Editorial

Decolonial discipleship as an intercultural church

Hyung Jin (Pablo) Kim Sun and Sarah Kathleen Johnson

The intersection of decolonization and interculturality presents both an urgent challenge and a transformative opportunity for the twenty-first-century Mennonite churches in North America. As we grapple with the ongoing legacies of colonialism on Turtle Island (a name used by many Indigenous Peoples to describe what is called North America) and witness the increasing cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of our faith communities, we find ourselves called to a discipleship that is simultaneously rooted in practices of decolonization and committed to genuine intercultural engagement. This special issue of *Vision* explores how these two discourses, often discussed separately, need to be understood as deeply interconnected aspects of our collective journey toward peace, justice, and reconciliation.

Why this focus?

Anabaptist-Mennonite traditions have long emphasized peace, justice, and simple living, but we must honestly reckon with how Mennonite communities have participated in and benefited from colonial structures, particularly through land acquisition and settlement patterns that displaced Indigenous Peoples. At the same time, the face of Mennonite faith communities has been changing dramatically. No longer primarily a faith of European descendants, Mennonite communities now span the globe, and local and regional communities encompass remarkable ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. This reality demands that we move beyond traditional frameworks that center the experiences of legacy groups while marginalizing the stories and perspectives of newer Mennonite communities.

Interculturality and decolonization: A necessary convergence

At the heart of this issue lies a fundamental theological conviction: that faith is contextual—not abstract but embodied, not universal but particular, not placeless but profoundly located. As co-editors, we believe that faithful discipleship requires us to take seriously the specific spaces, lands, and locations where we live out our faith. Our bodies carry the stories of the places we come from and the cultures that have shaped us. Our feet walk on particular soil with its own histories of habitation, displacement, and survival.

To follow Christ in North America means to reckon with where we are: on Indigenous lands that hold both beauty and trauma, promise and pain.

This embodied understanding of faith is deeply rooted in our understanding of incarnation—the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among us (John 1:14). In Jesus, God did not offer abstract truth from a distance but entered into the particularities of first-century Palestine, walking specific roads, speaking Aramaic, and engaging with the concrete realities of Roman occupation and religious marginalization. The incarnation affirms that divine love always takes on flesh, enters specific contexts, and walks on particular land. To follow an incarnate Christ means we, too, must take seriously the ground beneath our feet and the histories embedded within it.

Furthermore, Jesus's command to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27) takes on profound complexity in our intercultural and colonial context. Love requires not just good intentions but careful attention to impact. We must know our neighbors well enough to love them in ways that truly serve their flourishing. When we love only through our own cultural frameworks and experiences, we risk perpetuating harm despite our best intentions. True neighbor-love demands cultural humility and intercultural awareness, recognizing that our neighbors carry their own cultures, histories, traumas, and ways of being that must be honored. On this land, loving our Indigenous neighbors means acknowledging the ongoing impacts of colonialism; loving our immigrant and refugee neighbors means understanding their complex relationships to place and belonging; and loving across all our differences requires both decolonial and intercultural practices that move us beyond superficial unity toward genuine transformation and mutual flourishing.

Jesus's command to love our neighbors as ourselves takes on profound complexity in our intercultural and colonial context.

This understanding of embodied faith necessarily invites us into both intercultural and decolonial practice. An embodied faith calls us to deeply consider the ways our cultures have formed us, such as the languages we speak, the foods that nourish us, the rituals that ground us, and the worldviews that shape our perception. It asks us to bring our whole selves to the work of discipleship, rather than leaving our cultural identities at the door. At the same time, embodied faith demands that we deeply consider the land we inhabit and the histories embedded within it. We cannot claim to love God while remaining indifferent to the stories of those who were forcibly removed from the very ground on which we worship. We cannot pursue peace while ignoring the ongoing violence of colonial structures that continue to dispossess Indigenous Peoples.

The combination of intercultural engagement and decolonial practice is not merely additive but mutually transformative—neither should be pursued apart from the other, and the whole is greater than the sum of the two approaches. Decolonization without attention to interculturality risks being narrowly conceived as work between white settlers and Indigenous Peoples, thereby excluding or minimizing the responsibilities and participation of Black communities, people of color, and immigrant settlers who also live on Indigenous lands. This limited framing fails to recognize how different communities carry distinct relationships to colonialism—some through histories of enslavement, others through displacement and migration, and still others through recent arrival as refugees or immigrants. Each of these communities needs to grapple with what it means to live on Indigenous land, yet their relationships to settler colonialism and their pathways toward solidarity cannot be assumed to be identical. Conversely, intercultural dialogue that ignores colonial histories and ongoing structures of oppression fails to address the fundamental power imbalances that shape our relationships. Only together can these frameworks ensure that decolonial work includes all who live on this land while honoring the particular histories and responsibilities each community brings to this shared work of justice and healing.

