taught that Indigenous people were inferior to the Europeans who came here. Over time, it became a real burden and it was something that wore us down. A lot of our friends and relatives got overwhelmed by that.

When my son Niigaan was born, I promised myself that I would give him and show him a better life. A life that gave him a better sense of his own future than I had been able to live by. I promised him that I would always ensure that he never lacked a sense of who he was.

How can we begin to decolonize our society?

We all have to recognize that we are part of a heritage and ongoing reality of colonialism. Whether we have benefited from it or whether we have been victimized by it, we have to understand how we have been impacted by this dominant system. Oftentimes, we have been influenced to such an extent that we often don't even know that we're discriminating or being discriminated against. We must question what we've been taught and explore the possibilities of how things should be in the future.

What homework would you like non-Indigenous people to do?

Have conversations. I don't think that we talk to each other enough. I realize the temptation of going to books. I felt at one point in my life that I could rely upon books to teach me what it was I thought I couldn't find through conversation, but if I had found my elders through conversations, I probably wouldn't have turned to books so much over the years.

You have to actively engage in conversation with people, and particularly you have to engage with Indigenous people to make them part of your conversation and part of your circle of friends. Ultimately, reconciliation is about establishing relationships.

What is the most important thing that Canada can do to create a new and better relationship with Indigenous peoples?

We need to change the way that we educate our children. Indigenous and non-Indigenous, they all need to grow up and be educated in a Canada with a fuller and more proper sense of the history of this country.

Indigenous youth especially need to understand the validity of their own existence as Indigenous people. Part of that responsibility falls on our school systems to understand and promote that we are a valid people.

Special to The Globe and Mail

AN INTERVIEW
WITH SENATOR
MURRAY SINCLAIR
Special to:
The Globe & Mail
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Opinion Section
(P. B5)

I APOLOGIZE *

**I have this guilt / I have this shame;
 I have a conscience / So I have to take the blame.
 I stood back / I watched it all;
 I even helped imprison you / Behind those walls.**

**No excuse / Is good enough;
 We never let you speak / Unless you mimicked us.
 I can't run / I can't hide;
 Why I can't even / Look you in the eye.**

**No hollow prayer / No silent shout;
 No more empty words / Spilling from my mouth.
 You stripped away / My thin disguise;
 Now all that I can do is say / I'm sorry.
 I apologize.**

**I thought that God / Was on my side;
 And with my righteousness / I'd tame the savage child.
 I would not have them / Running free;
 If they assimilate / They could be like me.**

**How many can / The wagons hold?
 Another thousand children / I suppose.
 It must have seemed / Like judgement day;
 The anguish / As the wagons rolled away.**

**I can't begin / To know your pain;
 You can't forgive / As long as memory remains.
 Through it all / You still survive;
 And all that I can do is say / I'm sorry;
 Choking on the words that say / I'm sorry.
 I apologize.**

* **Written by Gabriola Islander - Gary Fjellgaard; Published by Slim Creek Music - July 2008 © Socan
 Available to hear on *You-Tube*.**

Note: Fjellgaard dedicated this composition to the First Nations victims and survivors of the cultural genocide which occurred in Canada for over a century. He said: **"No apology can heal the wounds caused by the far-reaching effects of the residential school system. I can only add my voice as a member of the generation who allowed this abuse to take place."**

Compassion is both an understanding of another's pain and the desire to somehow mitigate that suffering. It is to *"endure/suffer with/together"* for the sake of peace with justice. (BPFNA)

Indigenous Resistance Lifts the Veil of Colonial Amnesia

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson - GEEZ Magazine *

It's always been interesting to me when settlers talk about apocalypse. It reveals a kind of privilege and naïveté that is indicative of how complete the destruction of Indigenous peoples and our Nations is in the mindset of most Canadians.

It seems strange to me that ideas of invasion, attack, occupation, and dispossession are recent fodder for television series such as *The Walking Dead*. This fictional reality is so strikingly close to the colonial legacy I was born into, at least in concept, it is sometimes difficult to see it as entertainment.

I know that people who have not lived through colonization, colonialism, and ongoing settler colonialism cannot begin to imagine the damage and the trauma it has caused both historically and in contemporary times. Nor can they begin to imagine how to attempt to live fulfilling, beautiful, and enriched lives in spite of being both occupied and dispossessed. This is the reality Indigenous peoples are faced with every day in North America, but it wasn't always like this and our future together certainly does not have to be.

My *Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg* homeland is on the north shore of Lake Ontario. My elder, Doug Williams, from Curve Lake First Nation, tells me that two hundred years ago, Lake Ontario had its own resident population of salmon that migrated all the way up to Stoney Lake to spawn. We drank directly from the lake and that was a good, healthy thing to do. There was a large population of eels that also migrated to Stoney Lake each year from the Atlantic Ocean. There was an ancient old-growth forest of white pine that stretched from Curve Lake down to the shore of Lake Ontario, that had virtually no understory except for a bed of pine needles. There were tall grass prairies and black oak savannahs where Peterborough stands today and on the south shore of Rice Lake or Pimadashkodeyong. *Pimadash* means "going across" and it refers to fire moving across the prairie beside the lake. The lake was teeming with *manomiin* or wild rice. The land was dotted with sugar bushes, the lakes were full of fish. It sounds idyllic, because it was idyllic. And the knowledge systems, the education systems, the economic systems, the political systems of Indigenous peoples were designed to promote more life. We were not capitalists. Capitalism is not an Indigenous concept. Our way of living was designed to generate life, not just human life, but the life of all living things.

