

Peace Sunday 2012

Under the surface: mining, violence and solidarity



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Mennonite Central Committee Canada encourages Canadian Anabaptist churches to observe Peace Sunday on or just before Remembrance Day (November 11). It is an annual occasion to preach, teach and reflect upon the gospel of peace and to offer a nonviolent witness against war and violence. This Peace Sunday Packet is a resource so your congregation can prepare for Peace Sunday. See: mccc.ca/peace/peacesunday.

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Send us feedback

We welcome your feedback, questions, and comments.
Please be specific. What did you find useful? What wasn't useful?
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Introduction

Under the surface: mining, violence and solidarity

To begin thinking about the impact of mining and resource extraction around the world is to travel down meandering tunnels: creation care, economy, conflict, solidarity, and consumerism, to name a few. This year's Peace Packet connects us with our global neighbours who often suffer violence and injustice as a result of bad mining practices.

Solidarity means standing alongside and walking with our global sisters and brothers. For Christians this moves us beyond knowledge of our interdependence in the global community to truly heed Jesus' call for us to live as neighbours. It is only a start to know about issues and pray for peace. We must then respond by listening to our brothers' and sisters' voices, especially those who are being exploited, trying to feel their pain. We will then look for peacemaking solutions that will move us to action, locally and globally.

The use of the earth's mineral resources is as old as carving rocks to make tools. Even ancient civilizations dug into the ground to find gems and metals. So mining is not new, and neither is violence among those vying for those resources. In the course of history, armed conflicts have often been fuelled by competition over natural resources.

What is new today is the massive scale of resource extraction and of the economic gains. On this scale mining eats away at land, uses vast amounts of water, leaves pollutants and poisons in its wake, and creates competition for wealth. In short, it affects people, it affects land and it generates conflict. Mining companies are sometimes accused of stealing land, poisoning environments, trampling the rights of indigenous peoples, and stirring up violence. Mining companies are also credited with bringing sanitation, public health and economic benefits to impoverished areas.

So mining is a complex issue full of ethical, social, environmental and economic ramifications. It is also one of the main industries in the Canadian economy. We can't live as we do without the benefits of resource extraction. Minerals are an essential part of our daily lives: from fuelling our cars to adorning our faces, from keeping us connected by cell phones to giving us jobs and solid financial investments. At the same time some mining practices are steeped in the politics of greed, feed violent conflict in many places and sometimes trample the health and livelihood of our global sisters and brothers. As Anabaptist people who believe that how we live matters to our faith, this all has spiritual implications.

The Bible pictures God's shalom as a mountain¹ where all peoples come together and have access to livelihood and peace. We see the enormous craters left behind by large-scale mining and wonder what they say about our priorities. We hear the call of people from Colombia, Tanzania, Northern Canada and around the world who suffer the effects of large-scale mining and who call us to account for our part in their suffering. We strive to heed those calls. We plead for God's help in doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly when it comes to resource extraction.

Some mining practices are steeped in the politics of greed, feed violent conflict in many places and sometimes trample the health and livelihood of our global sisters and brothers.

¹ Isa 2:2-4; 25:6-10; 65:19-25

These worship materials are a complement to the materials developed during MCC's 2009-2012 **Mining Justice Campaign** (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice). The campaign's goal was to uncover the underlying reasons why the extraction of natural resources, more often than not, benefits a few at the expense of many. It frequently leads to violence and persecution of those who speak out in the cause of justice. The quest for justice demands that we address the reality of sinful structures as well as the sinful behaviour of a few "bad apples." This initiative was undertaken not to condemn the people who are employed by, invest in, or otherwise benefit from the work of mining companies². While the Campaign has ended, MCC's mining justice work continues.

The quest for peace demands that we stand in solidarity with sisters and brothers who are affected by mining-related violence. On Peace Sunday we look beyond the surface of economic development and see that peace is disrupted when people clash over natural resources.

2 Adapted from Paul Heidebrecht (mccottawa.ca/faithreflections/march1311)

Before Peace Sunday

Before worshipping together on the topic of mining, violence and solidarity, it will be important to get under the surface of the issues and do some groundwork in your congregation. Here are some ideas:

- Browse the **Mining Justice** website (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice). It has background for this year's focus on resource extraction and violence. There are study materials, videos, documents and news articles that can help educate your congregation and leaders about the issues. There are links to case studies that allow us to hear the perspective of people who are affected by the questionable practices of some mining companies.
- Check the latest news to see if mining appears in the headlines.
- Review the scripture passages and sermon ideas below to see what speaks to your context.
- Pray for wisdom and guidance as you prepare to lead worship.
- Check out and publicize the **Take Action** section at the end of this packet.

Know your context

Mining, especially in the Canadian context, is complicated. People in the churches will have wide ranging experiences and concerns about this. On the one hand the mining industry plays a large role in our economy and in our jobs and long-term investments. On the other hand mining practices create conflict with and among Indigenous peoples and in places around the world. Mining companies have been known to contribute to environmental degradation, displacement of peoples, and sometimes are even accused of promoting violence.

It is especially significant to find out whether there are people in your congregation employed in the mining industry and try to gain their perspective.

Study about mining

- If there are Adult Education opportunities, or Study groups in your congregation, they may want to look at the three-session study guide on "What does faith have to do with mining justice?" created by MCC. (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice)
- Prepare a group of youth or junior youth to do the **Web of Connections** reading on page ten and learn more about peace and the mining industry.
- Watch the videos in the **Resources** section followed by a small discussion group.

Reflect theologically

The 2011 *Ecumenical Conference on Mining*, of which MCC was part, highlights the following:

Theology: We see the need to deepen our theological understanding of resource extraction, and to move away from concepts of dominion and ownership—and beyond stewardship—to a sense of being part of God's Creation, understanding that it is our common responsibility to care for Creation.

Solidarity and accompaniment: We must respond to the call for greater and more committed solidarity and accompaniment of communities directly affected by resource extraction.

