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Howard Zehr's critique: most communities are not sufficiently robust to adequately perform the work of restorative justice.[1]

- a distinct role for Christians, I will argue that the *Christian* community (by which I mean the 'local church'), through its mission and witness is sufficiently robust to undertake this task.

- a distinct for disciples in the radical reformation tradition, through its emphasis on witness in combining peace and justice, to strengthen church to be restorative communities.

What would a restorative community in a city, neighbourhood, village, workplace, school or church look like? Examples include Canberra – modelled on the English city of Hull, the world's first 'restorative city' – and in Rwanda where four 'reconciliation villages' have been built.[2] The interdependence of community life and committed action has already been observed in a range of diverse contexts. While the phenomenon of 'community organising' is more common to public life in North America (and the focus of most extant literature), the dominance in those very places of

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[1] 3 major ones does it ensure that justice is extended to victims? Are wider social and political dimensions are considered? Are communities are made strong enough to facilitate the work of restorative justice.

[2] Mark Finnis, "Hull: Towards a Restorative City," (paper presented at *Becoming a Restorative County/Local Authority*. Cardiff, 15 July 2009). Another excellent resource, including many powerful and moving case studies, is Zack Baddorf, "Reconciliation Village Hosts Victims, Perpetrators of Rwandan Genocide," Voice of America 2010, available from <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/africa/Reconciliation-Village-Hosts-Victims-Prepetrators-of-Rwandan-Genocide-103207594.html> (Date accessed: 18 September 2010). These villages are not confined to Rwanda. It is noteworthy that most illustrations from Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa*, 127,155, 170 focus on middle level actors (Bishop Paride Taban, midwife Angelina Atyam and childworker Maggy Barankitse) operating in third places (villages, reconciliation centres and houses for orphans).

faith-based groups – especially local churches – raises important questions

for schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods seeking to practice restorative

justice.[3] I contend that the *Christian* community, inspired by a holistic

Christological vision, provides the kind of habitat that can create and nurture

restorative justice practice.

'Secular' restorative communities

The four approaches considered here can be referred to as 'secular' because

the inner logic of each approach does not require the Christian community.[4]

In Yoder's words, the intended community 'cannot be presumed to be

addressable from the perspective of Christian confession.'[5]

In the light of these four perspectives, it is assumed that restorative

communities require effectiveness, health, justice, peace and reconciliation

without necessarily holding Christian convictions or participating in the life of

the Christian community.

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[3] Examples include Frances Hesselbein, *The Community of the Future* (ed. al.; San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), part V "Strengthening the Social Fabric"; Robert Theobald, *Reworking Success: New Communities at the Millenium* (Gabriola Island: New Society, 1997), 69-71; Parker J. Palmer, *The Company of Strangers: Christians and the Renewal of America's Public Life* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 146-150; Elizabeth O'Connor, *Call to Commitment: The Story of the Church of the Saviour, Washington, D.C* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 158-167; and, Elton Trueblood, *The Company of the Committed* (New York: Harper, 1961), chs 1-2.

[4] This is notwithstanding the fact that most of the authors in this section are writing from within and for the Christian faith and share its Scriptures, traditions, worldviews and assumptions.

[5] John Howard Yoder, "Why Ecclesiology is Social Ethics: Gospel Ethics Versus the Wider Wisdom," in *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1998), 108.

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'Effective' communities: organisational perspectives

Restorative justice conferencing has been adapted by David B Moore (see chapter 2) to resolve workplace conflict by incorporating organisational perspectives.[6] He has recently modified his management-orientated approach for schools and other locally-based communities.[7] Consistent with a growing trend in contemporary leadership literature, he stresses the importance of open communication within the organisation. Conferencing, according to Moore, is a structured conversation through which grievances can be aired, disputes identified and conflicts resolved before each has a chance to escalate into 'acts of undisputed harm'.[8] Moore's approach is consistent with organisational theories that focus on win-win outcomes such as the *Harvard Negotiation Project* and its negotiation and problem-solving strategy called 'Getting to YES'.[9] Moore identifies the perceived lack of justice in a traditional 'adversarial process [that] emphasises the discrepancies between the two arguments … one side formally wins; one side

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[6] Moore and McDonald, *Transforming Conflict*, 51 specifically addresses 'questions addressed by organisational and systems theory.'