Over the past two centuries, without our permission and without our consent, we have been systematically removed and disposed from most of our territory. We have watched as our homeland has been stolen, clear-cut, subdivided, and sold to settlers from Europe and later cottagers from Toronto. We no longer have salmon or eels in our territory. We no longer have old-growth white pine forests in our territory. Our rice beds were nearly destroyed. All but one tiny piece of prairie in Alderville has been destroyed. Ninety percent of our sugar bushes are under private non-Native ownership.

Our most sacred places have been made into provincial parks for tourists with concrete buildings over our teaching rocks. Our burial grounds have cottages built on top of them. The veins of our Mother have lift locks blocking them. The shores of every one of our lakes and rivers is lined with cottages or homes, making it nearly impossible for us to launch a canoe. Our rice beds have been nearly destroyed by raised water levels from the Trent Severn waterway, boat traffic, and sewage from cottages. The Haudenosuantee, Cree, Nishnaabeg, and Métis have all of Ontario's industry within our territory and all of Ontario's urban population.

Our children have been stolen from us and sent to residential schools, day schools, child welfare, and now into an education system that refuses to acknowledge our culture, our knowledge, our histories, and Indigenous experience. And then of course there is the Indian Act, which until the 1950s made our ceremonies illegal, made it illegal for us to hire a lawyer, made it illegal for us to leave the res without the permission of the Indian agent, and made it illegal for us to organize. The Indian Act still controls virtually every decision and every aspect of life from birth to the grave. It is a continuous system of control over Indigenous Peoples.

Which brings us to 1923, when the Williams Treaty was signed and the crown dishonourably took away our hunting and treaty rights, a direct attack on our ability to feed ourselves. My grandmother grew up eating squirrel and groundhog because if her parents were caught hunting deer or fishing they would be criminalized. This is how my Ancestors, my family, and my relations have experienced settler colonialism.

It looks a lot like an apocalypse to me. And it didn't have to be this way; it doesn't have to be this way. Settler colonialism and its system of domination is nothing more than a series of systemic choices upheld by collective choices, composed of individual choices. My Ancestors spent a great deal of time and effort trying to influence the outcome of our contact and our decision to allow settlers to live cooperatively on our land. They spent a great deal of time and effort in the late 1700s and early 1800s negotiating treaties with settler governments to ensure that our relationship to our homeland was intact and that their grandchildren and great-grandchildren could live our way of life in our homeland, unharrassed. Our diplomats and spiritual leaders articulated a way of sharing land that respected separate jurisdictions and our nation's self-determination and sovereignty. It was our intention to continue to govern ourselves according to our own political traditions and to live in our territory in a close and intimate way with our first mother, the earth.

My Ancestors wanted the same thing that I want for the coming generations. I want my great-grandchildren to be able to fall in love with every piece of our territory. I want their bodies to carry with them every story, every song, every piece of poetry hidden in our Nishnaabe language. I want them to be able to dance through their lives with joy. I want them to live without fear because they know respect, because they know in their bones what respect feels like. I want them to live without fear because they have a pristine environment with clean waterways that will provide them with the physical and emotional sustenance to uphold their responsibilities to the land, their families, their communities, and their nations. I want them to be valued, heard, and cherished by our communities and by Canada no matter their skin colour, their physical and mental abilities, their sexual orientation or their gender orientation.

In many ways, four centuries of Indigenous resistance and mobilization on Turtle Island has been aimed at bringing about a decolonizing apocalypse – one that lifts the veil of colonial amnesia, amplifies Indigenous truths, and reveals the real and symbolic violence of settler colonialism. Indigenous resurgence movements are not just concerned with dismantling settler colonialism and ending the world, but also with bringing forth new realities based upon our ancient teachings and ways of being in the world. Apocalypse, the end of settler colonial oppression, the end of our abusive relationship with the Canadian state, and a radical de-colonial transformation, means it's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine.

* Leanne Betasamosake Simpson is an author, activist, editor, and spoken-word artist. She is of *Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg* ancestry and a member of Alderville First Nation. Simpson is the author of *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back, Islands of Decolonial Love, and The Gift is in the Making*. This article appeared in Winter, 2017 issue of [Geez Magazine](#)

"It's a Reconciliation!" Indigenous Peoples Reclaim the U.S. National Bison Range

After 113 years, the 18,800 acres of grassland, woodland, and wildlife that make up the National Bison Range will be returned to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Native American Tribes (CSKT) of Montana's Flathead Indian Reservation. ***"It's a reconciliation,"*** said Chairwoman Shelly Fyant. ***"We are such a place-based people. To have this land back, to be in control of it, is a fresh, new hope!"***

According to Native News Online, the transfer was announced by outgoing U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary David L. Bernhardt on Friday, Jan. 15. He signed Secretary's Order 3390 that transfers the land to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA will formally take the land into trust and restore the land to the Flathead Indian Reservation.

"The restoration of this land is a great historic event and we worked hard to reach this point. This comes after a century of being separated from the buffalo and the Bison Range, and after a quarter-century-long effort to co-manage the refuge with the FWS. And who better to do it than the original inhabitants of the land who depended on the buffalo for centuries? That was our mainstay," says Fyant.

Back in December, a bipartisan bill was created that would transfer the lands back to the Indigenous peoples, but as the year came to a close with no decision, many thought the plan would die out. Instead, the bill was attached to a Covid-19 relief package that had to pass.

