

**Presentation to ATG Panel Discussion on:
“Restorative Justice: A View from the Perspective of Parenting Training in the
Greater Mona Valley”.**

KM's Assignment: Provide a background to the Vision, Mission and Work being Done in the Greater Mona Valley (GMV) by the Anglican Togetherness Group (ATG), as this relates to Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice is a process in which victims, perpetrators and those indirectly affected by (an) act/acts of injustice(s) are brought together to facilitate a reconciliation and restoration of a state of peace and right relations between and among all parties that have been affected by the injustice. This approach seeks to resolve disputes or acts of injustice affecting persons in the community in a manner that all parties find acceptable and therefore results in restoration of peace and harmony among all the parties directly or indirectly affected by the original act of harm/injustice.

The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) currently promotes this approach as one of several alternatives to the traditional method of addressing such matters exclusively through the courts, as quite often verdicts rendered by the courts -even when judicially sound, do not satisfactorily resolve the hurt or injustice felt by both perpetrator and victim, as well as their relatives and other members of the community.

ATG/GMVP strongly supports this initiative and will be collaborating with MOJ and other partners in the roll-out of the initiative in the GMV, as it considers this to be consistent with and supportive of the ATG/GMVP's mission to transform the GMV. Fundamental dimensions of this transformation are to confront and root out injustice; promote/facilitate the achievement of peace and right relations among all elements in the GMV; and promote/facilitate peace and reconciliation among these groups. This undertaking, through its various programmes/components, also provide very good scope for the pursuit of the 5 Marks of Mission of the Anglican Community; i.e. to Tell, Teach, Tend, Transform and Treasure; to which the ATG is strongly committed.

The GMV manifests both contemporary and historic injustices which continue to negatively impact many of its citizens and communities. The gross injustices inflicted by slavery, as well as those that are of more modern socio-economic circumstances, can all be readily identified within the GMV. In particular, the consequences of slavery on family life and values, are easily discernible. It is in this context that the flagship initiatives of the GMVP – in particular its Parenting Programme and proposed Youth/Early-childhood Initiatives, must be seen as being key responses in the quest to confront the gross injustices that are major impediments to the realisation of a just and equitable society, and communities that facilitate realisation of the full potential by all of its members.

It is the capacity of humans to live together in community, as well as their vastly superior intelligence, that differentiates humans from other animals and enables them to enjoy a superior quality of life. It is living in community that affords humans physical protection, social diversity and the ability to enjoy the benefits of specialization/division of labour, as well as all the other marvels of

civilization. However, it also requires mutual respect; regard for the rights/interests of others; and in particular, the love and practice of justice.

In it in this context that we must view Jesus's distillation of the original 10 commandments into just 2 – to love God with all our heart and our neighbours as ourselves. It is also in this context that we must understand the mission of the ATG/GMVP to transform the GMV and pursue it as an essential prerequisite for building community and responding to Jesus' commandment to love God and our neighbours as ourselves.

It is against this background that the ATG/GMVP eagerly embraces the opportunity to join with other agencies/entities in pursuit of the modality of Restorative Justice, recognizing this as a key initiative towards its focal goal of transformation of the GMV.

Keith Miller