[7] Moore, "From 'Restorative Practices' to 'Relationship Management': A Schools-Based Project of the Australian Government Quality Teaching Program."

[8] Moore and McDonald, *Transforming Conflict*, 51.

[9] Roger Fisher*, et al.*, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating an Agreement without Giving In* (London: Arrow Business Books, 1997), 13-14, 19-23. See also Stone*, et al.*, *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*.

loses. And yet it is common for both parties in an adversarial process to feel that they have lost. Often, neither party feels justice has been done.'[10]

Organisational perspectives, such as Moore's, demonstrate the importance of fair process and the incorporation of genuine conversation. As noted in the previous chapter, the failure of the church to devise processes for dealing with internal issues of conflict, relationship breakdown or clergy bullying have surfaced in recent decades. In various denominations and institutional settings the church is improving its governance, in some cases through re-discovering the approaches of the apostle Paul and his circle to conflict in the early Christian assemblies.[11] Ricoeur has highlighted the dangers, however, of abandoning the kind of discernment and judgment necessary for enacting justice. The church can develop fairer processes without allowing itself to become process-driven because, in biblical imagery, the Christian community is likened to an *organism* rather than an *organisation*.[12]

'Healthy' communities: therapeutic perspectives

A healthy community needs inter-personal relationships provided by psychological insights to thrive. A significant proportion of restorative justice

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[10] Everett L. Worthington, *The Power of Forgiving* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 2005), 25, 27 observes that 'the disputant's sense of injustice, derives from the essential nature of the adversarial process. Emphasising discrepancies between two arguments has the side effect of maximising conflict between the disputants.'

[11] See further Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 139-151. Robert J. Banks, "The Early Church as a Caring Community," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 7 (1983). More recently Mark Strom, *Reframing Paul: Conversations in Grace & Community* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000), 173-181, 182-189.

[12] I am anticipating here my discussion of the sociality of the church in the next section by Bonhoeffer, *DBWE* 1:252-267.

practice depends upon the insights, skills and processes derived from a range of therapeutic traditions. American psychologist Everett Worthington III is a well-known expert on the emotional and psychological dimensions of forgiveness and reconciliation.[13] His basic premise is that forgiveness involves five steps contained in the acronym R-E-A-C-H: 'Recall the hurt, empathise, altruistic gift of forgiveness, commit publicly to forgive in a way that can be observed, and hold on to forgiveness.'[14] Worthington's practical advice for people who want to forgive others mirrors the apostle Paul's response to the offence in the church in Corinth.[15] Worthington's focus on the victim's role in forgiveness coincides with the discipleship practices commended to victims in the previous chapter. Worthington implicitly assumes, however, that victims not wrongdoers initiate the pursuit of a 'just forgiveness' in the family, church, communities, society and the world. The working assumption is that *individual victims* are responsible for forgiving.[16] These assumptions need to be challenged. Most psychology encourages 'healthy' relationships. The principal focus is on the interior life of individuals for spiritual, personal and emotional wellbeing. The health of the wider group

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[13] See Everett L. Worthington, *Forgiving and Reconciling: Bridges to Wholeness and Hope* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2003). Everett L. Worthington, *Dimensions of Forgiveness: Psychological Research and Theological Perspectives* (Philadelphia: Templeton Foundation Press, 1998).

[14] Worthington, *Forgiving and Reconciling*, 73-74.

[15] 1 Corinthians 6:1-9 see also Stephen C. Barton, "Christian Community in the Light of 1 Corinthians," *SCE* 10 (1997): 9. J D G Dunn, "The Responsible Congregation (1 Cor. 14:26-40)," in *Charisma Und Agape: (1 Ko 12-14)* (eds. De Lorenzi and Benoit; Rome: Abtei von St Paul vor den Mauern, 1983), 201-236.