After a century of work, it felt sudden, said Morigeau, a tribal member and attorney for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and a Montana state legislator. ***"It happened so fast, it just really hasn't sunk in!"*** reports High Country News. Back in 1971, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes went to court to claim back their land the U.S. took in the early 1900s and had won but it was then declared illegal to take back their lands so it was an unsuccessful battle. Since then they had not stopped fighting to reclaim their land.

* Amanda Mills is a Nation of Change board member and activist. This article appeared in the Feb. 7/2021 issue of the on-line newsletter NationofChange.org.



“A Good War” - by Seth Klein *
Book Report by Sara Chu

Seth Klein, founding B.C. director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), has written a startling book that tries to galvanize Canadian society to fight climate change. He does this by drawing parallels to the Canadian response to World War II.

Klein refers to the Green New Deal (GND), a plan developed in the United States in 2019 in recognition of the existential crisis that climate change poses. The plan assumes that strategies for ecological change are closely linked to strategies for social change to heal inequalities in our society. The plan espouses a form of Keynesian economics in making this link. Variations of the GND have been developed and promoted by many activist organizations in Canada. Klein believes that the problem of fighting climate change is not a technical one or one of policy. We know what has to be done. The problem, he says, is one of political will. Our political leaders feel they can only go so far because the public would rebel, but Klein cites many polls showing the majority of Canadians to be very concerned about addressing climate change.

The book's description of Canada's response to the War is gripping. As a country of 11.5 million people, we mobilized a million people into the armed forces and played a significant role in major battles. He suggests that we could similarly help employees in the oil and gas industries to transition to jobs in green energy. Indeed the scale of such a programme would be relatively smaller than the mobilization in WWII. Klein also describes how we came out of the War with major social programs like Family Allowance, Old Age Security, and Medicare which are hallmarks of our society today.

The author adamantly refutes the common notion that Canada, having a small population, is not a significant contributor to global warming. Canadians in fact have the highest per capita green house gas (GHG) emissions in the world (probably due to our northern location and the distances we travel in our huge country). And we are major exporters of fossil fuels. The GHG emissions from those exports are not counted against us even though we profit hugely from them. Northern Canada in the Arctic is warming at three times the global rate. Southern Canada is warming at twice the global rate.

Chapter 8 may be of particular interest as Klein outlines in fascinating detail how we united our country and paid for the eight-fold increase in annual federal government spending during WWII. He then describes how we could finance the war on climate change. Many measures ultimately would make taxation fairer, compelling the ultra-rich (who are also the highest producers of GHG) to pay a fair share. He notes that royalties charged to fossil fuel companies in Alberta today are very much lower than in the days of Premier Lougheed.

Klein also gives warnings about what not to do. He does not advocate using the War Measures Act as in WWII because it denied civil rights too much. He advocates a new, more nuanced Emergency Measures Act. The book gives detailed plans for mobilizing for war on climate change. It recognizes the vital role of Indigenous people. It asserts the necessity of humane policy toward refugees and immigrants (unlike Canada's poor response to refugees fleeing the Nazis). Klein points out the dangerous rise of the far right in our time, paralleling the rise of fascism before WWII.

This book is important reading for us all. Greta Thunberg says that she doesn't want our hopefulness. She wants us to panic. Then at last we might act.

***Sara Chu is a member of the Social Justice and Action Group (SJAG) at St. John's and a frequent contributor to *Let Justice Roll*. [A Good War: Mobilizing Canada for the Climate Emergency](#) is published by ECW Press (2020).**

Recovery For People and The Planet: COVID-19 & Environmental Action

By Leah Payne -- Alive Magazine *

Since the arrival of COVID-19, many cities are reporting cleaner air and less pollution. Are these real, long-term benefits? The truth is a bit more complicated. To ensure that we recover from COVID-19 in a healthy way for us the planet, we have a lot of work to do!

Is the Environment Really Benefiting?

The idea that nature has been flourishing since humans retreated to their homes due to COVID-19 can be found all over the internet. Some are jokes (the humorous “*nature is healing*” and “*we are the virus*” memes are indeed hilarious), but many of the allegations that have been made in earnest have been debunked (there are no dolphins in the Venice canals, for example). Plus, when it comes to the environment, there are many other measures to consider.

Pollution

Worldwide, including in Canada, air quality has improved as fewer cars have been on the roads, air travel has plummeted, industry has slowed, and people have been staying at home. On the bright side, a decrease in air pollution means health benefits, such as fewer asthma attacks and heart attacks, and may even decrease complications of COVID-19. However, it’s important to note that these decreases are temporary, as they’re linked to temporary measures to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Waste

The sad truth is that we’re creating all sorts of new plastic waste these days. Between stores and cafes not accepting customers’ reusables (such as cloth bags or travel mugs) and the increase in waste such as gloves, masks, and disinfecting wipes, waste is on the rise. Although medical supplies are necessary, we need to ensure that they’re disposed of safely and in a way that won’t harm the environment.

Policy

Perhaps most importantly, we need to examine governmental policies put in place (or removed) during this time. Disasters such as coronavirus can prompt governments to enact regulatory rollbacks and corporate bailouts—a phenomenon that Canadian author and activist Naomi Klein calls “*disaster capitalism*.” Here in Canada, critics are pointing to Alberta, for example, and its “*emergency*” measures that amount to deregulation of the oilsands, as well as a controversial new bill protecting “*critical infrastructure*” from blockades and protests. Ontario has also suspended environmental protection oversight rules, citing COVID-19. In the US, Trump has been criticized for deregulating environmental measures, also citing COVID-19. And China’s fossil fuel-powered COVID-19 economic recovery plan may be putting its 2020 climate pledges at risk.

