

# FAITH IN ACTION

You must act with justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8

The signed treaty alongside other symbolic items were placed inside a wooden box as part of the Truth, Justice and Conciliation Commission event. Photo by Doug Sewell.

## Survival Day covenant signed in Australia

By Travis Duerksen

**M**ost Australians celebrate each Jan. 26 with parades, fireworks and barbecues. But Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples call Australia Day by another name: Survival Day. All recognize the date as the anniversary of British proclamation of sovereignty over the land now known as Australia.

It was on this day in 2019 that Anabaptists from across Australia and New Zealand gathered with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to share in naming injustices, to reflect, and to sign a historic treaty between the groups.

The treaty was the capstone to the evening's "Truth, Justice and

Conciliation Commission," part of the Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand's (AAANZ) biannual "On the Road Conference" that took place Jan. 25-28 in Sydney.

"It was a powerful evening," said Mark Hurst, a pastor and resource person with AAANZ. "There were tears and expressions of joy." Mark, along with his wife, Mary, serve as mission associates with Menonite Mission Network.

The commission event was opened and closed by Aunty Jean Phillips, a senior Aboriginal Christian leader, and Brooke Prentis, Aboriginal spokesperson for Common Grace, a Christian social justice movement. The evening

included a time of truth-telling and repentance from non-Aboriginal speakers who detailed injustices done to Aboriginal peoples, including massacres, stolen land, stolen wages, and stolen generations – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were forcibly removed from their families through government and Christian church agencies up until the 1970s.

"Repentance is powerful when victims can name specific things that were done, and perpetrators listen," said Sharon Norton, co-director for Africa and Europe with Menonite Mission Network. "That's what I saw happen during the evening." ■

**PRAY** that we have the courage to act justly and to repent when we have fallen short of justice in the past.

# Serve

### Communications coordinator

California

Work to abolish the death penalty by raising awareness, expanding public engagement, developing support, and mobilizing supporters. This role is with Death Penalty Focus out of San Francisco.

### Border education program organizer

Arizona

Plan, lead, and do follow-up for delegation trips along the U.S.-Mexico border through BorderLinks in Tucson. Help educate a wide range of constituents about the realities of immigration and relations between the two countries.

### Church community worker

France

Offer temporary accommodation for families or individuals in emergency through La Prairie Menonite Church's hospitality house. Serve in the congregation's café/tea room/bookshop and/or dedicate your time to their children's outreach program.

### Disaster management advisor

Nepal

Support the staff and partners of United Mission to Nepal in their preparedness and response to disasters. Advise on organization system and structures and support the effective implementation.

### Community development worker

Botswana

See people empowered and organized toward health, economic opportunity, and social justice by connecting into local NGOs in Francistown. Possible work areas include life skill workshops, team building and mentoring work, community sport programs, after-school literacy programs, or refugee support.

**TAP A SHOULDER**

Apply or find other placements at [www.ChooseService.org](http://www.ChooseService.org).

# The three “E’s” of the Doctrine of Discovery

**W**ait! What exactly is the Doctrine of Discovery?

The Doctrine of Discovery is a historical rationalization that permitted Christian European rulers to invade lands and enslave people. While its beginnings were in the 15th century, its influence remains today in laws and practices that displace and destroy many indigenous peoples and other vulnerable communities.

The three “E’s” summarize the destructive results of the Doctrine of Discovery.

**Enslavement**—Because the Doctrine did not consider indigenous peoples to be human if they weren’t Christian, conquering nations were allowed to make slaves of the people they encountered.

**Extraction**—In many places around the world, the Doctrine of Discovery condones practices that take natural resources from indigenous communities to benefit those descended from colonialist nations.

**Extinction**—Before Europeans came to North America, there were as many as 18 million indigenous peoples living on

the continent. By the end of the 19th century, they numbered fewer than 250,000. Millions of people died because they did not have natural immunity to European diseases, nor could they resist the weapons of war the Europeans used against native populations.

The three “E’s” of the Doctrine of Discovery are a tool that many organizations, such as the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery Coalition, have used in their efforts to educate and advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples. To learn more, visit [www.dofdmnno.org](http://www.dofdmnno.org).

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



**ACT  
JUSTLY  
LOVE  
MERCY  
WALK  
HUMBLY  
WITH YOUR GOD.**  
—Micah 6:8

Be the Gospel.



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