Investment: There is a need for greater understanding of churches as investors and their duty to use that kind of participation to influence companies towards ethical behaviour and respect for human rights and the Earth, including consideration of withdrawal of investments in instances when companies refuse to change.

Role of the churches: As churches, we recognize our internal contradictions and complicity with respect to resource extraction, and the urgent need to practice responsible consumption and citizenship. Therefore as people of faith who are members of local church congregations, we need to further develop our theological understandings of the issue, address our individual and collective lifestyles, develop an alternative economic model, and challenge the political and economic powers that drive the resource extraction industry.

Read the full statement at (mccottawa.ca/ecumenical-conference-mining-statement)

Worship material

There are several options for each part of the worship service. Consider what best suits your context and the flow you wish to create for a service that is meaningful for your congregation.

The shape of this service is:

- Praising God and gratitude for creation.
- Raising awareness of the issues related to bad mining practices.
- Hearing the voices of those who suffer violence related to resource extraction.
- Confessing our complicity and sense of ambiguity in face of the Canadian involvement in the mining industry.
- Offering our resources and ourselves to God, and recommitting to peace.
- Hearing from Scripture and calling on God for wisdom and grace.
- Returning to our day-to-day lives with new insights and a will to live out our calling to peace.

Sample order of service

Gathering and praising

Call to worship and/or prayer
Introduction to theme
Music
First scripture reading

Confessing and reconciling

Music
Reader's theatre
Prayer

Offering

Hearing God's word

Children's story
Second scripture reading
Sermon

Responding

Music
Affirming faith

Sending

Benediction
Music



*Participants in MCC learning tours to Guatemala have learned about mining issues from service workers like Nate Howard, pictured here in front of a mine in San Miguel.
(MCC Photo/Melissa Engle)*

Visual elements

- display several geodes (hollow rocks lined with crystals) or other rocks
- project images of mountains and quarries (see **Resources** for more image ideas)
- display a pickaxe and a chest overflowing with jewellery and gems and a mining helmet
- if children's story #1 is being used, there could be a jug of water, several glasses and some stones already displayed
- hand out stones to people at the end of the service as a reminder to pray for those negatively affected by the mining industry

Music

The music suggestions below include various styles and are listed according to the main themes of the worship service. MCC constituent churches have diverse musical practices and sources for music. You will want to find songs that encourage a worshipful atmosphere, and that also focus on peace. Songbooks often have a section at the back with scriptural or topical indexes where you might find these particular songs or something related to them.

Once you have chosen the scriptures you will be reading, you might find more songs that your congregation already knows and would be related to your unique context.

HWB – Hymnal a Worship Book
STJ – Sing the Story
STS – Sing the Journey
WT – Worship Together

Gathering praising

God created heaven and earth—Traditional Taiwanese hymn (HWB 160)

Many and great, O God—Words by Joseph R. Renville with music of a Plains Indian melody (HWB 35 see also a version performed by Canadian artist Steve Bell).

Praise with joy the world's Creator—Words from Iona community, music by John Gross. (STJ 16)

The mountain of God—Words and music by Phil Campbell-Enns (mennochurch.mb.ca/2012/01/phil-campbell-enns-music/)

We are people of God's peace—Words by Menno Simons, music by Johann Horn (HWB 407, WT 677)

I sing the mighty power of God—Words by Isaac Watts, music in Gesanbuch der Hersogl (HWB 46, WT 251)

Confessing and affirming

God, whose purpose is to kindle—Words based on Luke 12.49 by D. Elton Trueblood, music by Esther Wiebe (HWB 135)

Brothers and sisters of mine—Words by Kenneth I. Morse, music by Wilbur E. Brumbaugh (HWB 142)

Prayer of Agur—Words based on Prov 30.7-9, music by Brian Moyer Suderman (mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre/ResourceView/5/10083)

Beauty for brokenness—Words and music by Graham Kendrick (STS 115)

For the healing of the nations—Words by Fred Kann, music by Joachim Neander (WT 683)

Sending

What does the Lord require—Words based on Micah 6.6-8, by Albert Bayly, music by Larry Warkentin (HWB 409)

What does the Lord require of you?—Words based on Micah 6.6-8, music by Jim Strathdee (STS 54)

What does the Lord Require?—Words by Albert Bayly, music by Katie Epp (WT 678)

Jesus, help us live in peace—Words and music by Gerald Derstine (STJ 52)

O God of love, grant us your peace (WT 676)

Peace before us—Words and music by David Haas (STS 16, see the accompaniment book)

Gathering

Call to worship #1

Have a solo voice sing the poignant melodies of either *God created heaven and earth* or *Many and great, O God*. (see **Music** above)

Call to worship #2

Psalms 24:1-6—The Earth is God's and all that is in it
or Job 28:1-28—Precious stones cannot compare to God's wisdom

Call to worship #3

God, we are grateful for Earth's bountiful resources,
the way we live depends on them.

As we enter this time of worship

make us mindful that you have provided for all your children on this planet.

Open our hearts to those who live with much less than we do, who suffer violence,

and pay the price of our excess.

Amen.

Introduction to the theme:

Under the surface: mining, violence and solidarity

This is the opportunity to introduce the issues of mining and violence to your congregation. Select one or two of the options below:

- Show one of the short videos or photo essays listed under **Resources**
- Use the **Web of connections** reading
- Create your own short introduction based on what you have read in the packet and on the **Mining Justice** website.

Open our hearts to those
who live with much less
than we do, who suffer
violence, and pay the price
of our excess.

Readings

Reader's Theatre #1

Web of connections —by Michele Rae Rizoli

The connection between mining and violence is complicated. It involves many issues on many levels. This reading illustrates some of the connections so that the congregation can begin to understand why this issue is before them on Peace Sunday.

Five or more readers hold cardboard circles with labels (indicated in bold print), which are connected by a piece of string or yarn. Another alternative is to arrange the circles on a wall, or to draw them on a flipchart (see suggested figure).