What Can We Do?

Thankfully, there’s a lot we can do to ensure that we recover from this pandemic in a way that benefits everyone. Model, actor, and activist Lindura and family physician Toni Sapping are the sisters behind the educational and social justice platform Plastic Free Toronto. Together they advocate for resilient communities and host sustainability events. According to Toni: “*We see ourselves as separate from the environment, but we are the environment. The two issues are interconnected. If we tackle one, we’ll benefit the other as well.*”

“The problem is not COVID itself. The problem is the sick systems that we have, where we continue to take from the earth. The pandemic is exposing how fragile our current systems are. A vaccine won’t fix the underlying issues of human and environmental exploitation that are causing the climate crisis—and that will bring new pandemics in the future.” *“Where is our imagination?”* asks Lindura. *“We need to dream bigger. Think of all that we can do if we try!”*

Support For a Green Recovery

We can take inspiration from progressive countries leading the way in a *“green recovery.”* This recovery would be in line with the UN sustainable development goals, reduced inequalities, good health and well-being, and sustainable cities and communities. Some of the EU nations discussing green recoveries include Sweden, the Netherlands, Italy, Finland, Denmark, Spain and Germany.

What does this look like in practice? Specifics differ but can include measures such as the following:

- **creation of green jobs**
- **investments in green technology**
- **support for people (such as universal basic income or fair living wage)**
- **environmental regulations**
- **strong health care systems and sick leave**
- **flexible working hours and remote working**
- **local food systems**
- **shifting to a low-carbon, circular economy**
- **supporting Indigenous rights**

Across Canada and around the world, environmentalists and some politicians (including those in the EU) are also calling for a green recovery from COVID-19. Now is the time for us to become activists and push for meaningful change. Reach out to politicians, sign petitions, and speak up about how you want the world to look in the wake of COVID-19.

Build Resilient Communities

We can also do so much by *“thinking globally and acting locally”* to change the world around us. Helping to build resilient communities is a crucial way to improve the environment and its inhabitants. Toni elaborates: *“Individually, we need to come together in community groups. How can we organize to get things done?”* This can include getting involved in municipal politics, supporting local businesses and organizations, growing local food, and volunteering. Toni and Lindura cite examples including bike lanes, food banks, diverting waste from landfills, and reducing food waste. Overall, Lindura is hopeful. *“This is a huge turning point; we have the ability to move forward in a really positive way. I believe that generally we’re going in the right direction.”* Toni agrees. *“We need to believe that the core of humanity is good; to shift from being consumers to being citizens; to continue to care for one another.”*

* Leah Payne is a writer, editor, and sustainability influencer based in Vancouver, BC. Her article appeared in the Oct. 2020 Issue of Alive Magazine (alive.ca). Leah Payne can be reached at: leahstellapayne.com

To use “God’s senses” does not mean simply turning inward but becoming free for a different way of living life: See what God sees! Hear what God hears! Laugh where God laughs!

Cry where God cries! —Dorothee Sölle

Five Things Canada Can Do To Beat Its 2030 Climate Target

Dec. 8, 2020 – Alex Ballingal - Toronto Star *

OTTAWA—The Liberal government has been saying for more than a year that it will exceed Canada's climate target for 2030, even as its own projections show the country is on track to fall short. The question has always been how. And now the Liberals are preparing their answer. The current target, set by prime minister Stephen Harper, is to slash emissions to 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. But during the 2019 election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau pledged Canada would “exceed” that target on its way to net-zero emissions by 2050.

The problem is that Canada is on track to fall short for 2030. The most recent projections from Environment and Climate Change Canada show the country needs to find ways to cut another 77 megatonnes of greenhouse gas emissions to hit that target, and more still to exceed it. It's a big target considering that the emissions from driving 1 million cars from Vancouver to Toronto is roughly one megatonne. Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson's office refuses to say exactly when, but the government is expected to release its plan soon. Here are five things the government can do to exceed the 2030 target.

1. Finish the Job

A good place to start is by zipping up the existing climate plan, said Isabelle Turcotte, director of federal policy at the Pembina Institute. This plan set the foundation for national climate action in Canada, and included measures to phase out coal-fired electricity and impose a mandatory minimum carbon price across the country. But not everything in the plan has been finished. For Turcotte, “*the biggest piece*” that remains is to implement the “*Clean Fuel Standard*,” federal rules to reduce the emissions from gasoline, diesel and other fuels that are slated to come into force starting in 2022. The government anticipates the standard will reduce annual emissions by 30 mega-tonnes by 2030, though the policy has been criticized by Conservatives who object that it will increase the cost of gas.

2. Crank Up the Carbon Price

The Conservatives say the same thing about the carbon price. But Michael Bernstein, executive director of Clean Prosperity, is among the wide range of experts that argues the policy is an essential and effective way to encourage emissions reductions without resorting to heavy-handed regulations. To exceed the 2030 target, Bernstein said the government should keep increasing the national minimum carbon price beyond 2022, when it caps out at \$50 per tonne of emissions.