[16] Everett L. Worthington, *A Just Forgiveness: Responsible Healing without Excusing Injustice* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009), 127-215 whose focus is on living out a 'just forgiveness' in the spheres of family, church, communities, society and world. This overlaps with the 'middle-level' spheres in Lederach.

is dependent on the health of constituent individuals but never the other way around. This limits attention to *individual* behaviour and privileges the individual over the community. An unintended consequence of this approach is healthy communities that are warm and supportive towards those who can behave according to the group norms, but exclude those whose wrongdoing is problematic or who are deemed 'un-healed' victims.

Contemporary psychological approaches usually require the intervention of an *expert* (for example, the therapist), a second difference to the approach of the early church. Taken together these limitations comprise what American scholar John McKnight calls the ideology of 'allopathic' therapies that effectively 'disperse community, isolate the afflicted and call on the spirit of expert intervention.'[17] A third limitation to psychological approaches is the reactive and subsequently sporadic implementation of restorative justice practices. In the immediate aftermath of wrongdoing, therapeutic skills might be used to return the community to 'health'. This brief experience of community proves unsustainable because – in the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer – such experiences are not the same as true community.[18]

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[17] John McKnight, *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits* (New York: BasicBooks, 1995), 137.

[18] Bonhoeffer, *DBWE* 5:47 who argued that 'nothing is easier than to stimulate the euphoria of community in a few days of life together [*gemeinsame Leben*]; and nothing is more fatal to the healthy, sober, everyday life in community of Christians.'

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These therapeutic perspectives highlight the importance of education that incorporates forgiveness skills in relationships, without the driving force of psychological goals (such as 'health').

'Justpeace' communities: ethical perspectives

Howard Zehr has sought the continuing development of values and principles to guide the restorative justice movement. Jarem Sawatsky has responded with *Justpeace Ethics: A Guide to Restorative Justice and Peacebuilding*. He is refreshingly honest about the tensions and complexity required to build communities of peace. He correctly notes that restorative justice involves a credible way of life and not just a program to be implemented.[19] The prime peace-building task of communities is to prioritise relationships over rules, and to promote local communities over larger institutions and the state.[20] Reordering priorities produces a series of interrelated *virtues* that form the ethics of Sawatsky's formulation of 'justpeace' communities. Undergirding the significance of 'justpeace' virtues draws on the view popularised by Hauerwas that ethical character is best formed within the life and witness of a Christian

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[19] Jarem T. Sawatsky, *Justpeace Ethics: A Guide to Restorative Justice and Peacebuilding* (Cascade Books, 2008), 6, 14.

[20] Sawatsky, *Justpeace Ethics*, 36-37.

community.[21] The tension between particularity and interconnectedness is, of course, most readily exposed in community. The apparent hesitancy in drawing on the life and death of Jesus or centuries of faithful Christian practice for the deep roots of 'justpeace' only serves to undermine such a principle-based approach. In the *Christian* community, it is unavoidably the particularity of Jesus Christ that must be affirmed as the basis for interconnectedness. [22]

Another limitation of Sawatsky's approach is his framing of virtues. For example, a major theme in his work is the insistence that virtues (such as nonviolence) are to be practiced. His ethical prescriptions are less clear about how such practices are to be embodied in everyday life.[23] Ethical perspectives can indicate the importance of virtues that incorporate biblical insights. Paul's communities stressing the role of 'peace' as a criterion and

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[21] Sawatsky appears to synthesise Yoder's social ethics, McIntyre's virtues and the ecclesiology of Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 50. Hauerwas contends that Christian ethics – especially Christian social ethics – 'cannot be divorced from the kind of community the church is and should be. The social ethical task of the church is to be the kind of community that tells and tells rightly the story of Jesus … Jesus is the story that forms the church. This means that the church first serves the world by helping the world to know what it means to be the world. For without a 'contrast model' the world has no way to know or feel the oddness of its dependence on power for survival.'