There is an initial circle labeled mining, an ending circle labeled violence and three main others that link these up: economy, community and environment. There are also smaller circles that are connected to these three.

As they read, each reader connects their circle with the others in turn, as indicated, and then remains standing in place. You can come up with your own way of staging this. The “picture” that emerges is an interconnected web linking mining to violence.

*The reading begins with **Mining** and **Violence** standing at a distance from each other.*

Mining. Let's talk about the Earth's natural resources; it yields so many wonderful and useful minerals. These are harvested by the mining industry. Whether we are aware of it or not, we are connected to this industry. But mining is also connected to violence in our world, whether we're aware of it or not. Let's make some connections.
(Mining links to Environment)

Environment. Everything that God created is good. We have God's permission to use earth's treasures – responsibly.
(Mining links to Economy)

Economy. Mining is at the heart of the Canadian economy; it contributes \$32 billion to Canada's gross domestic product³. Seventy-five percent of all mining and exploration companies in the world are headquartered in Canada.
(Mining links to Community)

Community. We live as comfortably as we do, thanks to these natural resources.
(Community links to Day to Day)

Day to Day

(Read this quickly to capture the sheer volume.) Here are a few of the minerals we use every day:

- **Gold** for telephones, spark plugs, medical treatments, jewelry and glasses frames, water purification...
- **Silver** for photography, x-rays, coins, batteries, plywood and textile manufacturing, heat and scratch resistant coatings, solar energy panels, thermal and electrical insulation, CD and DVD coatings, bandages for burn victims...
- **Copper** in fungicides and insecticides, plaster, fruit wrapping papers and paint, purification of gases, pennies, cement, plaster, coating for steel wire, synthetic rubber, hair dye, malaria prevention, antiseptics and germicides...
- **Zinc** in roofing, gutters and down-pipes, textiles, plastic, rubber, galvanizing steel, batteries, door handles, light fixtures, plumbing...
- **Coltan** in laptop computers, cell phones, hearing aids, pacemakers, medical prosthetics, jet and rocket engines, airbag systems, automotive GPS and ABS systems, video-game consoles, cameras and video cameras.
- Then there's: Wallboard with gypsum, clay, perlite, vermiculite, aluminum hydrate, borates, cosmetics with calcite, hematite, kaolinite, mica, silica, talc, titanium... *(sigh)*

(Community links to consumption)

3 mining.bc.ca/facts_canada.htm

Consumption. Most of what we might think is essential for life depends in one way or another on the mining industry. Is it possible that we are using too much? Do we really need the newest computer, laptop, cellphone, e-reader and videogame?

(Community links to Economy)

Economy.

(Economy links to jobs)

Jobs. The mining industry creates jobs for many people, both in Canada and in countries such as Guatemala, the Philippines, Colombia, Tanzania, and all over the world. Without these jobs many would be in poverty. Mining companies bring sanitation, public health and economic benefits to impoverished areas.

(Economy links to investments)

Investments. Because mining is so large in the Canadian economy, many of us have investments in Canadian mining companies through our RRSP's and mutual funds.

(Economy links to standards)

Standards. Some Canadian mining companies don't have good reputations. There is a growing body of corporate standards and guidelines that attempt to hold companies accountable for the environmental, social and cultural impact of their activities, and to encourage them to commit to sustainable mining practices.

But many civil society organizations who watch mining activities closely claim that the Canadian government is not playing a helpful role in these areas. Furthermore, Canadian mining and Canadian development aid are becoming more closely linked. Foreign aid now goes to Canadian non-governmental organizations helping local populations deal with the impact of Canadian mining companies in their communities. *(Economy links to violence and to community)*

Violence. Mining companies have sometimes been accused of taking over land, ignoring the rights of indigenous peoples, causing division in local communities, and using armed thugs to threaten and silence opposition. Mining enterprises often effect huge changes in the local communities as they create large economic gaps which generate internal conflict.

Environment. One wonders about the sheer scale of today's mining.

(Environment links to water and land)

Water and Land. Mining often involves clear-cutting and clearing great tracts of land, most of which are never restored. Mining involves crushing, hauling and displacing enormous amounts of rock and earth. Mining also uses vast amounts of water and releases harmful toxins. An open pit gold mine uses 900,000 litres of water a day, miners crush more than 250 tons of rock and earth to extract one ounce of gold, the amount usually required for one ring. Some communities end up with little clean water to drink, to wash with or to use in farming.

(Environment links to environmental degradation)

Environmental Degradation. Mines often poison water sources, release toxic gases and leave environmental destruction in their wake. As we bore into the earth and pockmark its surface some mining practices have become harmful to God's creation.

(Environment links to violence)

Violence. The operations of some mining companies are polluting water, land and laying waste to forests. People are infected with skin and lung diseases as a result of toxins used in mining. People fight over diamonds, gold, land, or access to water.

(Community links to violence)