3. Slap on a Climate Tariff

Thanks to U.S. President-elect Joe Biden, “*carbon border adjustments*” are in vogue amongst the climate policy crowd. Biden expressed interest in the idea earlier this year, and since then Green Leader Annamie Paul has championed the policy from Ottawa. The Liberals also mentioned them in their fall economic statement. The idea is that tariffs are applied to imports from countries with weaker climate policies. As Bernstein and Turcotte explained, this would eliminate the need for the special industrial carbon price, which charges heavy emitters on a portion of their greenhouse gas pollution so that the policy doesn't put them at a disadvantage with international competitors. A tariff means they would pay the carbon price on all of their emissions, which could be a stronger incentive to slash them. And with the U.S. signalling it is on board with this concept, the door is open for Canada to follow suit, Bernstein said. “*I can't see a world in which we act unilaterally without the U.S., so that really is a key factor.*”

4. Get Off the Road!

The government already has its eye on zero-emission vehicles, but Turcotte said Ottawa could go further in its push to slash emissions. Instead of relying on voluntary sales targets over the next decades, the federal government could impose mandatory thresholds for the share of annual car sales in Canada that need to be emissions-free, she said. Such rules are already in place in British Columbia, which has a law mandating 100 per cent of vehicles sold in the province must be zero-emissions by 2040. Quebec announced last month it will ban the sale of new cars with internal combustion engines in 2035. *"It would be beneficial to have such a signal in Canada as a whole"*, Turcotte said. The transportation sector was worth 25 per cent of Canada's annual emissions in 2018, second only to oil and gas. *"It's an increasingly utilized tool, and so Canada would be just following the pack."*

5. Enlist the Provinces in a "Race to the Top!"

It may sound procedural, but one "huge pillar" of the future climate plan should be a forum in which the provinces can be wrangled to ramp up action in their own jurisdictions, said Catherine Abreu, executive director of Climate Action Network Canada. Likening the idea to global climate summits that happen every year, Abreu said regular and "institutionalized" meetings between the provinces and territories and the federal government on climate action could serve as an *"elaborate peer-pressure strategy."* This is important because provinces can have a big impact on reducing emissions through policies in their own jurisdictions, such as building codes and infrastructure to broaden the reach of clean infrastructure. This, she said, could create a *"race to the top"* that helps carry Canada over the top on its 2030 target.

* Alex Ballingall is an Ottawa-based reporter covering national politics for the Star.

In an extraordinary July speech, titled **"Tackling the Global Inequality Pandemic,"** at times sounding more like a biblical prophet than the UN Secretary General, Antonio Gúterres said that COVID-19 has been like *"an x-ray, revealing fractures in the fragile skeleton of the societies we have built."* The pandemic, he said, is exposing *"the myth that we are all in the same boat."* Gúterres offered an incriminating list:

- ◆ anger against inequality, fueling the anti-racism movement in the U.S.;
- ◆ women worse off than men across the world, simply because they are women;
- ◆ the world's richest 1% gaining 27% of the world's income growth;
- ◆ a digital divide resulting in a *"two-speed world"*;
- ◆ the countries contributing the least to global warming suffering the worst of climate disruption;
- ◆ African countries being under-represented in international institutions which are deformed by legacies of colonialism.

With unusual public candor, Gúterres said, *"The nations that came out on top more than seven decades ago have refused to contemplate the reforms needed to change power relations in international institutions,"* and he named the UN Security Council as a case in point. *"Inequality",* he concluded, *"defines our time."*

From: Chris Rice, MCC UN Office

WHEN ONE PART SUFFERS, DO WE LOOKS AWAY?

BY ADAM RUSSELL TAYLOR -- Oct 8, 2020 *

While [the U.S.] vice-presidential debate covered *some* international issues — including climate change and U.S. relations with China, Iran, and Russia — foreign policy issues have largely taken a back seat in this campaign so far. Meanwhile, the number of worldwide coronavirus deaths surpassed 1 million, a chilling and tragic number that barely broke through the headlines about how our own president had contracted the virus. The fact that nearly a quarter of those 1 million deaths have taken place in the United States is a sobering reminder of the failure of American leadership — and we can't forget how that failure extends globally, as our nation's moral responsibilities and practical interests are inextricably tied to the rest of the world. As the Apostle Paul so aptly put it: "*When one part [of the body] suffers, all parts suffer with it*" (1 Corinthians 12:26). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous remix of this text says that "*Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.*"

The catastrophic rise in extreme poverty around the world, the alarming erosion of human rights in many countries, the elusive prospects for sustainable peace in the Middle East, the pernicious scale of human trafficking and modern-day slavery, religious persecution, and ongoing war and conflict should matter deeply to the body of Christ, even if they don't grab headlines or get addressed in campaign ads. These and other international issues are often rooted in and perpetuated by racism, past and present. As Church World Service points out in their Platform on Racial Justice:

Black, Indigenous and Persons of Color (BIPOC) communities in the United States and around the world are disproportionately impacted by hunger, poverty, displacement, disaster, and climate change. This is not by happenstance. White supremacy and misogyny continue to target and destroy the lives and communities of BIPOC. This is a daily life oppression, carried out by unjust international and national economic and legal systems, militarism disguised as law enforcement, and discriminatory immigration policies.

How the U.S. conducts itself in the world does matter in this election and should be part of how we evaluate candidates and cast our votes. As Pope Francis reminds the world in his latest encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, the world is deeply interconnected and we are called by our faith to become and act as one human family.

