

Church of the Master (Scarborough Presbytery)
Reflections on Reconciliation
(from a Council Meeting on November 21st, 2001)

Some personal stories:

- 1) The wife of a member and her brother were estranged and in conflict, and reconciliation was made over some time, with small steps and acts of mutual effort, ie. it wasn't any particular single act that achieved reconciliation
- 2) A member told of her experience in Sri Lanka, during times of inter-religious conflict. In her community, it was a minority on both sides who were instigating violence, but other were silent. Only when a well respected leader was murdered did people on one side approach people on the other and offer condolences, which led to cooperation against the violence in their community. In this case that single act of violence became a catalyst for healing, because the constant but mostly unspoken tension was no longer ignored, and reconciling actions were undertaken.

Reflections about our ministry:

What reconciliation ministries are currently exercised in our Church?

- reflecting in this way at a Council meeting is one exercise of this ministry
- the worship service and workshop on Nov. 25th on Residential Schools legacy, in partnership with another church, is a form of reconciliation ministry
- Presbytery's intervention with congregations in crisis is a reconciliation ministry

Where is a reconciling presence needed in our Church's ministry?

- we need to practice and teach active listening, in our pastoral ministry and in our fellowship
- we need to be proactive regarding the shifting challenge of diversity in our community and Church
- we need to encourage open, small group ministries for the sharing of stories and reflecting on our future, our ministries, etc.
- we need a prayer group to exercise spiritual reconciliation