The work of peace and justice requires multiple interpretive lenses because our realities are multifaceted and our histories layered. No single framework can adequately address the complexity of living faithfully on Indigenous land while building inclusive communities across differences. We need approaches that can hold historical accountability alongside contemporary solidarity, that honor both particular stories and shared struggles, and that create space for lament while nurturing hope. By bringing together decolonial and intercultural perspectives, we equip ourselves with tools robust enough to engage the full depth of our calling as peacemakers in a broken world.

Navigating terminology

As we engage the complex realities of interculturality, clarity about terminology becomes essential:

- **Cross-cultural** interactions occur when people from different cultural backgrounds engage with one another, often for a temporary period, such as during mission trips, exchange programs, or cultural learning initiatives. While this approach fosters awareness and understanding, it can sometimes remain at the level of observation rather than deep engagement. Cross-cultural experiences may lead to increased cultural appreciation but do not always result in long-term change or reciprocal relationships.

- **Multicultural** approaches acknowledge and value the presence of multiple cultural groups within a shared space, emphasizing representation and recognition. However, these cultures often remain distinct, with limited interaction or influence on one another. The focus is on diversity itself, rather than meaningful relationships or transformation.
- **Intercultural** engagement moves beyond coexistence and surface-level interactions to foster intentional, reciprocal relationships that transform all involved. It emphasizes deep engagement, shared resources and power, and mutual learning. Rather than merely observing or acknowledging cultural differences, intercultural interaction fosters co-creation, collective decision-making, and the formation of something new through sustained dialogue and collaboration.

Similarly, the distinction between *postcolonial* and *decolonial* approaches fundamentally shapes how we understand our responsibilities:

- **Postcolonial** frameworks, emerging primarily from literary and cultural studies, have provided valuable tools for analyzing how colonialism shaped identities, cultures, and narratives.[1] However, the "post" in postcolonial can suggest that colonialism is a concluded historical period, something we are "after" or "beyond." This temporal framing risks obscuring how colonial structures persist in the present, particularly in settler colonial contexts like Canada and the United States where Indigenous Peoples remain dispossessed of their lands and subjected to ongoing forms of cultural, political, and economic marginalization.
- **Decolonial** approaches, by contrast, recognize that while formal colonial administrations may have ended, coloniality—the underlying logics, structures, and relations of colonial domination—continues to organize our world. In the context of Turtle Island, settler colonialism is not a past event but an ongoing structure that continues to eliminate Indigenous presence while extracting value from Indigenous lands. A decolonial framework demands that we move beyond analyzing or critiquing colonialism to actively dismantling these persistent structures. It calls us not simply to include Indigenous voices within

1 See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Pantheon Books, 1978); Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (Routledge, 1994); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271–313; Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2002).

existing systems but to fundamentally question and transform those systems themselves.[2] For faith communities, this means examining how our churches, institutions, and theologies continue to benefit from and perpetuate colonial dispossession, and committing to material changes that support Indigenous sovereignty and resurgence.

The tension between reconciliation and resurgence likewise deserves attention. While **reconciliation** has been a dominant framework in church and society, Indigenous scholars and activists increasingly emphasize **resurgence**, the revitalization of Indigenous ways of being that do not depend on settler participation or approval.[3] Settler Mennonites of various backgrounds must learn to support Indigenous resurgence while doing their own work of transformation, recognizing that reconciliation cannot be rushed or imposed but must emerge from genuine relationship and structural change.