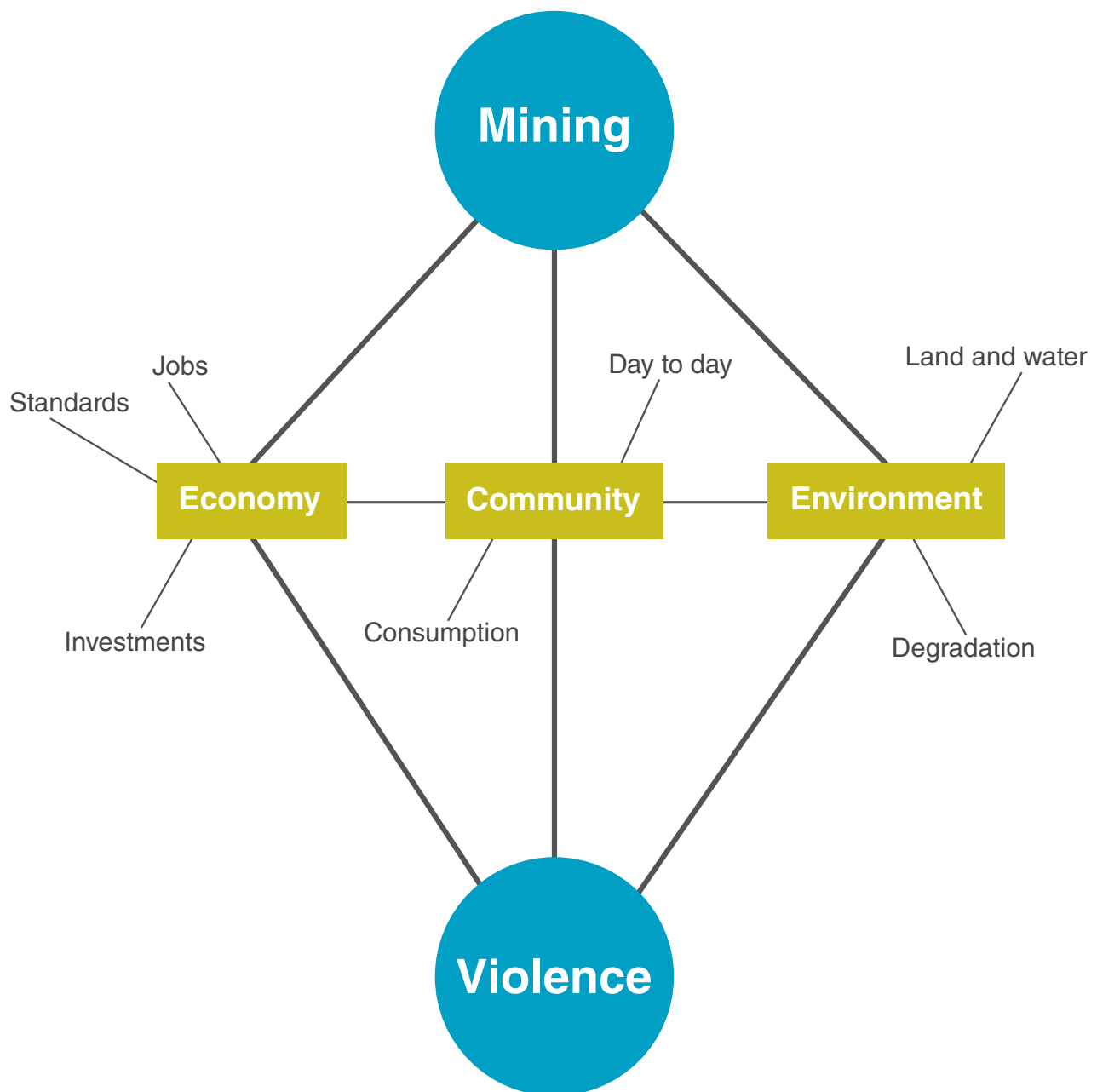
Violence. Mineworkers in other countries often earn only minimum wage or are forced into labour. Armed groups, legal and illegal, compete with the companies for control of resources and our global brothers and sisters are caught in the middle. The mining companies get rich while our sisters and brothers still live in poverty. Surely this is not what God wants.

Economy. How is our consumption connected to the hard work and violent situations of our global brothers and

sisters in mining communities? Can we curb greed and reconsider how we invest our money?

Environment. Can we call our governments into account, work against environmental abuse and honour God's creation?

Community. How are we called to work for peace in face of the violence related to mining?
We pray for God's mercy and God's wisdom, which are far better than gold or riches.



Reader's Theatre #2

If we want to be peacemakers and stand alongside global neighbours who are being oppressed by harmful mining practices, we need to listen to what they have to say. This reading captures some of the voices of people who have suffered negative impacts from the mining industry.

Rather than reprinting the entire Litany, the refrain can be printed in the bulletin or on an overhead, and the readers can prompt the congregation with a gesture, to repeat the refrain.

A Litany of Confession and Solidarity⁴ by Michele Rae Rizoli

Reader 1: We are grateful—and greedy—for the earth's bountiful resources:

Reader 2: Aluminum, copper, coltan, coal, lithium, titanium, lead, gypsum, graphite, manganese, mercury, nickel, quartz, tungsten, silica, diamonds, gold and silver.

Congregational refrain: God, have mercy on us; we long for your peace.

Reader 1: We hear the voices of our global brothers and sisters suffering from the indifference or malice that comes with irresponsible mining practices. They are in the Philippines, Tanzania, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Chile, Guatemala, Argentina, Brazil, Honduras, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Peru, Sierra Leone and in the Nishnawbe Aski Nation in Northern Ontario.

Reader 2: This is what they are saying:

Reader 3: "They never asked us if they could build a road on our farm. The mine has brought us nothing but violence and divisions. Before we all lived peacefully but now there are killings and kidnappings. Who will defend us, what will we do?"

Reader 4: "Our houses are falling apart because of the explosions in the mine. The waters below the mine are contaminated, crops do not grow properly and children are affected with skin diseases."

Congregational refrain: God, have mercy on us; we long for your peace.

Reader 1: After being relocated by the mining company for the second time, one Colombian leader observed:

Reader 3: "We are surrounded by the company and our towns are stagnant, the natural resources are running out, people are afraid to say what is happening... there will be nothing here when the company leaves, the law does not protect us." As the mine grows, we have been forced to relocate our villages, sometimes more than once. "Division has entered our communities. In our churches, in our homes, some are against the mine and some are for the mine."

Reader 4: The use of heavy machinery for digging in the river is causing permanent damage to our environment. The soil is being destroyed, rivers are being filled with sediment, and mercury threatens our health. The rush for gold and rare earth minerals creates a culture of violence and forced labour and exploits the most vulnerable.

Reader 2: Some trans-national companies behave irresponsibly and fail to conform to internationally recognized social and environmental standards. Meanwhile, many governments are indifferent to these bad practices. The presence of illegal armed groups has increased.

