

# *Children's Story: Understanding Truth*

I want to tell you a story of four young boys. Their names were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They lived in Jerusalem with their families. They were friends. One day, a foreign army came and took them away from their family and country, so that they might be trained and civilized to be useful for a the king. They were taken to the king's court and put with other young people. Some were from other places like them.

They were given new names – names that could be said and remembered by those in charge of them. They would now be called Beltshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and not Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. They were given new clothes. They had to speak a new language and were forbidden to speak their old language. They were punished when they did speak their old language. They had to eat foods they were not accustomed to eating. They were told they had to give up their spiritual practices and learn new ones. At night they slept in a large room with other children and they never got to see their parents again.

What do you think it would be like to be given a new name, one that wasn't chosen by your parents and you had difficulty remembering?

How would you feel if you never saw your parents again?

There was a time in the past that our church thought God wanted us to take Indigenous children from their homes and teach them to dress, speak and think like a white Canadian. It didn't work, but it caused a lot of pain. Eventually, our church realized it wasn't God telling us to do that. It is important for us to remember what we know as the golden rule: treat others as you want to be treated. We can also say that in the context of families and nations. Treat other families and nations the way you want your family and nation to be treated.

## **Prayer:**

God of all people, thank you for our families and our country. Help us to respect other families and other countries so that we might work together for your glory and peace. Remind us to treat others as we want to be treated. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

*The worship resources for Mission Awareness Sunday have been written by The Rev. Mark Tremblay. Mark was called to Knox church in 2012. He was attracted by the unique passion for Worship, Justice he experienced from the Knox congregation.*

*He has degrees in Philosophy, Religion and Theology. He has ministered to Churches in Brampton, Bermuda, and Eastern Ontario. He strives to bring recent scholarship and post-constantinian thinking to his exegesis and proclamation of the gospel; preaching should be educational, relevant and challenging. He also believes that the church is called to be part of the wider community in which it resides.*

*Mark and his wife, Liz, enjoy walking through Fish Creek Park with their two dogs and getting out of Calgary to explore the mountains. They have four adult children.*