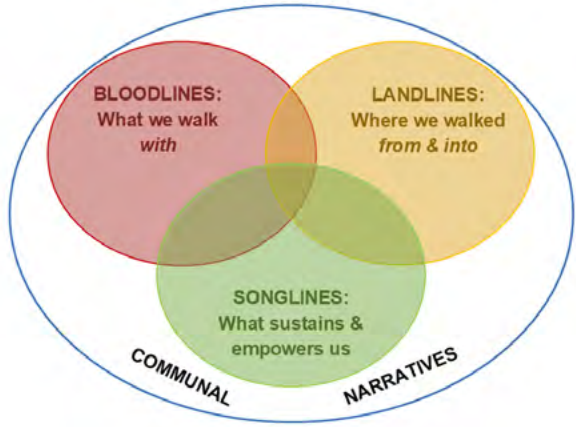
Healing Haunted Histories: A framework for transformation

This issue takes inspiration from Elaine Enns and Ched Myers's *Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization* (Cascade Books, 2021), which offers a powerful framework for understanding how colonial legacies continue to shape our present. Through their LBS model—Landlines, Bloodlines, and Songlines—Enns and Myers provide tools for settlers to engage with the geographical, genealogical, and spiritual dimensions of decolonization:

- "Landlines" delves into the geographical and historical contexts of settler communities, tracing how land dispossession and environmental degradation have been integral to the colonial project.
- "Bloodlines" examines the personal and communal histories of settlers, revealing how intergenerational trauma and inherited narratives shape identities and relationships.

2 See Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40; Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Duke University Press, 2011); Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America," *International Sociology* 15, no. 2 (2000): 215–232.

3 See Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Jeff Corntassel, "Re-envisioning Resurgence: Indigenous Pathways to Decolonization and Sustainable Self-determination," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 86–101; Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* (Broadview Press, 2005).



Storylines (LBS model). Design by Elaine Enns.

- "Songlines" highlights the spiritual and cultural traditions that offer pathways to healing and solidarity, emphasizing the role of faith and storytelling in fostering resilience and transformation.

Enns and Myers introduce the LBS model as a method to guide readers through the process of decolonization. This approach encourages critical engagement with one's own history and place, an understanding of broader social and political dynamics, and the development of restorative practices aimed at repairing and reconciling the harms of the past. By combining personal memoir with scholarly analysis, the authors provide a tool for settler communities to undertake the necessary work of decolonization in a deeply personal and impactful way.

Throughout *Healing Haunted Histories*, the authors emphasize that decolonization is not merely a theoretical or academic exercise but a spiritual and relational journey. They call on settler Christians and others to confront their complicity in colonial violence and commit to practices of restorative solidarity with Indigenous communities. The book serves as both a call to action and a compassionate guide, equipping readers with the tools and inspiration needed to embark on this challenging yet essential path toward healing and justice.[4]

While we, as guest editors, are inspired by and appreciative of the authors' approach to decolonizing discipleship—so much so that we share it as an orienting framework for this issue—we find a limitation in their exploration of Landlines, Bloodlines, and Songlines in relation to Mennonites, an exploration which is centered primarily around the experiences of Russian

4 Elaine Enns and Ched Myers have released companion resources to guide individuals and groups through the book, including *Throughlines: Healing Haunted Histories Study Guide for Groups* and *Throughlines: Healing Haunted Histories Self Study* (https://bcmonline.org/throughlines/).

Mennonites in Canada. While specificity and contextuality are important in decolonial work, the overwhelming focus on the experience of one of the dominant cultural groups within the Mennonite tradition risks marginalizing other Mennonite stories. Although Dutch, German, Russian, and Swiss Mennonite groups were predominant during the early formation of the Mennonite faith and tradition, the contemporary Mennonite faith has become global, intercultural, and more diverse than ever. Expanding the reflection on Landlines, Bloodlines, and Songlines beyond legacy groups is necessary as part of the bold attempt to reimagine Mennonite faith in an intercultural reality and therefore also to undertake the profound work of decolonizing Mennonite discipleship. We recogvnize that Enns and Myers share these goals, and offer this issue of *Vision* as an expansion of the work they undertake in *Healing Haunted Histories*.

Situating ourselves as editors

Sarah

When I saw the setup for morning tea in the Anglican church hall, I stopped short. It was the teacups specifically—each a unique floral pattern printed on a white china backdrop with fine gold tracing the rim of both the cup and saucer and winding around the delicate handle. As a child, I drank tea out of cups like these after dinner at my grandparents' homes. Each cup had a different pattern, and I would get to choose one before it was filled with a splash of barely brown tea that I sweetened with several sugar cubes. Some of the teacups featured pictures of Queen Elizabeth II at her coronation or silver jubilee, but my favorites had pink roses. It has been eighteen years since I lost my last grandparent. All of my grandparents were born in Canada—I am a fourth-generation Canadian. Their ancestors came from England, Ireland, and Sweden. Seeing the teacups in the church hall took me back to those dinner tables and that heritage.