[22] The commitment to nonviolence flows from a prior commitment to the particularity (or singularity) of Jesus. While sharing Sawatsky's commitment to a nonviolent ethic, nonviolence also functions as the hermeneutical lens in which varying faith commitments in 'justpeace communities' are included, while those committed to following Jesus without a thorough-going commitment to non-violence are excluded! There is a deeper and more troubling reason for this error. The principles espoused in *Just-peace Ethics* try to negotiate the differences between faith traditions through the interconnectedness of virtues. In practice, this means that inspiration is drawn from the author's own tradition (Christian) alongside a variety of other sources. This raises the question of whether such an easy synthesis between these differently imagined worlds is possible or whether there is not a more radical gulf between Christianity and other faiths committed to 'justpeace'?

[23] Nor can an approach called 'Justpeace *Ethics*' remain so deliberately vague about its ethical application. For example, an irritating stylistic device in Sawatsky, *Justpeace Ethics*, 19, 45, 62, 83, 88 is the recurrent use of expressions such as, 'this long-term–relationship lens has to do with' or 'a generation's lens becomes a virtue when it shapes our perspectives. It has to do with … this 'something' has to do with … it has to do with.' This lack of clarity is intentional because the author understands 'answers and formulas are part of the problem … shar[ing] some of the same logic as violence.' Some practical, concrete suggestions that don't necessarily try to 'solution the world to death' but elucidate how to embody the 'markers of character and imagination' need to be explicated.

goal of their activities is just one example. Ethical approaches are indispensable for the Christian community, but it must not become driven by principles divorced from faithful, concrete action.

'Reconciled' communities: conflict resolution perspectives

The American peace-builder John Paul Lederach has closely examined the best strategies from practice-orientated conflict resolution and has provided a fourth approach.[24] Lederach notes the human geography of conflict and its resolution. This enables him to observe the connection between 'social space' and reconciliation.

Reconciliation, in essence, represents a place, the point of encounter where concerns about both the past and the future can meet. Reconciliation-as-encounter suggests that space for the acknowledging of the past and envisioning of the future is the necessary ingredient for reframing the present. For this to happen, people must find ways to encounter themselves and their enemies, their hopes and their fears … reconciliation, I am suggesting, involves the creation of the social space where both truth and forgiveness are

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[24] John Paul Lederach, "Defining Conflict Transformation," *Peacework* 33 (2006): 36-37 locates the discipline of conflict resolution within social psychology and differentiates it from restorative justice because the goal of conflict transformation is 'to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interactions and social structures and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.'

validated and joined together, rather than being forced into an

encounter in which one must win out over the other.[25]

Lederach's convergence of reconciliation and social space (or place)

resonates with my own experience of restorative justice in Sydney's inner-city

during the last decade. In the first instance, the sociologist Ray Oldenburg's

concept of 'third' places – where people gather outside of either work and

home – illuminated the part played by the church's community centre in

Darlinghurst and the community garden in Glebe among disadvantaged

people.[26] Typically the places offered by Christian communities were the only

'safe' places to gather apart from the street.[27] Reconciliation requires such

places. Second, Lederach identified the critical role of 'middle-range' leaders

and actors who occupy positions where 'they are likely to know and be known

by the top-level leadership, yet they have significant connections to the

broader context and the constituency' and where 'their status and influence in

the setting derives from ongoing relationships.'[28] Lederach's description of the

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[25] John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 27.

[26] Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place*, 26, 46 who notes that 'a comparison of cultures readily reveals that the popularity of conversation in a society is closely related to the popularity of third places' and 'novelty in third place conversation is lent by the predictable changes but unpredictable direction that it always takes.' This follows Jürgen Habermas's concept of 'public space' and its appeal to the 'reasonable dialogue' promised by the 'ideal speech situation.' Yet much of contemporary public discourse as conducted through the media and on the internet appears incapable of reasonable dialogue with opposing viewpoints. It appears to be content with "preaching to the choir." Levinas' question remains: how to bring people to the table to dialogue without doing violence?

