

Reconciliation Ministries

Allen A. Belton, Senior Partner

Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us.

2 Corinthians 5: 17-20 (NLT)

An Unreconciled World

- In the U.S., nearly 8,000 hate crimes are reported to the FBI each year.
- Over the past 18 years, the conflict in the Middle East has cost \$12 trillion including losses in growth and development.
- More than a million religious people are harassed, arrested, tortured, imprisoned and killed for their faith every year.

Sources: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Strategic Foresight Group, World Future Society

A Working Definition of Reconciliation

The process of resolving conflict through the act of forgiveness by the person wronged and the acceptance of responsibility and lament for his or her actions by the person who inflicted the harm in order that the relationship between the parties might be restored.

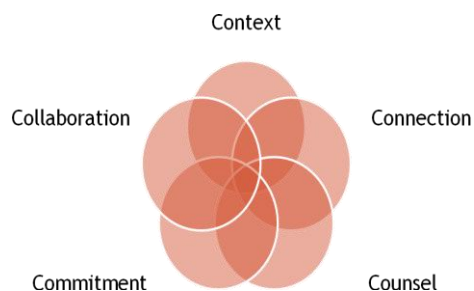
Israelis and Palestinians, Belgians and Rwandans, Muslim imams and Orthodox priests -- these are but a few examples of people working to heal relationships and build a better world based on justice and mercy. They are engaged in the work of reconciliation, one of the most powerful forces in the world today to resolve conflicts and restore relationships.

While many consider reconciliation a “hot” new concept, it actually started as a revolutionary idea thousands of years ago when God reconciled a broken world through the life and death of Jesus Christ. In that act, reconciliation became the heart of the gospel and the central mission of all Christians.

Conflict and brokenness result in wasted human potential, repression, isolation, racial and ethnic divisions, fragmented families, neglected neighborhoods and violence. Into these dire circumstances, however, comes the opportunity of hope through reconciliation.

Reconciliation occurs when individuals change the way they think about each other and build bridges of forgiveness and repentance. This change is not a one-time event but a journey, with new relationships and new experiences replacing the old. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, “the old life is gone, a new life has begun!”

By its very nature, reconciliation cannot be realized in isolation but rather in community. It grows out of understanding the context of the brokenness, making a connection to bridge divisions, wise counsel to support and guide, a commitment to new relationships, and ultimately, working in collaboration to accomplish the unimaginable.



Allen A. Belton, Senior Partner for Reconciliation Ministries, is a catalyst for reconciliation. God is using him to create opportunities for people to build new relationships and to experience reconciliation first hand, face-to-face.

Through his uncommon abilities to connect people, catalyze change and coach new leaders, Allen enables individuals and groups to begin journeys of reconciliation, inspires Christians to embrace the task of reconciliation, and develops young leaders as agents of reconciliation in their communities.

With faith in the power of God, Allen has been especially called to:

Create authentic experiences. Allen leads groups on journeys of reconciliation and encouragement, whether into the heart of conflicts between Palestinians and Israelis, peoples impacted by the African Diaspora or within local communities. Coming face-to-face with issues that divide people builds understanding and commitment to global and local reconciliation.



A short-term mission trip to Kenya built relationships with the Maasi.

Use gospel music to bridge divisions among people. Allen has been an instrument of unity among peoples of all faiths through the teaching and performance of traditional gospel music.

A powerful testament is the 2007 World Conference on Dialogue among Religions and Civilizations in the Republic of Macedonia where Allen and renowned gospel music artist Bishop Nathaniel Townsley, Jr. collaborated to lead a multi-faith gospel choir in daily performances that were so moving the choir was invited to bring its message to the capital and sing

For more information

To learn more about Reconciliation Ministries, contact Allen Belton at 425-775-3362, 206-979-3810 (mobile) or abelton@breakthroughpartners.org.

For more information about Breakthrough Partners, visit www.breakthroughpartners.org.