A Vision for the Human Family

Pope Francis has a penchant for impeccable, maybe even providential timing. His encyclical *Laudato Si'* came out just months before the 2015 Paris climate summit and played a key role in influencing public opinion and galvanizing political will behind bolder climate action to protect "our common home." Now, less than a month before the most consequential U.S. election in generations, the pope's new encyclical provides a powerful rebuke to a politics of division, fear, and hate while also casting a vision for the human family that is deeply relevant to applying our faith to U.S. leadership in the world. *Fratelli Tutti* (on "universal fraternity and social friendship") takes its title from St. Francis of Assisi and is inspired by his "*fraternal openness,*" which, the pope said, calls on people "*to acknowledge, appreciate and love each person, regardless of physical proximity, regardless of where he or she was born or lives.*" The encyclical also references and was inspired by a document on human fraternity and inter-religious dialogue that Pope Francis and Sheikh Ahmad el-Tayeb, grand imam of al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo, Egypt, signed in 2019. As E.J. Dionne writes: "*We are not accustomed to hearing from a pope, a month before US Election Day, who criticizes 'myopic, extremist, resentful and aggressive nationalism,' and castigates those who, through their actions, cast immigrants as 'less worthy, less important, less human.'*"

Human rights and international aid and cooperation rarely, if ever, make headlines in national politics or elections. But from a faith perspective, they should. They factor into our discernment both as Christians and Americans because our moral obligations and concerns cannot be confined to our borders. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly devastating to the world's efforts to combat extreme poverty, hunger, malnutrition, and child mortality.

Global Crisis Requires Global Response

The World Bank reports that COVID-19 has dealt an unprecedented setback to the worldwide effort to end extreme poverty, raise median incomes, and create shared prosperity. The World Bank's new poverty projections suggest that by 2021, an additional 110 to 150 million people will have fallen into extreme poverty. This means that the pandemic and global recession may push 1.4 percent of the world's population into extreme poverty. And since the outbreak, more than 1.6 billion children in developing countries have been out of school, implying a potential loss of as much as \$10 trillion in lifetime earnings for these students. Making matters worse, gender-based violence is on the rise, and early estimates suggest a potential increase of up to 45 percent in child mortality because of health-service shortfalls and reductions in access to food. I have spent his career advocating for greater global leadership to end the dehumanizing impacts of extreme poverty; these trends are heartbreaking.

In response to these staggering statistics, we desperately need members of Congress and a president who recognize that a global pandemic requires a global response, which, as the ONE campaign outlines, must include efforts to support the most vulnerable and the equitable global distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine and treatment. We need leaders who will provide bold leadership in the fight to end AIDS around the world by 2030 and who will work with the international community through organizations like the World Health Organization and GAVI (the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization) to fight preventable disease. Through the *Circle of Protection*, Sojourners is calling on Congress to provide an additional \$20 billion to support a global COVID-19 relief response to support people on the front-lines of the pandemic. As COVID-19 takes lives and drives a global financial crisis it is imperative that U.S. leaders pressure the G20 and the International Monetary Fund to increase debt relief and cancellation through the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust and other expanded processes.

An Abdication of Leadership

The fragile state of human rights and democracy has also been exacerbated by this pandemic and the abdication of U.S. leadership in protecting and upholding human rights. A recent report from Freedom House found: *"Governments have responded by engaging in abuses of power, silencing their critics, and weakening or shuttering important institutions, often undermining the very systems of accountability needed to protect public health. The crisis of democratic governance, having begun long before the pandemic, is likely to continue after the health crisis recedes, as the laws and norms being put in place now will be difficult to reverse."*

We cannot forget our priorities of working toward peace in the Middle East, or monitoring Russia's ongoing efforts to interfere with and subvert our election and democracy, or addressing the persecution of Uighurs in China. Each of these topics warrants our resources and attention, even in a news cycle where attention is hard to come by.

Pope Francis places Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan at the centre of his encyclical writing; *"The parable eloquently presents the basic decision we need to make in order to rebuild our wounded world. In the face of so much pain and suffering, our only course is to imitate the Good Samaritan ... Any other decision would make us either one of the robbers or one of those who walked by without showing compassion for the sufferings of the man on the roadside."* He continues by saying the *"parable shows us how a community can be rebuilt by men and women who identify with the vulnerability of others, who reject the creation of a society of exclusion, and act instead as neighbours, lifting up and rehabilitating the fallen for the sake of the common good."* These words provide a moral compass to elect leaders who are determined to revamp and rehabilitate global leadership to build a radically more just, healthy, and secure world.

* Rev. Adam Russell Taylor is president-elect of Sojourners. He previously led the Faith Initiative at the World Bank Group. This article, written prior to the US election, can be found at sojo.net

**"When we get through this, when we finish the song;
It won't be left vs. Right, but right vs. Wrong!"
Martyr Joseph, Welsh Singer/Song-Writer**

A WORK IN PROGRESS: MARGARET ATWOOD ON THE U.S. ELECTION -- SOJO.NET *

We in Canada watched your election with nail-biting intensity, getting the cups of tea ready for an influx of refugees from south of the border. Thankfully, that won't be necessary just yet. Now there's a breathing space. It's not a destination, it's a way station. Bottle of water, snack, pats on the back from encouraging bystanders, and then off you'll go again, long-distance runners.

This is a perilous journey, with many rocks and icebergs. For such a journey you need an Ice Captain: cool hand, knows the terrain, pays attention to what the science of radar says, keeps in mind the welfare of everyone on board. Looks like you just got an Ice Captain. That's good.

