

PEACE NOTES

Published by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

Issue No. 95, Winter 2008

THANK YOU

*For your peacemaking ministries
following Jesus Christ*

*&
For your support of the
Peacemaking Offering*

From The Staff of the
Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

And the leaves of the tree are for
the healing of the nations.

— Revelation 22:2

Called to Be Peacemakers

On the first Saturday morning in October, twenty-seven Presbyterians gathered in San Diego, CA for a one-day retreat on peacemaking. They came from ten different churches, including a Sudanese-American church. Many participants did not know each other, but they were drawn together by their call to be peacemakers. Throughout the morning they were led in processes to help them explore this call and find constructive ways of integrating it in their churches. Before leaving that afternoon, they briefly shared their plans. Some planned to join San Diego Presbytery's peacemaking committee; others planned to organize a peacemaking committee in their church or work with an existing peacemaking group. All seemed encouraged to find other Presbyterian peacemakers. The retreat was organized by the Rev. Martha Cross Sexton, chair of the presbytery's Peacemaking Committee and led by Ervin Bullock, Associate for Network Support of the Peacemaking Program. ■

2007 International Peacemakers

Presbyterians in forty-nine presbyteries learned about peacemaking through this year's International Peacemakers Program. Ten International Peacemakers from nine countries traveled to different presbyteries in the United States to tell their stories of peace and justice. Three Presbyterian colleges hosted International Peacemakers, as did Campbell Farm in Central Washington Presbytery and the Interreligious Task Force on Central America in Cleveland. Two International Peacemakers spoke at the World Mission '07 event in Louisville. Each year, our partner churches in other countries identify pastors, church leaders, laypersons, academics, or other community leaders to



The 2007 International Peacemakers and Interfaith Listening Team received their orientation at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary's Law Lodges.

participate in the program. This year, individuals were chosen who had experience in ministries of nonviolence. Next year, the International Peacemakers will be individuals with experience in addressing poverty. They will be available from September 26 through October 19, 2008. For more information, visit www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/intl/international.htm. Specific information for 2008 will be available in mid-April. ■

Photo by Joe Williams.

2008 PEACEMAKING CONFERENCE

**Sowing Mustard Seeds:
Working for God's Justice—
Confronting Poverty**

**July 15-19, 2008
Chapman University
Orange, CA**



Today globalization creates new forms of poverty with more extreme disparities between the rich and the poor. The annual income of the richest 1 percent is equal to that of the poorest 57 percent, and 24,000 people die each day from poverty and malnutrition. The majority of those in poverty are women and children. The number of people living in absolute poverty on less than one dollar per day continues to increase (Accra Confession, World Alliance of Reformed Churches). In 2006, as many as 36.5 million people in the United States lived in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau).

Jesus calls us to be aware of the systems that impoverish people and, through the parable of the mustard seed, teaches us of the power of small acts of peaceful resistance to crack those systems open.

Gathering in Southern California as an intergenerational group, participants in the conference will:

- ▶ deepen our awareness of the causes and effects of poverty;
- ