

GoNorth! Fennoscandia 2008

Module 2: Globalization & Tolerance - Chat #5

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Welcome to the SECOND CHAT on the topic of Globalization & Tolerance!

Background: When people use the term globalization, they could be using it to describe economic, political, environmental, or scientific issues, as well as describing the interchange of culture around the world. To globalize is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "to extend to other or all parts of the globe; make worldwide."

Language loss is currently happening in epidemic proportions around the world. Some of the loss can be attributed to the globalization of the English language. People around the world are learning and using English as it is emerging as the dominant language for many aspects of communication. E-mail, faxes, the Internet, air travel, cell phones, and camcorders are here to stay, keeping us connected with friends and family all around the world. Perhaps because it seems to be so simple and effortless, we rarely find the time to think about the magic that occurs as a result of increased communication.

Cultures, ways of life, and languages are being shared; thus, we are growing to understand and appreciate the cultural diversity of our world. The other side of the story is that because of our increased communication abilities, the world is becoming smaller. Cultures and languages are blending together or are simply disappearing. The challenge is how to live in a global community while attempting to strengthen and preserve the many cultures found in it.

As cultures rub elbows, another issue arises as well. What degree of welcome, respect, and tolerance do we have for other cultures with which we come into contact? Many of us experience this on a personal level when a new kid enters the classroom from another country or from a cultural group that is quite different from our own. For some people, the first inclination is to want to learn about that person. But sadly, for others, the first inclination is to make fun of that person, engage in ethnic or racial name calling, bully him or her, or even to participate in violence against the person's family or cultural group. All of these things violate basic human rights. What ingredients go into tolerance for others' differences? How can we learn to live within our own culture and yet be citizens of a diverse world?

Some questions to possibly open the chat with or discuss prior to the LIVE chat!

How do we show tolerance toward those who differ from ourselves? Are you tolerant of other people, their habits and customs?

What is the value of learning another language? What can you learn about another country by learning to speak its language?

Is it important to preserve Native cultures?

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About our Speaker: Reverend Brad Froslee

The Reverend Brad Froslee grew up on a farm near Vining, Minnesota, and is a graduate of Henning High School, Henning, MN. Brad went on to attend St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN (where he double-majored in political science and religion, with concentrations in the areas of comparative politics and religion), followed by the Harvard Divinity School at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA.

Throughout high school and college, Brad was active in choir, student government, 4-H, and Habitat for Humanity. Brad also spent summers during college working in camping ministry at Luther Crest Bible Camp near Alexandria, MN.

During his studies at Harvard, Brad worked with First Lutheran Church, Lynn, and Boston University. Brad was involved in community organizing, developing an urban day camp for youth in Lynn, working on issues facing refugees, walking with a congregation in addressing the issue of sexuality, and teaching confirmation and leading youth programs. Brad completed his Clinical Pastoral Education unit at Stanford University Hospital in Palo Alto, CA.

Following his theological and clinical training, Brad spent one year writing poetry and working at an HIV/AIDS residential care unit before focusing his attention on an additional year of studies in the areas of pastoral care and preaching at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. Brad then traveled to Oakland, California, and served for one year as an intern at Resurrection Lutheran Church. In Oakland, Brad worked with issues of diversity, homelessness, African/African-American planning, community organizing, and continued his work with youth and families.

Following temporary employment with the Minnesota 4-H Foundation, Target, and a month of study in Guatemala, Brad was called to serve St. Luke Presbyterian Church in Minnetonka, MN.

Brad has had the opportunity to travel to Russia, Hawaii, Washington, D.C., and Chicago through 4-H; has spent time in Haiti and on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota through work at St. Luke Presbyterian Church; and has spent time studying in England and traveling in Europe. As a pastor, Brad has been involved in creating opportunities for learning and conversation with people from different backgrounds.

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GoNorth! Education Basecamp: Good Morning Everyone! We are so glad that you could join us today. This is our second chat on the topic of Globalization and Tolerance. Brad is here and ready for your questions!

GoNorth! Expert: Hi! Great to be with you all this morning.

Brian hancockpark: what do you do when you have free time

GoNorth! Expert: I volunteer with several organizations that help other people...and I enjoy running, swimming and doing genealogy.

Michael Kim From Hancock Park: Are you happy to chat with us today?

GoNorth! Expert: Yes, I hear that you all are learning about diversity and globalization--and these are things that really interest me.

Arianna Hancock Park: Do you sometimes have to look in other points of views to solve problems?