All Americans should be aware that the vultures are gathering: Many in other countries are working for your shipwreck. We hope and believe you will prove them wrong. What else is needed? Sojourners work for "*social justice*," but "*justice*" has two opposites:

- ◆ One is *injustice*, and in fighting it a person could be tempted to employ an undesirable form of *justice-revenge*. But revenge begets revenge begets revenge.
- ◆ The other opposite of justice is *mercy*. Christians know that mercy is at the core of their good-news message: Forgiveness of enemies was very rare in religions before Christianity. It's also very hard to do.

What form could mercy take at the moment? Possibly it might require listening to what your "enemies" might actually have to say. Not everyone can be crammed into a box with just one label. Not everyone who disagrees with you is in bad faith. Some honestly think Plan A would benefit everyone, while others believe Plan B would be better. Listen carefully. If you do, perhaps others will be willing to listen to you.

America is a work in progress. So is democracy. Autocrats worldwide wish America ill: If democracy fails in America, there will no longer be a beacon of liberty and they themselves will feel justified as tyrants and pirate kings... "*See? It doesn't work!*"

* Margaret Atwood, author of *Dearly: New Poems, The Handmaid's Tale, and The Testaments*, is an award-winning Canadian writer. This article appeared in the Jan. 2021 issue of Sojourners as part of a special feature entitled: "*Finding Our Way in a Post-Trump America*".

A Lesson for Canada?

A source of collective moral imagination may be in the fresh politics of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern in New Zealand, where according to one scholar from this small country, "*the only kind of leadership that we can offer globally is moral.*" Ardern has signed multi-lateral treaties on climate change and to discourage nuclear weapons, and called for a politics combining empathy and strength.

From: Chris Rice, MCC UN Office

The story of the twentieth century was finding out just how big and powerful we were. And it turns out that we're big and powerful as all get out. The story of the twenty-first century is going to be finding out if we can figure out ways to get smaller or not. To see if we can summon the will, and then the way, to make ourselves somewhat smaller, and try to fit back into this planet.

Bill McKibben, 350.org

For Insurrectionists: Violent Faith Brewed from Nationalism, Conspiracies and Jesus

Jack Jenkins - Religion News Service - January 15, 2021 *

Moments before the assault on the U.S. Capitol began on Jan. 6, a mass of Trump supporters gathered at a northwest entrance. They were angry: Footage highlighted the presence of Proud Boys, an organization classified as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center, who were shouting one of their favorite chants: “*F— Antifa!*” As throngs surged toward a barricade manned by a vastly outnumbered handful of police, a white flag appeared above the masses, flapping in the wind: It featured an *ichthys* — also known as a “*Jesus fish*” — painted with the colours of the American flag.

Above the symbol, the words: “*Proud American Christian.*” It was one of several prominent examples of religious expression that occurred in and around the storming of the Capitol, which left five people dead. Before and even during the attack, insurrectionists appealed to faith as both a source of strength as well as justification for their assault on the seat of American democracy.

While not all participants were Christian, their rhetoric often reflected an aggressive, charismatic and hyper-masculine form of Christian nationalism — a fusion of God and country that has lashed together disparate pieces of Donald Trump’s religious base. “*A mistake a lot of people have made over the past few years . . . is to suggest there is some fundamental conflict between evangelicalism and the kind of violence or threat of violence we’re seeing,*” said Kristin Kobes Du Mez, a history professor at Calvin University and author of *Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation*. “*For decades now, evangelical devotional life, evangelical preaching and evangelical teaching has found a space to promote this kind of militancy.*”

A form of this faith was on display in front of the Capitol the day before the attack, when Trump supporters marched around the Capitol, shouting and blowing shofars as a protest against the 2020 presidential election results. “*This is our moment, Lord, this is our moment to take our country back,*” declared one woman standing in a prayer circle near the U.S. Supreme Court. “*This is our moment to fight . . . with you as our weapon. You are our fighter.*”

Some marchers followed a woman waving a white flag emblazoned with a tree and the slogan “An Appeal to Heaven.” The flag has become a banner for Christian nationalism: First waved during the American Revolution, it is said to be a reference to an argument by British philosopher John Locke, who suggested that — just as the biblical figure Jephthah led the Israelites in battle against Ammon — so too do individuals retain the right to “appeal to heaven” and wage revolution.

Andrew Whitehead, co-author of *Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States*, argued such appeals are commonplace in evangelical circles. “*Christian nationalism really tends to draw on kind of an Old Testament narrative, a kind of blood purity and violence where the Christian nation needs to be defended against the outsiders,*” Whitehead said. “*It really is identity-based and tribal, where there’s an us-versus-them.*”

Indeed, antagonistic religious imagery was easy to spot at the Capitol raid the next day. One insurrectionist photographed in the building’s rotunda wore military fatigues with a patch on the shoulder that showcased a cross and the words “Armour of God.” Just below was another patch featuring a slogan wrapped around a stylized skull used by the comic book character The Punisher: “*God will judge our enemies. We’ll arrange the meeting.*”

One person who claimed to have been among the attackers, 36-year-old West Texas florist Jenny Cudd, posted a video on Facebook discussing how she “*charged the Capitol with patriots,*” exclaiming “*f— yes - I’m proud of my actions!*” She boasted about “*break(ing) down*” House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s office door. She concluded her more than 20-minute video with an outline of her religious beliefs. “*To*

me, God and country are tied — to me they're one and the same," she said. "We were founded as a Christian country. And we see how far we have come from that. ... We are a godly country, and we are founded on godly principles. And if we do not have our country, nothing else matters."