[27] The street is the usual gathering place in inner-city neighbourhoods. It is also a contested place with conflict between police, residents, shop-owners as illustrated in the description of events in Darlinghurst and Kings Cross in the next section.

[28] Lederach, *Building Peace*, 41-42 where middle-range leaders are defined as 'persons who are highly respected … in the primary networks … leaders of identity groups in conflict (ethnicity, geography), whose prestige extends beyond local.'

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'greater flexibility of movement and action' of middle-range actors and their

'pre-existing relationships with counterparts that cut across tribal allegiances'

leads him to conclude that 'these qualities give middle-range actors the

greatest potential to serve and to sustain long-term transformation in the

setting' match my own experience as well as leaders of other Christian

communities.[29]

In his most recent work, *The Moral Imagination*, Lederach synthesises these

ideas by employing the analogy of a spider's web. This illustrates Lederach's

key insight that middle-level action is essentially about 'relational centers that

hold, create and sustain connections' combined with Oldenburg's explicit

focus on the physical dimension of third places as 'spaces of relationships

and localities where relationships intersect.'[30] This perspective is a reminder

of those ordinary facets of genuine reconciliation that are easily overlooked –

the importance of social relationships in a particular place facilitated by a

flexible leadership. Once again there is a biblical precedent for these facets in

Paul's references to the role of key people in the communities he founded

who embody similar characteristics and roles.[31] Peace-building perspectives

highlight the people, places and social relationships that promote

reconciliation within the Christian community, without becoming driven by

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[29] Lederach, *Building Peace*, 61.

[30] Lederach, *The Moral Imagination*, 78-85.

[31] Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community*, 152-154 and *Re-envisioning Theological Education*, 114-124 notes 'Paul's work was primarily a community action.'

outcomes (such as 'resolution') or ignoring the justice that lies on *the other side* of reconciliation.

Lessons for the Christian community

These four perspectives can inform and assist the Christian community in developing its own processes, skills, virtues and relational places. First, the church can adopt some of the *organisational* processes (such as facilitated conversations) without becoming process-driven. Second, the church can utilise *psychological* skills (such as R-E-A-C-H) without becoming therapeutically-driven. Third, the church can insist on *ethical* virtues without fearing that principles will replace practice. Fourth, the church can nurture and sustain *reconciling* places and relationships without being preoccupied or driven by 'outcomes'. In the next few pages I will introduce a number of models that the church might incorporate into its mission and its witness to God's restorative justice.

Christian restorative communities

Restorative communities can be shaped by specifically Christian convictions (and in their 'Christological' grounds). A restorative community whose commitment to justice is shaped by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The pivotal role of the Christian community in practices of reconciliation and justice in post-genocide Rwanda, and particularly the role

of *Prison Fellowship International* in establishing 'reconciliation villages', is a stark contrast to the absence of similar communities in Australia.

I. **For Yoder** (and more recently Hauerwas),[32] the church's *witness* constitutes the truth of the gospel which makes the Christian community's *faithfulness* essential.[33] The social practices of the Christian community therefore form its essential nature.

II. **For Bonhoeffer,** the being of the church is its *mission* because the Christian community exists in the world 'for' the other. He insists that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not dependent on the church's witness but on its *visibility* as the sign of Jesus' kingdom breaking into the world.

III. **For Volf**, the church is called to live for the world's sake (as argued by Bonhoeffer) *and* called to be other than the world (as argued by Yoder) demonstrating how visibility and faithfulness can be reconciled in what Volf calls the church's '*soft difference*' with respect to the world.

I will begin by identifying four of these approaches including perspectives on organisational processes, therapeutic skills, ethical principles and the

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[32] Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 99, 114 features his mantra that 'the church must first be the church.' This is his way of saying that the church's visible existence in the world sets forth, for the world's benefit, an alternative, lived reality ('the church does not have a social ethic; the church is a social ethic'). This alternative, lived reality is a community of people shaped by faithfulness to the Gospel who, in turn, help others to shape their lives and characters in faithfulness to the Gospel so as to *witness* to the Gospel in the world. It is precisely the church's internal life of formative practices which allow us to see and rightly know what Christ might do outside the church ('such people serve the cause of justice best by exemplifying in their own lives how to help one another').

