

RECONCILIATION AND UNITY

BRIGHT HOPE NEWS



Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

A few years ago, I was introduced to John Paul Lederach's work using Psalm 85 to bring reconciliation and unity into division. Psalm 85 talks about people being reconciled and forgiven and given the hope of living in peace. In verse 10 we are given the ingredients for unity: "Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other". Don't we all wonder when we see the conflicts around the world; how the heck will we ever have peace here?

Without wanting to oversimplify conflict resolution, valuing the different roles that mercy, truth, righteousness and peace have in allowing us to walk in unity with people is very helpful. What good is living in peace but not allowing the whole truth to be wrestled with? Where would our need for justice be without mercy or compassion?

Bright Hope World partnerships in places of conflict or in countries that have experienced war are living out mercy, truth, righteousness and peace through their work. A few examples of this reconciliation work in real life come from some of the partnerships in the DRC that are bringing unity to their communities:

Alliance Evangelique Orphan's Place of Peace (DRC09a): This partnership aims to heal the wounds and trauma of the ongoing conflict in Eastern DRC by caring for children orphaned by the conflict. They provide shelter, education, and community support. They see this as promoting societal reconciliation.

Alliance Evangelique Sewing Programme (DRC09b): This program supports victims of sexual violence, many of whom are survivors of conflict-related atrocities. By offering vocational training and income-generating opportunities, they empower individuals and foster community healing and unity.

Rehema Mercy Ministry, Bukavu (DRC10): This ministry is facilitating healing and reconciliation for street children, many of whom are victims of conflict. This ministry provides education and community integration and promotes reconnection to their own communities.

Our partners set a wonderful example of building bridges into communities through the ingredients of mercy, truth, 'being made right' and peace. Our partners navigate these relationships daily and expertly. But we do have to accept that full reconciliation and justice have not come just yet. Our partners focus now on building His Kingdom here on earth through the connections that they have in their communities to vulnerable people that the Father advocates for and loves deeply.

We need this sort of understanding in our own country; in the board you might be a part of, in race relations, in the PTA at your kids' school, among the people you work with, or in your own family trials. What could it look like for you if mercy, truth, righteousness, and peace were the main ingredients for you in the areas of your life that need unity?

Hayley Field

BHW Zambia Partnership Facilitator

Hayley's article (see to the left) is very timely as we continue to see terrible conflict rage in a number of places that Bright Hope World has partners. This is particularly acute in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) as Hayley notes.

We've also watched, along with the rest of the world, the devastation in Myanmar and, to a lesser extent, in Thailand. We have checked in with our partners and are not aware of any direct safety impacts on them. Myanmar will, of course, take years to recover and the current ruling regime is not exactly friendly to most of the people living in the country, nor to outside agencies wanting to help.

In Thailand, the impact from the loss of tourism is likely to be a concerning challenge, so if you were thinking about going on holiday...

In the office we have recently produced an index of our podcasts and created transcripts for them as well. So, if you haven't listened to the podcast and like a little provocative mission content, check it out at <https://www.brighthopeworld.com/media-podcast.asp>.

We are also about to mail out information (and a coffee sample) to churches in the hope we can secure some new La Mai customers. If your church provides coffee and they are not using La Mai, tell them to give us a bell or look out for our letter!



The Faith Harvest Network is based in the east of Uganda among the mountains and lakeside communities. Many of these people are poor and vulnerable with few resources or capital to allow them to get out of poverty. Our partners Peter and Violet oversee many of the churches in these small communities.

Faith Harvest Network works with churches in this area and has commenced small loan programmes in several of the churches. They want to improve the wellbeing and livelihoods initially for these people. They would love to see these people fully engaged in the decision-making processes that determine the future of the mountain and lakeside communities.

Evelyn Ajambo is the chairperson of the loan programme in Buhimi village, which is in south-eastern Uganda and the home of one of the churches that have formed a microloans programme.

Evelyn sells fish, onions, tomatoes and eggplant as well as a few other products. From the profits, she has now been able to purchase two pigs. The income from her food stall enables her to provide food for her children and assist in paying school fees. She also has enough funds to be able to buy soap and other essential items for her family.

Evelyn is not always able to depend on her husband, who does not have reliable employment. Even though the store she runs looks modest, she says that the business is good, particularly when people come in from the fields at the end of the day.

By her own reckoning, Evelyn expects to come out of poverty and expresses a great deal of gratitude for the loan, and to God.

Read more at <https://www.brighthopeworld.com/partnerships.asp?pid=434>.

1. Pray that both we in New Zealand, and our partners around the world, will succeed in “building bridges into communities” to pursue “mercy, truth, righteousness, and peace”. Pray that God would help us all to be agents of peace and justice.
2. Pray for all the Faith Harvest loan beneficiaries – for wisdom as they seek to grow their businesses and financially support their families.
3. Pray for the peoples of Myanmar and Thailand. Pray for safe recovery of more people, protection from more shakes, and minimal economic disruption. Pray for peace in Myanmar.