This visceral memory was especially striking because I was at this church as part of a research project studying congregational engagement with Indigenous justice.[5] As my colleague and I listened to the priest reflect on our questions about how the church community was engaged with the work of truth and reconciliation on the unceded Anishnaabe Algonquin territory where we were meeting, I could not shake the feeling that these teacups somehow tied me to this tradition—they reminded me of my Britishness in

5 Sarah Kathleen Johnson, "Looking and Listening for Lived Theologies of Truth and Reconciliation: Learning from a Diffuse Art Installation in the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 40.2 (2024): 176–192; Sarah Kathleen Johnson and Joshua Zentner-Barrett, "Germinal Ritual: Ceramic Feathers and Social Transformation in Canadian Churches," *Yearbook for Ritual and Liturgical Studies* 41 (2025): 21–43, https://doi.org/10.21827/YRLS.41.21-43.

a way I did not expect. This mundane moment and material object revealed a certain relationship with my own history—and with this land. The story Sarah Augustine shares in response to this issue of *Vision* about the bones of bison being made into china has added further layers of significance to this encounter with the teacups.

I do not recall ever seeing teacups like this in a Mennonite church, although I have been part of various Mennonite churches for almost forty years. My parents joined a Mennonite church around the time I was born, and I was dedicated in that community as a child and later baptized there on confession of faith. I attended a Mennonite high school and university, and I became a pastor ordained in the Mennonite tradition. My work on the editorial team for the *Voices Together* hymnal and worship book brought me to Mennonite communities across Canada and the United States, including to some of the churches in Saskatchewan that Elaine Enns describes in *Healing Haunted Histories*.

Reading *Healing Haunted Histories* evoked the opposite felt experience for me as the teacups. Instead of encountering a piece of myself in an unexpected place, it felt like a piece of myself was taken away. Songlines in which I thought I shared—especially the literal songline of the act of community singing—were fused to bloodlines and landlines that are not my own. Having spent much of the last decade developing and introducing a Mennonite hymnal, it was odd to experience such a sense of exclusion from this aspect of my tradition of origin and ongoing affiliation. Exclusion is a familiar feeling for me in Mennonite spaces, although my white skin and lifetime of participation in Mennonite institutions make it possible for me to "pass" as ethnically Mennonite. However, I did not anticipate that it would be so palpable when reading a book that is otherwise intensely and intentionally committed to diversity, equity, and justice. Furthermore, having been part of the complex process of introducing more songs and prayers with connections to Indigenous communities in *Voices Together*, it was disconcerting to encounter Mennonite musical practices framed as something sustaining for an ethnocultural Mennonite community yet situated apart from questions of how what we sing can draw us into relationships beyond ourselves.[6]

I am convicted by the call to restorative solidarity in *Healing Haunted Histories*, and am committed to acting within my spheres of influence for Indigenous justice. At the same time, I receive this book with some

6 *Guide to Voices Together Songs and Resources with Connections to Indigenous Communities in Canada and the United States*, https://voicestogetherhymnal.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Indigenous-Communities-Guide.pdf; Katie Graber, Anneli Loepp Thiessen, and Sarah Kathleen Johnson, "Centring Relationship: The Necessity and Complexity of Worshiping with Songs and Prayers with Connections to Indigenous Communities," *Conrad Grebel Review* 41.1 (2023): 18–52.

hesitation because of the way it centers a dominant cultural story within the Mennonite tradition—and in so doing risks marginalizing Mennonites who do not share this heritage. In order to engage in decolonial discipleship as an intercultural church, it is crucial to simultaneously hold an ongoing need to challenge the ethnocentrism that lurks in many Mennonite institutions in North America alongside a reckoning with our diverse relationships with this land and its original peoples, including the coloniality that infuses our lives within and beyond the church. I am personally implicated in both of these dynamics in different ways, which is what motivated me to edit this issue of *Vision* with Pablo.

Pablo

In the introduction to my book *Building Mennonite Belonging*, I tell the story of how I became a Mennonite.[7] I was drawn to this community by their beautiful songlines—expressions of faith that resonated deeply within me. These songs carried different sounds and words that our violence-filled world desperately needed. I saw them as gifts to the wider church and world, and I wanted to be fully part of that tradition.

Yet the more I engaged with Mennonites in the US and Canada, the more confused I became. Had I joined a faith community or an ethnic enclave? Local congregations centered around so-called "ethnic Mennonites," those of Swiss, Dutch, German, and Russian heritage. Social gatherings revolved around "the Mennonite game" of tracing genealogical connections, discussions of traditional Mennonite foods, and references to proper Mennonite surnames. While these conversations were enriching and helped me understand one strand of Mennonite tradition, when these particular bloodlines become the dominant narrative, those of us who joined through songlines rather than birthright were made to feel like half-Mennonites at best.

