

BEYOND TOWARD FAITH IN ACTION

Don't just talk about love. Put your love into action. —1 John 3:18, NIRV

Harvesting peace in Burkina Faso

By Lynda Hollinger-Janzen

When they planted last year's crop, Mennonites in Burkina Faso didn't know the crop would be peace. During planting season in June 2015, members of the Mennonite Church in Sidi, Burkina Faso, discerned that God was calling them to renounce the annual sacrifices to the ancestors that are believed to ensure a bountiful harvest. Traditionally, the land is not sold, or rented; it is allotted by the land chiefs to people who work it to feed their families. Before receiving a farming plot, each family must offer a live chicken and four liters of dolo, a locally made millet beer, to

the spirits of the land.

In the beginning, the Christians complied with all the traditional conditions for the use of the land, but as the Mennonite church grew in numbers and as their faith deepened, the Christians began to see the sacrifices as a contradiction to trust in God's providence, and they refused to continue participating in these rites.

Village authorities threatened to evict the Christians from the village. There were also death threats against them. Mennonites around the world

prayed. At harvest time, the Sidi Christians were inspired to offer to help the land chief harvest his cotton crop. He accepted!

This act of love and humility broke through the hostility. Now, tension in the village has greatly diminished. The Mennonites of Sidi are convinced that God is working through these difficulties to speak to their community.

Their hope is to see the Sidi church grow. They also hope that those who persecuted them will learn to know the God who is love. ■

Their act of love and humility broke through the hostility.

PRAY for our brothers and sisters in the Sidi community, that they may continue to be led by the Holy Spirit and maintain their loving witness.

Serve

Restorative justice/mediation coordinator

La Jara, Colorado

Live in community with other young adults, and dedicate a year to faith development while you serve with an agency that works to find alternative solutions to conflict for community members.

House parents for children's home

Nigeria

Serve as missionaries, and guide and support the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the children and staff at The Wanted Children Foundation children's home and church plant.

Youth and children's social justice ministry

Botswana

Promote peace and justice while working with children and young adults through life skills workshops and literacy/educational programs at Mother Teresa Center or Little Eden Justice and Peace Center.

Match your skills

Mongolia

Serve in Mongolia using your expertise and skills. Some of the opportunities include coaching children's sports, teaching English, information and technology, business, agriculture, communication, and community development.

TAP A SHOULDER

Apply or find other placements
www.MennoniteMission.net/Serve

3 WAYS to listen for peace

Contributed by Jason Boone,
coordinating minister for the Peace
and Justice Support Network

How we listen can make a difference in the result of a difficult conversation. Here are three ways to listen:

1. **Stay in the present.** Disagreements tend to put us in time machines. We think back to previous times when we had conflict, or project doomsday scenarios. Most real-life disagreements can be solved, or a way to coexist can be found. Imaginary ones are impossible to unravel!
2. **Make a commitment not to fix.** It's tempting to view conversations as a chance to "fix" the other person's mistaken view. Fight this urge! Seeking to correct someone else's

view is a sure way to make them retrench.

3. **Turn to wonder.** If things get rough and you find yourself defensive or judgmental, ask yourself, "I wonder how they came to this belief?" Or "I wonder how this makes them feel?" These wonderings help keep us from making quick, often harsh judgments, and keep the paths toward reconciliation and understanding clear.

Try these three listening tools with a difficult co-worker or friend. I bet you'll notice a big difference in the conversation.

Explore more

Peace Podcast

Keep an eye out this fall at PJSN.org for a **new podcast** featuring peacemakers around the world, sponsored by *The Mennonite* and the Peace and Justice Support Network.

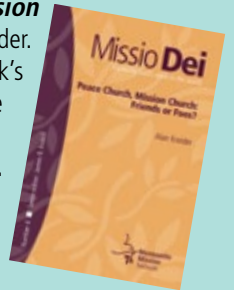
Join peace and evangelism

Explore how evangelism and justice and mission and peace can come together to create a more holistic ministry by reading

Peace Church Mission Church

by Alan Kreider. Visit Mission Network's resource page on the website at www.MennoniteMission.net/Resources

to download your free copy.



Cut out or fold over, post, and use this verse for contemplation and prayer over the next month.

LOVE

Love is **patient**; love is **kind**; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but **rejoices in the truth**. It **bears** all things, **believes** all things, **hopes** all things, **endures** all things. **LOVE NEVER ENDS.**

—1 Corinthians 13:4–8

Be the Gospel.



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