Congregational refrain: God, have mercy on us; we long for your peace.

Reader 1: We hear the voices of our global brothers and sisters.

⁴ Quotes adapted from **Mining Justice** materials, *A Common Place*, (allan.lissner.net/someone-elses-treasure/, Simon Chambers blogs) (kairoscanada.org/blogs/?cat=141), Report "Mining and Resource Extraction on Choco, Colombia: Pillage, Destruction, Violence and Misery." By Jose Rutilio Rivas Dominguez, Pastor, Mennonite Brethren Church of Choco, Colombia (mccottawa.ca/mining-and-resource-extraction-choc%C3%B3-colombia-pillage-destruction-violence-and-misery)

Reader 3: Gold is of no value to us, but our land, our families, our cultures, these are the things we value. Who came up with the idea that gold should be worth so much anyway? It's only a yellow stone that shines! Life should be more valuable than gold.

Reader 4: Sometimes at the mine the women are raped and the men work for pennies per day.

Reader 2: Think a little about the poor people, not only those who have money, think of us who are ignored and humiliated as though we are worth nothing.

**Life should be more
valuable than gold.**

Congregational refrain: God, have mercy on us; we long for your peace.

Reader 4: Seeing the overwhelming material wealth of North American cities, a peasant from Asia understands that the development that had been promised by the mine, was never really intended for them.

Reader 1: Another brother admonishes:

Reader 3: "If I, as a Christian, see people whose dignity is being threatened, if I see that money is being privileged over respect for water, trees and nature, if I see that social conflict is dividing and harming communities, and that what is motivating this is a drive for profit, as a Christian I cannot remain indifferent in face of these realities. These practices are attacking the practice of love."

Pause

Reader 1: We confess that our lives of consumption are entangled with the mining industry

Reader 2: We confess that exploitation of people is not what God intends.

Reader 3: We see that our lives are interconnected with neighbours around the world.

Reader 4: May we open our hearts and re-examine our lives in light of this connection.

Congregational refrain: God have mercy on us; we long for your peace.

Pause

Reader's Theatre #3

Did You Have This in Mind? (A Psalm of Praise and Lament)

by Abe Janzen and Kim Thiessen

All: Did you have this in mind, oh mysterious creator?

Group 1: When You told us to master the earth as You made it, so some at least say, to name and to manage the hills and the trees, the rivers and seas...

All: Did You have this in mind?

Group 2: A thing of such beauty, to have and to mold into richer or poorer

All: And, now, we have done it

Group 1: ... it seems to us all, but we can't seem to stop, nor to moderate any, the digging and taking, the selling and buying

Group 2: Of what we subdued, as You said that we should.

All: Did it come to Your mind, as it now comes to ours

Group 1: That we might mess it up, with our love and respect and our wonder and thirst?

All: And because it now haunts us we come back to You

Group 2: Our hearing was flawed and maybe not true

Group 1: When we heard You suggest that we should subdue this earth so enchantingly pregnant with magic

Group 2: Our hungry consumption for oil, gold and water, our thinking is frantic, our planning erratic.

All: Please interrupt us and help as we scramble, for blueprints that hopefully give us a handle, on how to step back, take a breath, look around, and vision our living another way round

Group 2: Our eyes would not see, and our ears would not hear, the cries of Your land, Your people, us here...

Group 1: Your family nearby, and so far away, who need, use, abuse the gifts we hold dear.

All: Hear now our prayer of thanks and of shame, of gratefulness, guilt, of heartache and blame...

Group 2: This world that we live in and love, that sustains and surprises, destroys and forgives

Group 1: That gushes with goodness and tempts so our greed; that brings life to people who toil on the land, who rely on the jobs, with the oil and the sand

All: For those who draw gifts from the earth we are grateful; we quench our demand yet we wish to be faithful

Group 2: We pray for restraint, for ideas and vision, and wisdom to learn Your same care, and compassion.

All: You had love in mind when you placed us out here, with this virginal earth ... to love and to cherish, to hold and mold. Come closer to us as we try to repent and relearn what it was... what it is... that You meant.

Hearing God's Word

Scripture passages

Psalms 24—Creation is God's handiwork

Job 28:1-28—The Wisdom of God is better than precious minerals

Proverbs 16:8—Better is a little with righteousness, than large income with injustice

Proverbs 30:7-9—Prayer of Agur

Matthew 5:1-10—The Beatitudes

Matthew 6:21—Where your treasure is

Children's stories

Consider the age range of the children in your congregation. Very young children may benefit from simple explanations about minerals and natural resources, so bringing in a rock collection and talking about it might be enough to generate interest. Older children might be able to understand pollution, the effects of mining and the concept that things we do have an impact on others far away.

Children's story #1

Learning from the geode (for young children)

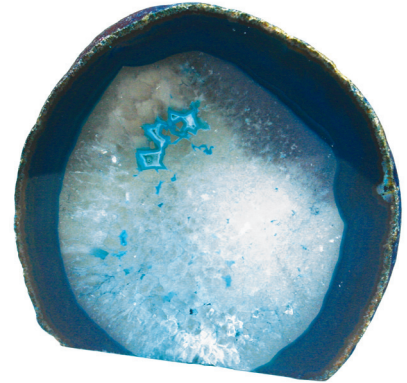
Find a large geode and show the children the rough side and then the side with crystals. Let them know that it is a geode and a little more about it (if you know what stone it is, for example). Marvel at how God created so many minerals (you might mention some of the items from the **Mining Fact Sheet**, see **Resources**). Talk about how, if you saw just the rough side you might not pick it up and you would miss the beauty inside. Talk about how if you saw just the pretty side you would not know that there was a side that wasn't so pretty. Ask the children to comment. Let them know that no matter what we look like on the outside, our actions, the way we treat other people, how caring we are, make us beautiful in God's eyes.

Children's story #2

Water and Mining (for older children)

Have a line up of people across the room with clear drinking glasses, and one has a couple of small dirty stones hidden from view. At one end is a jug of water at the other end is a thirsty person (Thirsty) who should be the centre of attention.