Like Sarah's experience with exclusion, I found that the bloodlines emphasized in Mennonite spaces did not resonate with me. The constant centering of these specific ethnic narratives left me questioning my belonging in the community I had chosen. In my struggle, I encountered wonderful faith partners, mentors, and friends who recognized this problem and encouraged me to tell my own bloodline story. They envisioned a day when the bloodlines of those outside the dominant groups would be fully integrated into a wider Mennonite narrative—one that celebrates the diversity of peoples and gifts each ethnocultural group brings, embodying the intercultural vision of God's kingdom.

7 Hyung Jin (Pablo) Kim Sun, *Building Mennonite Belonging: Toward an Intercultural Church* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2025).

My reflection on landlines began when I moved from the US to Canada. As someone born in Paraguay, my original landline story was rooted there; even in Paraguay, though, as new immigrants, my family's relationship to land differed from other Paraguayans. After university, I spent eight years in the US as an international student, then six years in Toronto pursuing my PhD. Throughout these fourteen years, immigration offices and institutions constantly reminded me that my presence on this land was temporary. Renewing visas every few years, always facing the possibility of rejection, I lived in perpetual tension—physically present on the land but psychologically prepared to leave at any moment.

This temporary status profoundly shaped how I received teachings about colonization, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, treaties, land acknowledgments, and Indigenous justice. These crucial conversations remained abstract because I had never truly settled on the land called Canada. I was a guest in someone else's conversation about belonging.

Yet the songlines of Christian communities engaged in decolonizing work continually invited me into their chorus. They insisted that faithful discipleship on Canadian soil requires reconciling work with Indigenous communities. Even as an international student, I opened myself to this call and engaged deeply in these conversations.

Everything changed when I became a permanent resident. Suddenly, I was settled. These landlines were no longer theoretical but concrete realities I had to grapple with. As a new immigrant and person of color who is now a settler, I carry different landlines than white settlers. I must learn and unlearn what it means to occupy this particular position. The decolonizing discourse has primarily focused on the relationship between white settlers and Indigenous communities. I enter this conversation to bring the complex landlines of new immigrant settlers of color into view—not to diminish Indigenous sovereignty or white settler responsibility, but to expand our understanding of who lives on this land and how we might all participate in decolonial work from our specific locations.

This is why I feel called to work with Sarah as co-editor on this issue. Together, we seek to hold the tension between challenging the ethnocentrism within Mennonite institutions and reckoning with our diverse relationships to this land and its original peoples. My journey, from songlines through excluded bloodlines to complex landlines, exemplifies why decolonial discipleship must be intercultural if it is to include all who now call these lands home.

Overview of the issue

The contributions to this issue approach the intersection of decolonization and interculturality from different angles. Some writers focus primarily

through a decolonial lens—examining settler complicity, treaty relationships, and Indigenous justice—while others foreground intercultural engagement, exploring how diverse cultural traditions enrich and challenge Mennonite communities. Yet the issue as a whole seeks to hold these two frameworks in generative tension, embodying the conviction that neither can be pursued faithfully in isolation. What emerges is not a single method but a chorus of voices, each using personal narrative, sermon, letter, and even poetry as theological method. This storytelling approach is itself significant; it models how decolonial discipleship emerges from particular stories rather than abstract principles.

Several contributors explore how baptismal identity and chosen kinship can expand our understanding of family bloodlines beyond bio-genealogical boundaries. Caleb Kowalko reflects on his experience as a non-ethnic Mennonite pastor and proposes that baptism offers "decolonial and intercultural possibilities" by recentering community around the body of Christ rather than European ancestry. His invitation to ask "When did you join the family through baptism?" challenges the assumption that genealogical connection defines authentic Mennonite belonging. Leah Reesor-Keller writes a letter to her child about what it means to be "treaty people," acknowledging her settler ancestry and the complicity of her family's Mennonite tradition in harms like Timber Bay Children's Home, while insisting that this honest reckoning is essential to faithful discipleship. Peter Haresnape offers a complementary perspective from the English Fens, discovering through his solidarity work on Turtle Island that he grew up in colonized lands, and finding in Treaty a "bottomline" that offers belonging without the erasure of difference—"love" understood as regard for the other and commitment to mutual flourishing.

