



A Virtual Oktoberfest!

In care of our community we will celebrate online, with a special event on Sunday, October 24.

See page 2 for details!

It's not too late to donate an auction item! Drop it off with a note, call John or email ecmumt@gmail.com.



Revisiting Our History



By Rev. John Lund

Years ago, in the early stages of the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative we asked if mainline Protestant, Catholic, Evangelical, and Interfaith partners

could work together on community needs and got to a yes rather quickly. We then moved to nonprofits like the YWCA and soon forged a partnership that led to the Meadowlark family homeless center. More recently we have expanded to neighborhoods, the Food Bank, the Health Department, unions and other groups (close to 40), with a new name—Common Good Missoula—and energy building along the way.

All Nations Health Center was also approached as a possible organizing partner. As an Indigenous organization they had some hesitation working with historically white organizations, but also expressed an interest, as the needs are great. However, after coming to a few meetings, the All Nations leadership told the Common Good leadership that we would have to do some serious and in-depth education and work on the history of colonization and its ongoing impacts before they could go any further with us.

With that directive, we have been working for almost two years on building a series of workshops

called Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization. We have been building relationships with All Nations leaders and with CSKT tribal leaders, elders and educators. We will be ready to run the workshops for all Common Good partner organizations and members in October and November on Zoom.

Part of our pre-homework for these workshops is to research and understand our own personal connections with colonization as well as the institutions we represent. Here are a few snapshots: First, on my father's side my great-grandfather Lund was a logger in Upper Michigan at the beginning of the 20th century when the region was stripped of the great White Pine trees and mined of copper and iron. Meanwhile my Finn great-grandparents were able to homestead a plot of land for almost nothing and became landowners and farmers in the UP as well.

Eighty-five years later when I was in college at Northern Michigan University, I became friends with a student who was from the Ojibwe tribe that resided for hundreds (or thousands) of years in that same region where my ancestors logged and farmed. I ran a Lutheran youth group and I asked my new friend if he would like to come and talk about his tribe.

(Please continue reading on page 3).



Calendar of Events

Emmaus Student Group

A chance for community, worship and grounding, connection and discussion. We enjoy delicious food and place an emphasis on stories, art, music, contemplation, prayer, and open sharing. **Wednesdays, 6:30-8** in the Emmaus yard.

Community Organizing

Emmaus has been a partner with the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative and with Common Good Missoula but we have not had our own organizing body—until now! We are sending 10 of our staff, interns and students to the “Fundamentals of Organizing” training through Common Good to build a core team. We will have regular core team meetings and monthly meetings with a larger group who are interested in building energy, capacity and power for the sake of healing and community change. Stay tuned to our website and facebook for details!

Confluence: *the moment of meeting and the movement forward*

Confluence is a gathering grounded in Jesus’ vision for liberation, and is formed and fed by art, music, poetry, contemplation, and the natural world. The **1st and 3rd Sundays of each month starting October 3rd at 7pm** in the courtyard of UCC (405 University Ave).

Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization

Designed to take people from faith, labor, healthcare and community organizations through a process that sets the stage for right relationships and meaningful action with Indigenous people in their own communities. This will take place **Monday and Wednesday 6:30–8:30pm, October 18–November 1**. Please contact John if you are interested.

Faith and Climate Action

We invite faith, campus, and public communities into deeper consciousness, conversations, and actions regarding the broken and strained relationships between humans and the creation we live in. Visit faithandclimateactionmontana.weebly.com for updates and to sign up for e-news!



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There was a lot of hesitation but he eventually said yes and brought their sacred hoop and other artifacts to tell the tribal story, which was beautiful. What I didn’t realize was that those sacred artifacts had been banned and criminalized until 1978 (Indian Religious Freedom Act) and I was one of the first white people to ask to bring them out. I didn’t see myself as a colonizer asking the occupied people to share the very artifacts that my colonizing predecessors had criminalized as my ancestors took over their land. But that’s who I was and what I did.

Later, in seminary, I did a cross cultural experience and went to the Inuit village of Shismaref, Alaska on the Seward Peninsula as there was a Lutheran Church there. When I got there, I found out that every person in that village was considered Lutheran, as were all of the Inuit villages in that region. I was astounded that almost every child born there over many decades has been baptized Lutheran. I don’t know the whole story, but I wonder how that came to be and who made those decisions.

In Missoula some years ago the American Indian Student Services at UM put on a workshop for both native and non-native people on Historical Trauma. Part of the workshop talked about the impacts of boarding schools on tribal people over generations. What surprised me was that more than a few of the people in the room spoke up about their own experiences of being taken from their families and put into boarding schools. The stories were horrifying and many and the impacts are real and immense to this day. As a Blackfeet leader told us recently, “Everyone in Indian country is recovering from boarding schools.” Most of us settlers don’t realize the depth and ongoing agony of what has happened to the Indigenous people around us. For the sake of understanding, making changes, and healing in our communities, it’s time to wake up to the realities of what has happened and what is still going on. We have some serious wrestling to do. If you want to join us in the Wrestling workshops please contact me.



Wrestling with the Truth: Connecting Head to Heart

Lars Anderson, Seminary Intern

I was fortunate to participate in Common Good Missoula's Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization this fall. There were nearly one hundred other participants in this training from churches, unions, and non-profit organizations. As a seminary intern, it was exciting to see the collaboration happening across denominations and secular organizations in the work to create a more equitable life for all people.

The Wrestling with the Truth series consisted of five sessions that were designed to help participants understand the realities of how colonization has impacted indigenous people. Additionally, participants were given time and prompts to help them reflect on how they have been directly impacted by colonialism.

Although the entire experience was meaningful, a particular session of this series impacted me more deeply than others. This session focused heavily on Minnesota history and current events in relation to interactions between settlers (non-indigenous residents of Minnesota) and the indigenous people of Minnesota.

In school and through relationships, I had previously learned about each of the events that were discussed. I already knew about the thirty-eight Dakota men that were hanged in Mankato, Minnesota in 1862. I already knew about Enbridge's Line 3 pipeline that was largely being constructed across reservations despite ongoing

protests from water protectors.

Knowing was my problem. As a young person in Minnesota, I was fortunate to have high school teachers that are ethnically Ojibwe. I took a number of American Indian Studies courses at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. Last year, I had the opportunity to work with the Northeastern Minnesota Synod's Together Here ministry which is led by a Deacon who is Ojibwe. I came into Wrestling with the Truth with a fair amount of pre-existing knowledge and experience working with and learning from indigenous people.

Again, knowing was my problem. Going through Wrestling with the Truth helped me to understand how I have intellectualized the impacts of colonialism on my life and on the lives of other people that I care about. This experience helped me to connect my head with my heart and feel the feelings I had previously repressed in relation to settler and native interactions. With the support of my group members, I was able to feel the anger, sadness, and grief that I had initially felt when I first learned about these harmful events and systems. I hope to continue to allow myself to feel as I keep wrestling with these issues.

Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization was an uncomfortable but great experience. I found hope in learning alongside people from a variety of different backgrounds in order to learn from the past to shape the future. This future is rooted in love and care for all beings. I am excited to continue wrestling, collaborating, and dreaming about how we can make this future a reality that benefits all.



Emmaus staff and students attended a Common Good Missoula community organizing rally in September. Pastor John and others spoke about the power of organizing and how it makes a difference in people's lives.