

## **Truth & Reconciliation Doorways**

How can I contribute to the process of Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous People in Canada? What do I need to learn? What do I need to do? These are the kind of questions a lot of us at BMC are asking, and the answers are not always clear.

The BMC Truth and Reconciliation Working Group has identified seven doorways ~ passages that might be just right to help you take the next step in working towards Truth and Reconciliation with your Indigenous neighbours.

What would happen if everyone in our church decided, in the next year, to go through at least one of these doorways? Let's find out.

### **Doorway 1: Learning session at Crow Shield Lodge**

Join an intergenerational group of 20 people from BMC to visit [Crow Shield Lodge](#) on Sunday, June 12, from noon to 3 PM. We will spend most of our time there in the teaching lodge. During this session, we will work with three big issues that the youth at BMC identified for their focus this year:

- We want to learn about Indigenous religion and spirituality.
- We want to make connections with local Indigenous people.
- We want to work against prejudice and racism in ourselves and others.

At Crow Shield Lodge, we will meet with Clarence Cachagee, two other facilitators, and a firekeeper to work on these important issues.

The cost for this event has already been paid for from our Harvest Fund contribution to Crow Shield Lodge.

#### To Knock On This Door:

Contact the church office (519-648-2501, [office@breslaumc.ca](mailto:office@breslaumc.ca)) and put your name on a list of interested participants. We will try to find a way for all interested people to participate. People of all ages are welcome. The content and duration of the event may make it a challenging experience for younger children.

### **Doorway 2: Learning tour with MCC's Indigenous Neighbours Program**

MCC is inviting BMC members to participate in an intergenerational learning opportunity in the north (Timmins) about Indigenous perspectives. This learning tour will take place sometime this summer and will be able to accommodate 15 to 20 people from BMC. Activities will introduce you to local Indigenous people and hear about the joys, challenges and shape of their everyday lives. In addition, participants will have a chance to explore some of the projects that MCC is working on through the Indigenous Neighbours Program. MCC trusts that this learning tour will give participants a base of experience from which they could choose to respond to future requests for assistance with understanding and compassion.

## Truth & Reconciliation Doorways

### To Knock On This Door:

We are in the early stages of planning for this learning tour. We don't have a date yet. If you think you *might* be interested in participating, please contact the church office (519-648-2501, [office@breslaumc.ca](mailto:office@breslaumc.ca)) and ask to be put on a list of people who want to be updated as these plans develop.

### **Doorway 3: Virtual tours and workshops with the Woodland Cultural Centre**

The Woodland Cultural Centre has three virtual offerings right now that may be of interest to you. If enough people at BMC are interested in participating, we can book private times for the first two events.

- A virtual tour of the former Mohawk Institute Residential School will give you a history of the institution over its 140-year history. Viewers will get to see different rooms inside the school and hear interviews from five survivors. The length of this tour is 90 minutes, split evenly between the actual presentation and a question and answer session.
- A virtual Truth and Reconciliation Workshop covers topics from the Imperial Context, Canada's Indigenous Policy, The Indian Residential Settlement Agreement, to United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The presentation allows for an in-depth understanding of TRC's final report, its 10 Principles and 94 Calls to Action. The Truth and Reconciliation presentation provides insight into the Progress Report, Examples of Implementations, Personal Acts of Reconciliation, Barriers to Reconciliation, and explanation of what Reconciliation is not. This is a 90 minute interactive workshop.
- Visit the Woodland Cultural Centre Museum in person or virtually. Staff members will guide you through the permanent historical gallery, which exhibits and interprets a collection of archaeological material, historical cultural material, arts, crafts, documents and archival photographs.

### To Knock On This Door:

Contact the church office (519-648-2501, [office@breslaumc.ca](mailto:office@breslaumc.ca)) and indicate which of the above activities you would like to do with a group of other people from BMC. We will work with the Woodland Cultural Centre to set up the requested activities and keep you informed about these plans. You can also participate in these activities independently by contacting the [Woodland Cultural Centre](#).

### **Doorway 4: Direct Action Training: From Learning to Action For Indigenous Solidarity**

On Saturday, April 23, MCEC is offering an online training session presented by the Community Peacemaker Teams (formerly Christian Peacemaker Teams). Topics that will be covered in this three-hour session (between 11 AM and 2 PM) include:

- De-escalation: learning and practicing various de-escalation skills and help discerning if

## Truth & Reconciliation Doorways

it is appropriate to attempt to de-escalate different situations.

- Participating in a protest: Tips on preparing yourself for various protest scenarios that may arise. We will also cover protest anatomy, affinity groups, and common organizing structures.
- Police, Military, and other violent presence: Interacting with police and military, responding to state violence, preparing for arrest, and counter-protesters.
- Self Care: how to take care of yourself during and after this hard work.

### To Knock On This Door:

More information on this training session is available in the church office. Here is a registration link for [Direct Action Training](#).

### **Doorway 5: Indigenous Mennonite Encounters In Time And Place**

This conference is being held at Conrad Grebel University College from Thursday, May 12 to Sunday, May 15. You can attend all or part of the conference, in person or virtually.

This academic conference and community education event will offer stories and analyses of encounters and relationships between Indigenous peoples and Mennonite settlers from point of contact to the present. The intent is to advance understanding on the part of Mennonites and other interested participants of their colonial histories, and to advance reconciliation and bring justice to Indigenous-settler relations. The event will comprise academic presentations, community storytelling, artistic offerings, and both Indigenous and Mennonite ceremony. The organizers anticipate a time of listening, conversation, and silence.

There is no set charge for participants in this conference, although a donation is recommended.

### To Knock On This Door:

Get more information and register for this conference at the following address: <https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous-mennonite-encounters/>

### **Doorway 6: Join a bookclub and read Five Little Indians, by Michelle Good**

Five Little Indians was selected as the Canada Reads 2022 winner. It is a powerful story of five residential school survivors and it will be read throughout the country in the coming year. We are inviting members of BMC to form a one-time book club to read this book together and see where it takes us.

### To Knock On This Door:

Contact the church office (519-648-2501, [office@breslaumc.ca](mailto:office@breslaumc.ca)) and put your name on a

## Truth & Reconciliation Doorways

list of BMC folks who want to read Five Little Indians together. If you would be willing to help organize such a book club, mention that too. And try to nail down a copy of this book.

### **Doorway 7: Two Row On The Grand**

Two Row On The Grand is an annual multi-day canoe/kayak trip down the Grand River from Cambridge to the mouth of the river in Lake Erie. The paddle is done with Haudenosaunee People and allies alongside of each other in two separate, yet parallel rows. This helps to reenact the Two Row Wampum Treaty, in which different cultures were instructed to paddle down the river of life on parallel paths, close enough to support each other, yet not too close as to get in each other's way.

This year, Two Row On The Grand is a ten-day journey, from July 20 to July 29. In addition to paddling together, participants will camp, eat meals together, and experience educational events, traditional teachings, dancing, storytelling and sharing circles. Testimony from past participants is that this is an intense and transformative experience that brings people into new relationships and ways of thinking.

The cost of this experience is \$75 a day (\$50 for children). People can also volunteer to work on ground support for this expedition. This kind of participation requires special training and permission from the organizers of Two Row On The Grand.

#### To Knock On This Door:

For more information, and to register, visit the [Two Row On The Grand](#) website.



Let's go open some doors!