The theme of landlines emerges powerfully through accounts of migration, displacement, and the sacred significance of place. These narratives also make visible the diverse ways people come to inhabit this land. Sue Park-Hur describes how mountains have oriented her spiritually—from the San Gabriel Mountains, which became her compass as a young Korean immigrant, to the pilgrimage to Mt. Baekdu on the border of divided Korea, where tears and prayers for reunification seemed held in the body of crystal-blue water. Her work with ReconciliAsian demonstrates how landlines of origin and landlines of dwelling must both be honored, including building relationships with the Tongva people whose territory she now inhabits. Jonny Rashid traces how his Egyptian American family's experience as religious minorities shaped their embrace of American Evangelicalism and conservative politics, while his own experience of post-9/11 racism opened him to Anabaptist peace traditions—illustrating how landlines, bloodlines, and songlines intersect differently even within a single family.

Mollee Moua's account of a Hmong family reunion, where elderly siblings shared memories of the Laotian Civil War and their scattered diaspora, reveals how storytelling itself becomes a practice of healing when the church creates intentional space for difficult histories to be heard and honored.

Contributors also demonstrate how the songlines of cultural and spiritual traditions carry deep ethical wisdom that enriches Christian discipleship. Brian Quan explores how Confucian values—honor-shame mediation that preserves dignity, sacramental hospitality expressed through communal meals, and clan-based mutual aid—offer "living songlines" for the Toronto Chinese Mennonite Church that embody gospel values in culturally particular ways. Denise Climenhage's journey into the Cree language of her maternal heritage led her to the concept of "wahkohtowin," the understanding that all living things are related and connected to one another and to the Creator. Her sermon invites the Ottawa Mennonite Church into ongoing learning and action, including consideration of reparations. Hyejung Jessie Yum's Creative Land Acknowledgment practice transforms a potentially empty ritual into embodied pedagogy, as demonstrated when students Matthew Kitchen, Nathaniel Salmon, and Nour Bach Tobji shared homemade bannock from Kitchen's Moose Cree First Nation family recipe alongside poetry and critical reflection on this food's complex colonial history.

Joon Park names ethnocentrism and homogeneity as "the most persistent spiritual adversaries" in postcolonial church life, arguing that these twin tendencies—the very engines of colonialism—must be confronted for any intercultural church to flourish. His insistence that intercultural community requires "true belonging" rather than "fitting in" challenges congregations to examine whether newcomers are welcomed into genuine participation or expected to assimilate to existing norms.

Two responses extend these reflections in important directions. Elaine Enns and Ched Myers, the authors of *Healing Haunted Histories*, affirm the convergence of intercultural and decolonial approaches while sharing examples of how diverse participants such as Nigerian, Ukrainian, Greek, Pakistani, Jamaican, and Cree students have adapted the LBS framework to their own contexts. Sarah Augustine adds a crucial dimension often absent from theological reflection: the material work of dismantling structures. As executive director of the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery and a Tewa descendant, she insists that churches must move beyond prayer and potlucks to changing laws and policies, following Indigenous leadership in the struggle for liberation. "Freedom for the oppressed is not a metaphor," she declares, calling the church to work that extends beyond reforming our own institutions to transforming the legal and political structures that perpetuate injustice.

Across these contributions, we see immigrants of color, white converts to Anabaptism, those reconnecting with Indigenous heritage, and multigenerational settlers each navigating distinct relationships to Turtle Island—a complexity that any adequate account of decolonial discipleship must address. Taken together, these stories stretch Mennonite identity across continents and generations. Korean, Cree, Paraguayan, English, Egyptian, Swiss, Chinese, and Hmong landlines, bloodlines, and songlines are not peripheral to the tradition but rather integral to it. These are Mennonite stories, carried by communities who now live on Turtle Island and who reckon, in different ways, with their responsibilities to this land and its peoples. What binds these diverse accounts is not sameness of origin or method, but a shared call to discipleship: to follow Jesus in ways that seek justice and peace, practice restorative solidarity, and remain accountable to the places and relationships in which faith is embodied.

Conclusion

As we present this collection of voices, we do so with humility, recognizing that the work of decolonial discipleship in an intercultural church is not a project to be completed but an ongoing journey of transformation. We offer these contributions not as final answers but as invitations to deeper engagement, honest reckoning, and faithful action. May they serve as resources for individuals and communities seeking to live more justly on this land and in the right relationship with all their relations.

About the authors

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