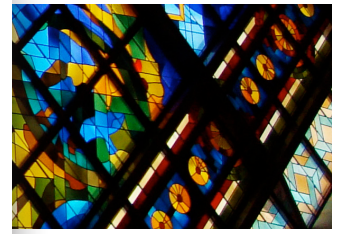




40 DAYS OF ENGAGEMENT on Anti-Racism



DAY 34

Race and Space



Learning

SunDo Hyun

My family and I moved to Canada from South Korea in 2009, when I began my studies at St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon. Saskatoon is a beautiful place, with the Saskatchewan River running in the middle of the city. It's my hometown in Canada! At some point, I recognized that there seemed to be a kind of segregation between the east and west sides of the river. I saw many Korean immigrants in Saskatoon trying to find a home in the east side of the city rather than in the west, partly because there was a belief that west side of the river was less safe, and the housing conditions, neighbourhoods, and other socio-economic indicators were of lower value. That made me think of the spatial segregation in a community along the lines of race, income, social status, and other social-economic factors. It might not be so visible or announced officially, but is obviously recognized by the people in the community.

Here is another example I found interesting. There was a McDonalds at a downtown corner in

Saskatoon. I used to go there with my two little boys because it was close to the bus terminal, and my kids liked riding the bus and eating out with me from time to time. In 2013, the restaurant was torn down by the owner of the building—not because of financial or business matters, but because of the people around it. (CBC News Saskatoon: [McDonald's Property Owner Plans to Demolish Building](#)). The city government also talked about its plan to remove benches and planters in that area. Why? Because there was a perception that this place was getting more dangerous; people hanging around there seemed to be involved in drugs, alcohol, and crime. Those people were likely to make other people afraid. So they made this space into a parking lot.

This made me wonder about the spatial segregation of the marginalized and the privileged in a community, and the role of the spatial practices of government administration in creating the segregation. I've learned that spaces of

racial minorities and marginalized people are socially produced; how people view the marginalized is reflected in laws and regulations, and how spaces are created. What is more interesting to me is that the marginalized space may not be necessarily be actually *marginal*; it is often located in the “inner city” or “downtown” of a community. The core area of poverty and marginality is also more likely to be subject to constant surveillance of its inhabitants and conditions.

Other examples to explore are the colonialization of Indigenous people and lands in Canada, the creation of [reserve system](#) governed by the [Indian Act](#), and the discrimination and destruction of [Africville in Halifax, Nova Scotia](#). I invite you to take the time to learn about those examples as part of your 40 Days of Engagement on Anti-Racism.



Faith Reflection

SunDo Hyun

When Jesus traveled into Samaria on his way from Galilee to Jerusalem ([John 4](#)), he must have known the historical resentment and hostility between Judea and Samaria because of the division of the North and South Kingdoms of Israel after the death of King Solomon. He must have also known the general perception in his time that divided the people of Judea as the chosen people, and the Samaritans as the despised. He crossed the boundaries of segregation and hostility when he chose to travel into the Samaritan region and engage the “despised” people there. He also challenged the gender barrier in his time and place when he spoke with a Samaritan woman in a public space, shocking his disciples. I find it interesting that his simple request of water became the first step towards listening to others and sharing gifts each other.

In [Luke 14](#), Jesus, observing guests trying to get a place of honour at the table, speaks about space and power relations. He says, “Sit at the lowest place of honor so you may be invited to a greater position.” I’m not sure

if he is talking about manners and etiquette. I don’t think he is teaching them how to be strategic, or how to manipulate the situation to get a better seat. I wonder if he is calling for sincere humility in their relationship with God and with others. This teaching can also be empowering to people who think (or have been told) they deserve the lowest place. Humility and empowerment is something that happens at Jesus’ table and his fellowship with people of different backgrounds.

Take some time to discover your community (neighbourhood, town, or city) with various family activities. You could go out for a walk and take pictures or videos of places you find interesting in relation to history of the community, people’s lives, or social issues. You could go to downtown in your city and compare the spaces with suburban spaces. You could also research the practices of your community’s government, such as regulations about public space and new development projects, as well as the police patrol divisions in your city.



Children's Activity

SunDo Hyun

Explore these resources with children:

- [Africville](#) by Shauntay Grant & illustrated by Eva Campbell;
- [Viola Desmond Won't be Budged](#) by Jody Nyasha Warner & illustrated by Richard Rudnicki (also available in French; translated Louise Binette (2013))
- [Kids Talk About Segregation](#)



Group Commitment

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Explore more of the history and current issues of the colonization of Indigenous people and lands in Canada, as well as other spatial practices that discriminate and oppress Indigenous and racialized/marginalized people in Canada. The following is a list of few suggestions:

- Doctrine of Discovery
- Acknowledging Indigenous Territory in Worship
- Canada's reserve system
- Africville

I'm convinced that understanding the relationship between race and space has implications to the truth and reconciliation process in Canada. It is important to recognize the ongoing injustice of colonialism in relation to the lands and people segregated along the lines of race, income, or social status.



Advocacy

SunDo Hyun

Segregation of the spaces of the marginalized and the privileged is found in every community, because shaping and mapping spaces are always linked to power-related politics.

- Pay attention to spatial segregation and government practices that marginalize and degrade certain groups of people in your community.

- Individuals and community organizations could work together to promote the better quality of housing, educational, and recreational facilities in neighbourhood of less quality.
- Advocate for Indigenous peoples' rights to lands and resources, and explore all six principles of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#).

- Acknowledge traditional territories in worship gatherings, and consider offering the [KAIROS Blanket Exercise](#) at your community of faith.



Born and raised in South Korea, **SunDo** became a United Church minister in 2016 (admitted from the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea) and has been in congregational ministry in Saskatchewan.

SunDo is passionate about working toward Truth & Reconciliation in Canada, helping the younger generation find home in Christian faith and community, welcoming people of different cultural backgrounds and gender identities, and making the wider community a better place for everyone.