- Thirsty asks the one by the jug for a glass of water to drink. Number one pours a full glass of water and passes it to the next person in line.
- Person 2 tells the audience they just need a bit to water their crops, pours some more in their own glass and passes it on to the next person.
- Person 3 tells the audience they just need a bit to wash their clothes, pours some in their own glass and passes it on to the next person.
- Person 4 tells the audience that they just need a bit to swish around some stones to see if they are valuable. They make a show of putting a couple of dirty stones into the glass, then taking them out with their fingers and admiring them. Person 4 gives the glass with just a bit of dirty water to Thirsty.
- Thirsty makes a sad face or asks the kids, should I drink it?



Variation: Thirsty might try to stop Person 4 and the two get into a fight about the water.

Ask the children what happened? (for example: The water was all used up before it reached Thirsty, people along the way were not thinking about Thirsty and were not worried about keeping the water clean).

You might say, “today we are thinking about how we use the natural resources God has given us, especially in mining. Often in mining things happen like they did with Thirsty, the water is all used up in finding gold and other minerals and then there’s no clean water left. This might lead to fighting and conflict.”

Ask them how that kind of conflict might be resolved. What could be done differently? For example: Thirsty could drink first and then pass the water on, the person who dirtied the water could use water that was already dirty from somewhere else.

Talk about how we need to be aware of others, even if they are far away, and not just ourselves when we are using things up. Sharing in this way, is a way to work for peace, like God wants us to.

Sermon starters

We encourage preachers to peruse this entire packet and to visit the **Mining Justice** website (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice) to gain perspective on the issues involved and to craft a response that speaks to your community. There are also images listed under **Resources** that could add interest to a sermon.

See the excellent reflections on faith and mining on the MCC **Mining Justice** website at (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice/faith) and also the 2011 Mining Justice Lenten Materials at (mccmanitoba.ca/programs/peace/miningjustice)

Isaiah describes God's vision of peace, as a mountain, where all people gather and live side by side without violence (Isaiah 2:2-4; 25:6-10a; 65:19-25). Is it possible to envision this given the current scale of mining practices? Often global issues can become overwhelming, in this passage we find hope that in working for God's shalom, all disgrace will be wiped away—that of our own over consumption and that of our sisters and brothers who are displaced and impoverished because of corporate interests. "They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain."

Hunger for justice by Esther Epp-Tiessen

Matthew 5:6

Some Canadian visitors to Guatemala were surprised to learn that their presence was not welcome in the wake of Canadian mining practices in the community of San Marcos⁵. This led them to do some soul-searching and reflection. While there, they often prayed: Thank-you God for bread/ Give bread to those who are hungry/ And hunger for justice to those who have bread.

The Matthew passage and the prayer can help to explore the meaning of hungering for justice and what that means for those of us who have bread (and also a great deal more!). What does it mean when our lives are implicated in the injustice experienced by the poor? What does it mean when our lifestyles, investments, etc. enable Canadian mining companies to cause great harm to people and to the planet? Can we pray that God will fill us with a hunger for justice for the entire creation?

From paralysis to solidarity and action

Luke 5.17-25

This well-known story of the friends who bring a paralytic to Jesus takes on a special meaning when read through the eyes of solidarity in the cause of peace and justice. The paralytic might be the brothers and sisters who are powerless and suffering injustice through no fault of their own. The friends are those of greater privilege whose hearts are moved to do something towards healing and who go to great lengths to confront the authorities with the paralytic's plight and to bring him to a place of healing. This act of solidarity, of moving on account of others, of confronting power and of turning towards Jesus to set things right, can be a metaphor for right action in the case of the complex inequities created by our global economy.

Hearing from Colombia

Psalms 23

1 Corinthians 10.13

Leviticus 25.3-4

Read the report by José Rutilio Rivas Domínguez, Pastor, Mennonite Brethren Church of Chocó, Colombia⁶. The Mennonite Brethren Church of Chocó has been affected by all mining issues and the poverty and violence that relate to mining. The majority of members make their living by informal artisanal mining, and many have been victims of extortion, exploitation, abuse, theft of property, and displacement by illegal armed groups. Indeed, many also find their faith is weakened by the actions of injustice to which they are subjected.

⁵ see Community experiences, San Marcos, Guatemala (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice/casestudies) and an update on the situation at thedailypress.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=3545489

⁶ mccottawa.ca/mining-and-resource-extraction-choc%C3%B3-colombia-pillage-destruction-violence-and-misery

Reflect on the very specific situation of this church in Colombia and what Pastor Rivas says about the use of the land and causes for hope. Ask your congregation to imagine themselves in place of the Christians in Chocó and how that might affect their faith. Challenge your congregation to respond to consider his invitation to us to walk with them as sisters and brothers: “In the midst of this situation, our church seeks to respond with a gospel message filled with a holistic vision, building bridges of relationships between the various actors and stakeholders in this situation. In order to do this, we seek allies from other experiences and latitudes who will help us discern as we work toward solutions.”

Care for the land

by Steve Plenert

Deuteronomy 31:20 and Exodus 33:3

Micah 4:4

Psalms 67

The Bible does not specifically say much about mining, but it certainly has plenty to say about justice. What does get mentioned often in scripture is “the land.” The land that God gives is “flowing with milk and honey.” The land will support people with “their own vine and fig tree.” “The earth has yielded its increase” referring to the bounty of provision that comes from it. Interestingly, the reference to “flowing with milk and honey” in Exodus immediately gives a warning that God will not be present with the people because they don’t obey God’s ways. Deuteronomy 31:20 is even more explicit saying that when the people are brought to the land flowing with milk and honey “they will turn to other gods and serve them”

The coming into prosperity carries great risks for a people. They are called to serve God and live God’s ways in the face of the blessings that God provides from the earth. Psalm 67 connects the earthly blessing of God with living the way of God as well. “May God be gracious to us and bless us *that your way may be known upon earth...* Let the nations be glad and sing for joy *for you judge the peoples with equity.* The earth has yielded its increase, God has blessed us. Let all the ends of the earth revere him.” The blessings of the earth are a blessing of God so that all the earth may revere God. God judges the earth with equity and the peoples are to reflect God’s equity in their own dealings to God’s honour and glory⁷.