GoNorth! Expert: Definitely. I find it helpful to look at topics and issues from a variety of view points. This last fall I spent a week in Arizona and Mexico learning about immigration issues and people crossing the border. I met with people from Mexico and Central America, Border patrol folks, and people trying to make a difference. It was great to have a variety of perspectives and learn from lots of different people.

Arianna Hancock Park: Do you know how to speak any other languages?

GoNorth! Expert: I have studied Norwegian and e-mail with relatives in Norway in Norwegian. I've also studied some Russian...and some ancient Greek.

Jeffrey Hancock Park: What's your job?

GoNorth! Expert: I serve as a pastor.

Dylan Arrazati Hancock Park: What religion are you in?

GoNorth! Expert: I am Christian.

Zachary Roth Hancock Park: What's a pastor?

GoNorth! Expert: A pastor is someone who works in a church...and is asked to help take care of people, to preach, teach, and share communion and baptisms.

Arianna Hancock Park: Do you like to eat food from other culture?

GoNorth! Expert: Yes, I love Thai, Chinese, Greek, Turkish, Italian food...and I also love lefse!

Alexandria Hancock: Did you like growing up in a farm in Minnesota?

GoNorth! Expert: I really enjoyed growing up on a farm in Minnesota. I learned a lot about taking care of animals, care for the land, and working with other people. My dad still runs his farm...so sometimes I get to go back and help.

Temuulenhancockpark: Do you have any culture?

GoNorth! Expert: I am American, but my ancestors are from Norway, Finland, Germany, and England.

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Jeffrey Hancock Park 2: Have you ever faced prejudice before?

GoNorth! Expert: I have faced prejudice. Some people judge others by what they look like, how they live, where they are from. At times I have been different from others and have found out that there is prejudice, name-calling, bullying, etc.

Eddy from hancock park: How do YOU solve problems?

GoNorth! Expert: When it comes to solving problems I tend to learn about the particular issue (or where others are coming from) sometimes that means reading, talking with others (some times experts in an area), thinking through the best ways to make a decision, and acting.

Zsipporah: Have you ever been somewhere where you don't know the languages?

GoNorth! Expert: I have been places where I haven't know the language. I spent six weeks traveling around Europe--France, Italy, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic--and had to learn to pick up little phrases, use body language, and just try to learn new things.

Martin 4th grade Breck School: Have you ever been a part of another culture's religious activities?

GoNorth! Expert: Yes. I have had great opportunities to go to Yom Kippur and Passover events from the Jewish tradition, I have gone to Native American ceremonies, and have gone to an Islamic mosque. Also, a good friend of mine is a Buddhist Vietnamese monk and I have been to his Buddhist temple and have spent time talking and learning with him.

cres 5-C: Why do you think racial bullying has increased over time?

GoNorth! Expert: It seems that there is quite a bit of racial bulling today. My guess is that we are actually more tolerant and understanding today, but that we hear of more events in the news. I think there was just as much if not more bullying in the past.

Johann Wilson from Hancock Park: When did you start being a pastor?

GoNorth! Expert: I have been a pastor for four years.

CRES 5-C Fuji: Have you ever used the term don't judge a book by its cover when any of the prejudice has happened?

GoNorth! Expert: I have. And I realize that I am not always perfect. When I was in high school I had a good friend who was "bigger" than other kids and she would get teased. It was easy to not say anything or just go along with the teasing. This was completely wrong, but sometimes in school it can be hard to stand up to others. I think I learned a valuable lesson and try to stand up more to others teasing or bullying today.

Eddy from hancock park: where are you right now?

GoNorth! Expert: I am in the Base Camp Headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Eddy from hancock park: Have you ever had a time when people didn't have tolerance?

GoNorth! Expert: There have been times. I have worked in communities and churches where there has not been tolerance for new people (immigrants) moving in, I have also seen people use race, sexual orientation, and other things to hurt others.

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Jeffrey Hancock Park 2: Who or what inspired you to become a pastor?

GoNorth! Expert: I love working with people...and for me, personally, spirituality and faith are important...and I love history and study. So this is a great fit!

C.R.E.S.Lightning: What is your favorite culture?

GoNorth! Expert: I don't know that I have a favorite. I think there are incredible things that each culture can share with others--be it types of food, how they care for the earth, how they care for others, history, art, medicine, etc.

Guest: How do you handle people who exclude others because of their race?

