

Good morning,



I like to tell stories but some of them are tough ones. My stories (those situations or events that I know of or have been involved in) are true, although I usually change the names and other details in order to respect the privacy of others. But the stories are true. In prison, inmates shared their lives with me as the chaplain, and I heard terrible accounts like abuse from those who should have been trustworthy; neglect like being a toddler tied in the playpen by mom as she went out to party; or being physically punished regularly at home for being a bad child and sometimes forced to kneel on marbles in the corner. The list goes on and on with situations that make me shudder as I recall them.

It is no surprise to me that abuse, neglect and torment impact a person, especially when that person was a child at the time. Over sixty percent of the population was indigenous at a prison I served for five years. Many of those men were slowly able to consider me a friend but not all. Some had been too deeply damaged in residential school settings and did not know how to respond to someone from the church other than to feel pain and hate.

Elders worked with prisoners like I did and would regularly offer the sweatlodge as a method of healing for prisoner pain. That support helped many of those fellows. Once a correctional officer, who was indigenous himself, was invited to the sweatlodge by the Elder. He responded with thanks but declined. I asked him later why he didn't attend. He replied, "*I have too much hate in me.*" I was surprised because he was such a friendly and responsible officer. He had his own story he was living with.

This Sunday we are invited by the *Ministry Through Reconciliation Committee* at Hope to wear something orange in honour of those who have stories that are hard to tell and hard to hear. But friends care about each other and friendship begins with listening.

The writer of *Ecclesiastes 4:9-10* put it this way, "***Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.***"

We all want good friends. Let's be that for others. Sometimes it begins with a shirt.

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This Sunday, you are encouraged to wear something Orange in support of National Day for Truth & Reconciliation. The orange shirt has become a symbol of truth, hope & reconciliation and a commitment to a better future. By wearing orange, you make a statement to support reconciliation to honour residential school survivors, their families, and communities.

Coming up at Hope:

Sept 25 @ 11:45 a.m. *Ministry Through Reconciliation Committee* meeting.

Sept 26 @ 10:00 a.m. *Hymn Sing* on Zoom

Sept 27 @ 8:30 a.m. *Men's Group* in person and on Zoom

Sept 27 @ 9:00 a.m. - Noon. *Hope Quilters*

Sept 27 @ 10:15 a.m. *Hope Men's Chorus* practice

Sept 28 @ 3:00 p.m. *Wedding* at Hope

Sept 29 @ 10:00 a.m. *Canadian Lutheran World Relief Sunday Worship* (Zoom opens at 9:30 a.m.)

Sept 29 @ 4:30 p.m. *Taize Prayer Community* meets at Hope (*last Sundays of Sept, Oct, Nov*).

Sept 30 — *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation*

Oct 6 @ 10:00 a.m. *Sunday Worship*

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The *Sunday service* and *Invitation to Zoom* will appear in your email as usual on Saturday morning.

The Lord is with us.

Pastor Terry