Whitehead was shocked by the video, but not surprised. He said Cudd's explicit fusion of God, country and Trump is a "perfect" example of Christian nationalism, but those who invoked it while storming the Capitol are but an extremist subset of a much larger group — one that doesn't stop at the boundaries of evangelicalism.

"Extremism of any form, whether it's religious or not, can only really flourish if it's allowed to," Whitehead said. "So with 50% of Americans being relatively favourable toward understanding the U.S. as a Christian nation, or even that Christianity should be favoured, it creates a situation where those that want to take that view even further can do that."

Some evangelicals condemned the faith expressions seen on Capitol Hill. Hundreds of faculty and staff at Wheaton College, an evangelical school, signed a statement decrying the "*blasphemous abuses of Christian symbols*" during the attack.

But evangelicalism is a tree with many branches. Anthea Butler, associate professor of religion at the University of Pennsylvania, pointed to Jenna Ryan, a real estate broker from Frisco, Texas. Ryan live-streamed herself as she entered the Capitol with other insurrectionists. As she crossed the threshold, she can be heard declaring, "*Here we are, in the name of Jesus! In the name above all names!*" Butler argued that the Ryan's words are emblematic of Pentecostal or charismatic Christianity, which is both a part of evangelicalism and distinct in important ways. Many of Trump's faith advisers, such as Florida pastor Paula White, hail from charismatic traditions that place an emphasis on prophecy and "*spiritual warfare*." "*To say 'in the name of Jesus' — that's calling protection, but it's also calling power,*" Butler said. "*So in other words, 'Jesus has given us the power to bust into the Capitol.'*"

In another video posted on Twitter, a man near the south side of the Capitol can be seen speaking to onlookers as hundreds stand atop the Capitol steps. While two Christian flags — white banners with a red cross in the corner — waved in front of him, he can be heard saying: "*Donald Trump coordinated it. We're his surrogates. He fought for us and we have to fight for him.*" He then glances at the flags before adding what sounds like "*Jesus loves us!*"

All scholars who spoke to RNS said Christian nationalism and hyper-masculinity often overlap with forms of white supremacy. Proud Boys leader Enrique Tarrio, for instance, was arrested in January after he and members of his group tore a Black Lives Matter sign from a Washington church in December and burned it in the street. But the Proud Boys who appeared in Washington on Jan. 6 insisted they drew strength from God: As they approached the Capitol, Proud Boys — some donned in camouflage or military-style helmets, others gripping weapons such as a baseball bat — paused for a moment of prayer.

As they knelt, a man with a bullhorn prayed: "*We pray that you provide all of us with courage and strength to both represent you and represent our culture well!*"

* As published in: anabaptistworld.org



Source of Justice,

You teach us what is good, and yet in so many ways we rebel against your ways. Move us to seek true justice: Justice that disrupts violence, Justice that upends oppression, Justice that inspires love. Guide our feet as we march toward becoming your beloved community, In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.

Solidarity: A Public Virtue – Richard Rohr (CAC) *

Citizens of the United States will finish voting this week. Many of us are feeling demoralized, and many others carry serious distrust of American political institutions. The most vulnerable in a society have already experienced the discouragement from which so many are suffering today. They know firsthand that the system has not worked, at least not for them, for a long time.

Two years ago, I wrote (in *Sojourners* magazine) that for me, personally, voting is a deeply moral act—a decisive statement of Christian faith that I matter, that justice matters, and that other people matter. Sadly, for many religious people, the public forum has historically remained the most disconnected from our faith. Unlike its Jewish forebears, Christianity, in its first two thousand years, has kept its morality mostly private, interior, and heaven-bound, but with very few direct implications for what is now called our collective economic, social, or political life. I am not talking about partisan politics here, but simply the connecting of the inner world with the outer world.

This week our meditations will be focusing on what I call “*public virtue*.” The virtue in which I was trained in the seminary, I’m sorry to say, was “*private virtue*” that taught me how I could be virtuous in my interior life. As my novice master put it in a good 1961 fashion, “*Try to make it as easy as possible for all others to love you!*”

Perhaps I, myself, was good and could go to heaven. But such personal salvation does not come close to the mystery of the Body of Christ, which turns focus outward, to ask: how can I be good for the sake of my neighbourhood, my city, my church, my community, and the world? It really is a different starting place. It’s not seeking my own ego enhancement, but the spiritual and physical well-being of others, as Jesus did.

There really is no such thing as being “*non-political*”. Everything we say or do either affirms or critiques the *status quo*. Even to say nothing is to say something. If we say nothing, we communicate that the *status quo*—even if it is massively unjust and deceitful—is apparently okay. This common “*non-political*” stance is an illusion, and the powerful have always been able to use it to manipulate people.

We must use the power of the Gospel to critique and affirm both the Left and the Right on most public positions, even while knowing that political or programmatic changes—of themselves—will never fully bring about the goodness, charity, or transformation that the Gospel offers the world.

What I mean by public virtue is primarily about **solidarity with others**, as opposed to an exclusive concern with my inner life. As different parts of the Body of Christ, we each have strengths and gifts that are needed by the entire body. We are called by the Spirit to use these gifts in service and love for our hurting world and not just for our private sense of “*holiness*.”

* CAC Daily Meditation for November 1, 2020 – one day in advance of the US election.