“Allen and I met in the mid 1970s training people to be sensitive to cultural differences. Blacks were struggling with integration and reconciliation. Al was dedicated to that and has stayed dedicated up to today. I’m sure it will continue to be his mission.”

John Perkins
Founder, John M. Perkins
Foundation for Reconciliation &
Development

“A ‘catalyst’ is an agent that creates change. Allen is a catalyst of God’s love. When people experience Allen, they walk away feeling loved. He’s known to say ‘Loved people love people.’ His mission is to catalyze that process in the life of everyone he meets.”

Ken Kierstead
Senior Director, Urban & Global
Missions, University Presbyterian
Church, Seattle

Current Reconciliation Ministries Relationships

Coalition for Community
Development and Renewal
DADS (Divine Alternatives for Dads)
Duke University Center for
Reconciliation
John M. Perkins Foundation for
Reconciliation & Development
King County Youth Chaplaincy
Mt. View Presbyterian Church
New Light Christian Church
Renewing Our Minds Project
Seattle Urban Academy
Teleios
University Presbyterian Church
Urban Impact

with the national symphony for several hundred people.



Allen (standing, center) and Bishop Nathaniel Townsley, Jr. (standing, right) in Macedonia with members of the gospel choir and Orthodox, Muslim, and Jewish clergy.

Raise up leaders. God has given Allen a special heart for developing and mentoring youth and young leaders to carry forward the work of reconciliation. He is a leader in establishing the King County Youth Chaplaincy to provide non-denominational religious programming in the Juvenile Detention Facility and is a long-time mentor to community leaders and ministers in Seattle, Rwanda and the Balkans.

Allen himself has benefited from deep relationships with reconciliation mentors. He counts John Perkins, founder of the John M. Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation & Development and the late Dr. Horace Clarence Boyer, professor emeritus of Music, the UMass Amherst, as key influences in his own life and work.

Over the years, the most important lesson he has learned, he says, is, “Reconciliation isn’t just for people who disagree or have unsettled conflict. It’s for all of us and is at the core of the gospel message.”

Allen now works in affiliation with Breakthrough Partners, a consulting group



Allen A. Belton
Senior Partner, Reconciliation Ministries
Breakthrough Partners

For more than 30 years, Allen has led reconciliation and mentored leaders in local churches and in such challenging arenas as unemployment, mental health, prisons, parenting, youth, and substance abuse. Prior to his association with Breakthrough Partners, Allen was senior associate director of Urban and Global Missions and director of Reconciliation Ministries at University Presbyterian Church, Seattle.

Allen also has served as vice president for multi-ethnic and urban affairs at Youth for Christ USA and has held positions of leadership in ministry and social services in California. Allen is an ordained minister and graduate of Patten University, Oakland. Allen and his wife, Margaret, have four children, eleven grandchildren and live in Seattle.

Breakthrough Partners is a Washington-based nonprofit corporation. All contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.

with a like-minded mission to build leaders and rebuild communities in the most broken areas of the world. It envisions local churches, globally strong to operate with a biblical worldview and in partnership with other churches to bring holistic transformation to individuals, families, communities and nations.

Allen likens his work at this time in his life to a relay race runner passing the baton to a partner. He is passing the baton of his faith, experience and encouragement to the next generation of leaders.

This new partnership will enable Allen over the next three and a half years to raise up new reconciliation leaders. As Paul and Barnabas worked together to encourage the first century church, Allen will work with many individuals and groups to:

- Identify, train and mentor Reconciliation Advocates to lead people in reconciliation to God and each other
- Build relationships between leaders of diverse groups to live and work in unity
- Lead teams to troubled areas of the world, including the Middle East, the Balkans and East Africa, to promote and support reconciliation
- Enable a coalition of faith-based organizations in the Seattle metro area seeking to empower the body of Christ to transform the urban community

To carry on the task of reconciliation, Allen needs a community of people and organizations like you for spiritual encouragement and financial support. As God leads, become a partner with Allen through your prayers and gifts. Through us, God can make his appeal to the world; together, we can be Christ’s ambassadors of this wonderful message of reconciliation.