[33] Originally in Yoder, *The Original Revolution*, 107-124 see also "Let the Church Be the Church," in *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1998), 168-180.

relational focus of conflict resolution. The church must learn from these other perspectives *before* expressing its distinct contribution.

Three of the theologians serving as dialogue partners have written on the relationship of the church and the world as well as Christology. While this aspect of their work cannot be fully appraised here, Bonhoeffer's understanding of the church's *mission*, Yoder's account of the church's *witness* and Volf's version of the church's '*soft difference*' provide important insights into how these elements might feature in my (or any) model.

Yoder's model: the witness of the church to the world[34]

Yoder's ecclesiology presents a threefold challenge for Christian communities. He asks: what is the nature of the church, what is its mission, and how does the 'order of redemption' (the church's agency) intersect with the 'order of providence' (the government's agency)?[35] Yoder argues that the church must be a foretaste, a herald or a model of the kingdom before the watching world. Unlike Bonhoeffer, who prioritised the church's solidarity with the world, Yoder maintained that 'integral to the calling of the church is for it to demonstrate what love means in social relations.'[36] The church's distinctiveness from the world is the basis for its *witness* to the world. This is

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[34] Yoder articulated his ecclesiology in works such Yoder, *The Priestly Kingdom; Body Politics*, 78; and, "Why Ecclesiology in Social Ethics," 102-103, 106, 108 because the world 'cannot be presumed to be addressable from the perspective of Christian confession' and the confession or non-confession of Jesus Christ as the 'only necessary dualism for social ethics.'

[35] John Howard Yoder, *The Christian Witness to the State* (Newton: Herald Press, 2002), 1.

[36] Yoder, *The Christian Witness to the State*, 1.

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because the church is herself a society, Her very existence, the fraternal relations of her members, their ways of dealing with their differences and their needs are, or rather should be a demonstrations of what love means in social relations. This demonstration cannot be transposed directly into non-Christian society.[37]

Here Yoder lays stress on the distinctiveness and visibility of the church's life. The church should be an exemplary body and a counter community so that the world can imitate and be challenged by it. Thus, the church 'will be most deeply and lastingly responsible for those in the valley of the shadow if she is the city set on the hill.'[38]

Central to Yoder's model of the church as foretaste/model/herald of the kingdom are the internal practices of the Christian community. His interpretation of Jesus' teaching about 'binding' and 'loosing' (Matthew 18:15-20 discussed in chapter 2) illustrates this kind of witness before a 'watching world'.[39] Here 'the constantly beckoning imperative remains the love of the enemy … this imperative has moral power in the world to the extent that it is already embodied in the church.'[40] Yoder's understanding of

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[37] Yoder, *The Christian Witness to the State*, 17.

[38] John Howard Yoder, "The Otherness of the Church," in *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1998), 64 does not deny the church's mission, but it follows from its witness, arguing in Yoder, "Why Ecclesiology in Social Ethics," 102-126 that 'to say that social ethics is the life of the believing community says that … these people are willing to live within the limits of the story of their faith and even celebrate their faith in a form that holds its meaning open for others to join.'

[39] Myers and Enns, *Ambassadors of Reconciliation II*, 47-149 is an excellent resource of this kind that provides many powerful and moving case studies of restorative justice in practice.

[40] Yoder, *The Christian Witness to the State*, 2-3.