Where is Wisdom?

by Virginia A. Hostetler

Job 28:1-28

This passage begins with a descriptive portrayal of the world of the miners: dark and mysterious, forgotten by the people above ground but yielding treasures of gold, silver, copper, iron, and precious stones. Yet, while miners can locate many secret riches, they cannot dig for the greatest treasure of all—Wisdom.

While we long for justice and fairness in the world, and we are committed to helping bring about God’s reign, we must confess that there is much we do not understand. Like a miner, the faithful Christian searches out bits and pieces of the truth, shiny certainties in a world of much darkness and confusion. We may understand a few aspects of a complex reality, but we often find no certain solutions to the enormous problems of our world. Sometimes we choose to take action on the bit of insight we can discern in the twilight.

Job was living in the midst of great difficulties for which he had no explanation or cure. Yet he affirmed God as the source of true and complete Wisdom. Verse 23 says, “God understands the way to it, and he knows its place” (NRSV). “But God understands the way to it. He’s the only one who knows where it lives (NIV).”

In the face of injustice, our worship must acknowledge that the One who created the world is our best source of Wisdom. Like a miner who brings hidden things to light, the Creator sees beyond the shadows and knows reality as it really is. God’s word to us is very clear: “Wisdom means that you respect me, the Lord, and turn from sin” (v. 28, Contemporary English Version).

We confess that we only see reality dimly. But praise God, who invites us to partake of the treasure of divine Wisdom!

7

For more thoughts on how God views the spoiling of creation and the destruction of land see Jeremiah 2:7 and Isaiah 24:4-5

Affirming faith

Confession of Faith #1

Congregational responsive reading HWB 710 or another confession of faith that is familiar to your congregation.

Confession of Faith #2

I believe in God,
the creator of all Earth's peoples and treasures
I believe in Jesus Christ,
who embodied compassion
I believe in the Holy Spirit
who kindles in us a hunger and a thirst for justice
and enables us to work for peace.

Confession of Faith #3

This reading affirms what Anabaptists believe about peace. It should be performed in a spoken word style, bold indicates emphasis, underline indicates speaking each word separately and deliberately. Feel free not to include all stanzas⁸.

Remembering Who We Are

by Michele Rae Rizoli

Sisters, brothers, friends, we've called this Peace Sunday
It's the proverbial string we tie around our finger every year so we won't forget
On Peace Sunday we remember who we **are**,
who **we** propose to **be**

We are children of God's Peace

"We who were formerly no people at all, and who knew of no peace, are now called to be... a church... of peace. True Christians do not know vengeance. They are the children of peace. Their hearts overflow with peace. Their mouths speak peace, and they walk in the way of peace." (to quote Menno Simons)

We are followers of this Jesus who

described the blessed vision for the realm of God

We've decided **not** to just put it off until "some heaven light years away"⁹

We believe peace is to be dared "here in this place,"

We **believe** peace is to be imagined in our times

In God's name, by Jesus' example, in hope of his truth

We believe the beatitudes are **not** just a pretty metaphor

We don't just pine away for peace,

we believe that with God's direction and protection

we can actually **work** for peace—like the MCC button says¹⁰

We take this job description seriously: this blessing and being blessed

We are the ones who value the poor in spirit, the humble, the meek

We are the ones who will comfort the mourning,

and find comfort with each other and with God

We are the ones who seek nourishment and fulfillment by seeking justice,
who break this bread and drink this cup with others and on behalf of others

We crave and serve up mercy, because God is love and has loved us first

We do not see the world with malice but with purity

8 Adapted from a longer Peace Sunday Sermon that can be downloaded at [mcccanada.ca/system/files/a+peace+sunday+sermon+\(toronto+united+mennonite+church\)_0.pdf](http://mcccanada.ca/system/files/a+peace+sunday+sermon+(toronto+united+mennonite+church)_0.pdf)

9 HWB 6, "Here in this Place" by Mary Haugen

10 mcccanada.ca/peace/resources/peacebuttons

We choose to be peacemakers, in the big things and in the little,
we **choose** not to be bullies – not to put others down so that we can look good,

we **choose** to be friends—even to the ones who are... different,
we **choose** not to use nor defend violence against others in any way
—even if we think they deserve it,
even in our cars and on our facebook comments
even if we have to choose to do this everyday
over and over again

we **choose** to see in the **face** of the other
the **face** of another human being like us

We are game for the hard work of disagreement
of not walking away on first instinct
of looking for reconciliation,
of regarding others through the eyes of God's love
When facing indignation,
we have imagination for transformation¹¹

We **know** this is misunderstood and terribly misinterpreted
by those who **believe** that we are **naïve**,
that war is **necessary, ordinary**
that questioning is unpatriotic, idiotic
Yet
we persist in living out the realm of God

Sisters, brothers, friends
We are people of God's Peace.

11 Walter Bruggeman

Prayers

God above and below

by Carol Penner¹²

Thank you God for everything under us;
for these chairs on which we sit,
for this church's firm foundation,
for the soil with its burrowing animals and insects,
for the rock down under that, layered by the sea in ancient times,
for the water that flows in subterranean channels far beneath us,
and for the miles upon miles of bedrock,
(unknown and unexplored by all but you),
all the way down to the living heat of our planet,
the molten rock deep in the heart of the earth.

Thank you God for everything above us;
for this solid roof which shelters us,
for the wind swirling and birds soaring skyward,
for the airplanes and clouds high above,
for the upper atmosphere and the stratosphere,
for satellites orbiting, for meteors whizzing,
for the moon and the planets of our solar system,
for asteroids and comets and supernovae and black holes,
for galaxy upon galaxy stretching away into the vastness of space.