GoNorth! Expert: I tend to ask people to think of one time that they have been excluded or teased--what did that look like? what did that feel like? Then to think about what it would be like if we could share our stories and respect each other. In some places I have led five or six week groups on how to welcome others and learn from each other.

cres 5-C: Did you ever do a chat like this before?

GoNorth! Expert: I was able to do a chat with Go North! last year...and I came back again this year because it was so much fun talking with folks like you.

Team Freya (CRES): Why do some people do racial violence?

GoNorth! Expert: I think that racial violence often happens because people are scared, because they don't understand difference, or they are unhappy with who they are--or with their own life. When people are scared, feel alone, don't understand, or are unhappy they feel that one way to respond is to pick on, tease, or hurt others. It's not a good response, but it is a response that some people choose.

homecroft student: Is there any certain country where you personally like the religion?

GoNorth! Expert: I enjoy studying lots of different religions. Personally, I am a Christian and enjoy learning more about my own tradition, but I also am fascinated by Buddhist, Islam, and Judaism.

C.R.E.S. lightning: What usually makes you want to visit a culture?

GoNorth! Expert: I like to visit different places to learn more or because I have met people from a particular country or area.

Team Freya (CRES): If everybody had the same culture, do you think that would help stop wars? I know there would be setbacks though.

GoNorth! Expert: Cultures seem to develop in a lot of different ways, and I don't think it is possible to have just one culture. For example, if you have two towns right next to each other and they are all friends but one group has a baseball team that plays a team from the other town there can become a rivalry...we tend to develop lots of different types of cultures and we simple need to find ways to talk about who we are and ways that we can live together better.

homecroft student: What is the most rewarding thing you've done in your life?

GoNorth! Expert: I have had a lot of great opportunities to travel, to meet new people, to go to school...I've felt quite rewarded in each of these. One thing that has been particularly exciting has been starting a camp for kids who may not fit in in their schools or communities because they are different.

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GoNorth! Education Basecamp: Hey Everyone! These are fabulous questions! We have about 10 minutes left...enough time for a few more questions.

Jordan: How do you feel about globalization and the fact that wherever you travel it seems popular culture has taken over? Do you think globalization is a good thing?

GoNorth! Expert: I think there are parts of globalization that are helpful. We are more connected and can learn from each other faster--this is often good when it comes to science, responding to natural disasters, etc. But popular culture and economic globalization can also hurt communities and countries by causing people to lose jobs, to stop using their own language, or losing some of their cultural values and heritage.

Brian hancockpark: has there been time when people didn't play with you because how you look and the skin color

GoNorth! Expert: There was a time when I didn't fit in because I wasn't very good at sports, especially in elementary. I got better as I got a bit older, but that was hard when I was in elementary and wasn't as good at sports as some of the other kids.

eres 5-C: Do you think judging people by their religion is bad?

GoNorth! Expert: I do think that judging people by their religion is bad. I think that we need to create better understanding of all cultures and people--and religion is a part of that. We can learn a lot from each other.

Jordan: Why do you believe people are not tolerant of each other

GoNorth! Expert: It seems easier to find difference with others than to look at ways that we are similar. I think we need to recognize that we all have gifts to bring and we have some shared experiences. I do think that society (family, schools, communities, countries) at times create a fear of people who are different...and it is important for us to question why we are different, what we can learn from each other.

GoNorth! Education Basecamp: While Brad is answering his last question, we want to thank you for joining us today. We had so much fun and we hope that you not only enjoyed yourself, but learned a lot too-

GoNorth! Education Basecamp: A BIG thank you to Brad for sharing his time with us today!!!

Eddy from hancock park: Do you think to look in other points of views is a good way to solve problems

GoNorth! Expert: One saying that you may have heard is to "walk a mile in your neighbor's shoes." I think it is important to look at why people say, act, live in a particular way...to look at other points of view and to learn from them--not to say that it will always be right for us, but that we can learn from each other and solve problems when we work together.

Ms. Fox, Homecroft, St. Paul: I'm glad that we are taking time to understand each other. I have been learning a lot about the Sami culture and it is interesting!

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CRES 5-C Fuji: THANK YOU FROM TEAM FUJI

Cres 5-C: A big thank you for answering our questions from Team Fuji and Eric

GoNorth! Expert: Thanks! It's been fun to be with you.

Thanks!

From all of us at Team GoNorth!, Thank You for joining us today! Join us again next week on Wednesday, March 12th at 11AM CST for our second chat on the topic of Globalization and Tolerance with Reverend Brad Froslee.