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Jesus' lordship over the church and the world suggests that more than the church's *witness* is on view. It is more than expecting that the social order that is given to the church will affect the world without any attempt at translation.[41] The distinctiveness of the church appears to mean that the church must relate to the world entirely on its own terms. This is the form that Yoder's model of the church takes in the work of Hauerwas where the church virtually absents itself from most of the important questions facing schools, workplaces and neighbourhoods.[42]

Yoder's model of the church risks idealistic irrelevance by drawing too great a distinction between the alternate practices of the Christian community and the so-called 'secular' communities outside it. This might strengthen the witness of the church, but has the potential to simultaneously weaken its solidarity with the world. Despite his attempts to locate the Christian community *in* the world, the major trajectory of Yoder's model remains as its *witness* – the

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[41] Yoder, *Discipleship as Political Responsibility*, 62-63 argues 'it is remarkable how the meaning of Christ's lordship has been reversed in modern ecumenical discussion. In New Testament times the lordship of Christ meant that even that which is pagan, the state, was under God's rule. Today exactly the same expression means that Christians have been sent into all areas of public life, including every political position, and that there as Christians they are to do their duties according to the rules of the state – in other words, the opposite of the meaning in the New Testament.'

[42] Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom? How the Church Is to Behave If Freedom, Justice, and a Christian Nation Are Bad Ideas* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 45-68 where the stated agenda was to disentangle Christian ethics from liberal democratic sentiment. However, Hauerwas' provocative suggestion that 'justice is a bad idea for Christians' was perplexing in the secularity of Australia (where the lectures were first delivered). Outside the liberal, democratic and 'Christian' North American context where 'the church' is often excluded from public discourse, Hauerwas' sole promotion (and Yoder's before him) of the church's 'witness' effectively renders the church mute and irrelevant.

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same rubric that dominated the theology of his friend James McClendon who

tried to fashion a bridge between the models of Yoder and Bonhoeffer.[43]

 To substantiate my claim I will first describe a model of a local church that

has contributed constructively to the problem of violence in its immediate

neighbourhood through the principles and practice of restorative justice. I will

then canvass three ecclesiological models based on engagement with the

world and conclude that 'soft difference' is an appropriate model for Christian

communities of restorative justice.[44] I will then integrate into this model the

four reconciling practices of the early church in the ancient Roman city of

Philippi: hospitality, deliverance, salvation and resistance (drawn from chapter

7). I will conclude with my suggestion that the relationship of the Anglican

church with Indigenous Australians acts as a 'test case' for the proposed

model of a Christian community of restorative justice because it raises the

issue of post-reconciliation justice.

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[43] Luther conceived of the church and state not primarily as institutions but as separate vocations. A Christian may therefore serve God through a political vocation as 'God's executioner' or through a spiritual vocation as a minister of God's word. It is entirely possible to reconcile the two roles – executioner and minister – because one concerns the 'outward' identity and one the 'inward'. For my understanding of the role of vocation in Luther's theology I am indebted to James William McClendon, "Social Ethics and Christian Community," in *Ethics: Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 165-191 who appears to prefer Bonhoeffer over Yoder in rejecting Luther's dualism by affirming that 'there are not two realities, but only one reality, and that is God's reality revealed in Christ in the reality of the world. Partaking in Christ, we stand at the same time in the reality of God and in the reality of the world. The reality of Christ embraces the reality of the world in itself. The world has no reality of its own independent of God's revelation in Christ. It is a denial of God's revelation in Jesus Christ to wish to be 'Christian' without being 'worldly,' or to which to be worldly without seeing and recognizing the world in Christ. Hence, there are not two realms, but only the one realm of the Christ-reality, in which the reality of God and the reality of the world are united.'

[44] A comprehensive theology of church community and its concerns is well beyond the scope of the present chapter. Most ecclesiology, however, affirms its link with Christology, for instance, the Augustinian notion that Christ and the church constitute a single person, the whole Christ. Barth, *CD*, IV. 2:655 thinks 'Jesus Christ is the community'. The Christological emphasis is clear even for theologians whose ecclesiology is ultimately Trinitarian. An example is Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 128 notes 'the all-embracing framework for an appropriate understanding of the church is God's eschatological new creation. According to the message of Jesus, the gathering of the people of God is grounded in the coming of the Kingdom of God in his person. Commensurately, New Testament authors portray the church, which emerged after Christ's resurrection and the sending of the Spirit, as the anticipation of the eschatological gathering of the entire people of God.'