The wide span of your work is a mystery we cannot fathom.
You are above us, you are beneath us, God of creation!
Help us to feel your presence today among us
in the love we share, in the praise we offer
as one faithful piece of the big picture.

Two prayers

by Luke Gascho

God, you are our Sustainer and Redeemer.
Forgive us when our dependence and addiction to oil and gas
fuels further abuse of your creation.
Give us strength to reform our perspectives of needs and wants,
so that, with your grace, our lifestyles might be transformed
to truly reflect your love for all creation.
May we live more mindfully, so that all might live more abundantly.
Amen¹³.

Dear Lord, You too walked on this Earth.
We thank you for taking on flesh like ours.
But we struggle with the reality of our walk.
Our North American footprint is large and heavy.
We know there is a connection with our way of living
and the oppression of other people in the world.
We don't want this to be so. Our lives are filled with many good things.
Parting with them is hard, for they give us comfort and security.
Forgive us for having our securities so rooted in things rather than in your love.
We seek repentance. We desire change.

¹² Copyright Carol Penner (leadinginworship.com)

¹³ From the Lenten Materials on Mining Justice, quoting Luke Gascho, Creation Care: Keepers of the Earth (MMA, Goshen, Ind., 2008), 99.

Grant us wisdom to live in your joy by living with less.
May we be participants with you in restoration.

Amen.

Sending

Benediction #1

May the God who knows the depths of the earth
and the depths of the human heart,
strengthen you and sustain you to live faithfully each day.

Benediction #2

May you treasure what God treasures
May you love as God loves
May wisdom guide your steps. Amen

Benediction #3

People of peace,
Go and do justice,
love kindness
and walk humbly with your God.

Take Action

Here are just a few ideas of how to continue to take action on mining justice.

Re-examine your investments

The **Mining Justice** website has links and articles that will help you take a closer look at how your money is being used. Speak to your financial advisor or invite people from your congregation to undertake this revision together. (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice/sri)

Discover what others are doing

Here you can find information on how Canadians are engaged in conferences, activism, and other activities related to mining. (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice/responses)

Read the news

Mining is a topic that often appears in the media. As you seek out stories, consider what your relationship is to the products being extracted and to the people who are affected. See relevant articles on the **Mining Justice** website (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice).

Lower consumption of mineral products

What kinds of mineral products could we say no to buying and using? How do we decide to live with enough when it comes to mineral resources.

See how MCC Manitoba suggested taking inventory of uses of oil and coltan (mccmanitoba.ca/programs/peace/miningjustice)

Read one person's response to use of gold¹⁴.

Make friends in a mining community

Learn to know an individual or family whose livelihood depends on mining. Ask them to share their insights. Read more about the Chocó community in Colombia.¹⁵

Recycle e-waste

Find out what your province is doing about e-waste recycling (electronic materials) and organize a collection in your church community.

Join a campaign

You've heard of conflict-free diamonds, now look into a campaign for conflict-free cell phones. (everence.com/conflictminerals/)

14 creationcarecrossroads.blogspot.ca/2012/01/first-hand-look-at-gold-extraction-in.html#more

15 mccottawa.ca/mining-and-resource-extraction-choc%C3%B3-colombia-pillage-destruction-violence-and-misery

Resources

This is not intended as a comprehensive list of resources, but rather a starting point so that you can learn more!

MCC's Mining Justice website: mccottawa.ca/miningjustice

This site is the primary source of information for this Peace Sunday Packet.

La Mina: mccottawa.ca/stories/videos/la-mina

This video was developed as part of MCC's Mining Justice Campaign (2009-2012). Features interviews with people from Guatemala and Honduras affected by Canadian mining. Comes with a study guide.

Gold mine: mccottawa.ca/stories/videos/gold-mine

This video was developed as part of MCC's Mining Justice Campaign (2009-2012). Features an interview with Francisco Machado, Mennonite pastor from Honduras, who fled due to safety concerns regarding his involvement with mining advocacy. Comes with a study guide.

For further articles, periodicals, books, and church statements and reports, visit mccottawa.ca/further-reading-materials

The following organizations are coalition partners with MCC in our work for mining justice:

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives: kairoscanada.org/sustainability/resource-extraction/
KAIROS unites eleven churches and religious organizations in faithful action for ecological justice and human rights.

Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA): cnca-rcrce.ca/

CNCA is a Canadian coalition uniting over twenty environmental and human rights NGOs, faith agencies, labour unions, and research and solidarity groups promoting corporate accountability.

The following organizations are also committed to working on mining-related issues:

McGill Research Group on Canadian Mining in Latin America: micla.ca/conflicts/

McGill Research Group on Canadian Mining in Latin America provides an Interactive Map of conflicts around mining in Latin America.

The Mining Association of Canada (MAC): mining.ca/site/index.php/en/

MAC is the national voice of Canada's mining and mineral processing industry.

Mining Injustice Solidarity Network (MISN): solidarityresponse.net

MISN works to bring the voices and experiences of communities impacted by Canadian extractive industries to Toronto where much of the industry is based.

MiningWatch Canada: miningwatch.ca/home

MiningWatch Canada is a pan-Canadian public-interest initiative supported by environmental, social justice, Aboriginal and labour organisations from across the country. It addresses the urgent need for a co-ordinated public interest response to the threats to public health, water and air quality, fish and wildlife habitat and community interests posed by irresponsible mineral policies and practices in Canada and around the world.

Photos and videos can be very effective in capturing the impacts of mining. Do a search on the internet for images and videos under "mining" and see what you find!

Call for solidarity

See the "Community Experiences" section on the Mining Justice website and hear the voices of our brothers and sisters. (mccottawa.ca/miningjustice/casestudies)

Read the article, "African guests ask Canadian churches for support." (mccottawa.ca/stories/news/african-guests-urge-canadians-support-mining-regulations)



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