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My Beloved Community





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SUPPORT PLEDGED



HUNGARY

If It Is Possible, As Far as It Depends on You, Live at Peace with Everyone, Romans 12:18

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. often spoke of a “beloved community” as a place of peace that is *based on both justice and equality* and where conflict is resolved without violence. Most importantly, this beloved community transforms people and relationships that creates connections grounded in human dignity, friendship, reconciliation. I have been privileged every Thursday to enter a living example of the beloved community. The experience changed me.

School is out for this year, but I am going to miss a very specific Thursday afternoon assignment. My school does not have a cafeteria. So each day two teachers are assigned to walk with the students four blocks to a nearby restaurant. This is one of the activities that I truly enjoyed. Every time I walk with our group of about 25 children to the restaurant, I am reminded of the principles of living in a beloved community. On these walks I have experienced God. I often find myself humming the hymn, “He Lives”. I see Jesus in the ways the children treat one another and the care they extend to the well-being of their community. Here are a few observations and pastoral lessons that I learned on my weekly journeys.

- Hold hands.....travelling in pairs is better than solo.
- Wait for one another. It will help keep you safe.
- When to cross the street is a big decision. Sometimes unpopular choices are made for the well-being of the group.

- When a person younger than you is trying to tell you something, be humble. Anyone can be your teacher.
- Talking while you walk side by side is a good time to share your heart. It's a great way to get to know one another.
- Learn how to be sensitive to the needs of others. A partner can help you stay focused on where you are trying to go.
- It's not uncommon to become easily distracted. Your partner can help you catch up when you fall behind.
- It will rain. Don't be afraid to play, get wet or fall in the mud. Relationships are messy!
- Don't be afraid to jump into the puddles. Make a splash with both feet on purpose.
- Sometimes we hurt one another unintentionally. And sometimes, you just need to cry.
- Hugs and kisses are good especially when coupled with "I am sorry."
- It's okay to say I love you in sign language.