Restorative Communities

A local church model: St John's Darlinghurst and street violence

In the first part of the chapter, I noted the importance of 'middle-level action' and 'third places' in the practice of restorative justice in two Sydney communities. I will now describe one particular case in more detail in order to develop a model for the distinctive role of the *Christian* community as a site for restorative justice. The case study involved local small business owners, street violence and a church, St John's Anglican Church East Sydney. The church is centrally located in its neighbourhood with surrounding streets comprising the third wealthiest and fifth poorest localities in Sydney. Known locally as 'the Cross' (short for 'Kings Cross'), and similar to many inner-city neighbourhoods around the world, east Sydney's villages traditionally drew people across a wide range of social strata including international tourists and backpackers, visiting sailors, the wealthy and influential, the marginalised and street people, the elderly and those suffering from addictions and mental health issues. The re-gentrification of recent decades generated debate and conflict, often witnessed as abuse and violence on the streets. A flash point erupted when a proliferation of footpath cafes and places with alfresco dining displaced 'street people' who had long-established business dealings (primarily prostitution and drug dealing) on the same footpaths. These were conducted within informal – but clearly demarcated – territories. Satisfactory resolution to the ensuing conflict was elusive despite a strong police presence

and advocacy from the local Chamber of Commerce. St John's church had a history of caring for people in need and making abusive or violent people accountable through restorative justice conferences it facilitated.

The church responded to escalating street violence by hosting a training day for local business owners and the staff of local government agencies. It was attended by approximately 90 participants. The training started with a gospel presentation of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10). A role play depicting a typical confrontation between shop owners and street people was then presented with small group discussion facilitated by church staff. Key principles and critical practices from restorative justice were presented followed by a re-run of the conflict modeled on restorative justice ideals. The training day generated spirited conversation and goodwill between the various groups (including a handful of street people). The impact spilled over into the local community which created opportunities for further training and collaboration.[45]

A number of causative factors were apparent in the church's positive contribution to resolving the issue of violence in its local neighbourhood. They were based on a demonstration of the community disciplines of restorative justice that were described in the previous chapter. First, the church observed

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[45] The forum was reported on by Pam Walker, "Defusing Street Crime," *Wentworth Courier*, 1 May 2002, 6 The background issues are described in Geoff Broughton, "Reading the Bible through the Lens of the Street," in *Reflections on a Remarkable Church* (ed. Brisbane; Redfern: Currency Press, 2007), 103-105. The broader context is outlined in Geoff Broughton, "On the Doorstep: Places for Hospitality, Conversation and Mission," *St Mark's Review* (2004): 20-27.

victims and wrongdoers of the violence and remembered both without abandoning either. Second, it desired justice and reconciliation for all the stakeholders. Third, the church's commitment to justice and restorative practices were transparent in the local neighbourhood because it publicly nurtured and celebrated 'forgiveness with accountability'. Fourth, it willingly absorbed the cost of practicing forgiveness and fostering reconciliation. Another factor was the readiness to embrace the processes, skills, principles and outcomes of more secular approaches. For example, St John's Anglican Church was a respected and integral part of the 'web' of local relationships that existed between police, local business owners, government agencies and those on the streets. The clergy and staff functioned as middle-level actors and the church's community centre functioned as a 'third place' for many of the homeless and displaced people of the street. For my purposes this case study must offer more than an illustration of successful restorative justice practice.[46] An account (and any model flowing from it) of how restorative justice is strengthened and deepened by its location in the church requires theological and biblical contributions that transcend secular approaches or habits of Christian discipleship.[47]

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[46] Dependency on anecdotes that are not accompanied by rigorous investigation is a regrettable trait of the restorative justice movement.

[47] Bonhoeffer, *DBWE* 1:300 demonstrates that theological, sociological and other perspectives must not be considered in isolation from each other because any 'theory of the church' must ask about the conditions under which the church takes shape in within the world.