

***Baptism and Incorporation into the Body of Christ, the Church: Bridgefolk's response to ministerial sexual misconduct by John D. Rempel, February 17, 2021***

The Bridgefolk board is aware that Mennonite Church Eastern Canada recently terminated the ministerial credentials of John D. Rempel of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, due to ministerial sexual misconduct.

We seek to stand in solidarity with survivors and prioritize their voices and experiences. As an organization that has turned to John for a variety of leadership roles at our conferences since its beginning in 2002, we grieve for the victim-survivors harmed by his actions and honor their courage in coming forward.

John has taken some steps to acknowledge his wrongdoing and expressed his desire to seek forgiveness and make amends. We hope that he will take responsibility for his abuse of power and the harm he caused in a way that is responsive to the expressed needs of survivors. Should there be others who come forward in the future, we will support them in their truth-telling.

*"Baptism and Incorporation into the Body of Christ, the Church"* is a profoundly collaborative work in which John was one of five Mennonite delegation members, six Lutherans, and five Roman Catholics engaging in these Trilateral conversations from 2012 to 2017. He also shared in the writing and editing work over the past three years.

We at Bridgefolk believe that the Trilateral Report contains crucial dialogue among these three Christian traditions that deserves to be read and studied. It is not a document produced by us, yet it is our responsibility to let readers know that a member of the Mennonite delegation engaged in abusive behavior. Bridgefolk continues to post the Trilateral Report on its website. Some survivors and those who walk with them will not be able to use the Report; we respect and support this.

We hope that those who study the Report will not dismiss the complexity of these issues and will instead wrestle with, evaluate, and learn from the Report in the full context of these events.

As Bridgefolk, our common commitment to Gospel non-violence compels us to listen humbly and learn from those who have been harmed, and to courageous truth-telling about abuses of power within our churches and institutions.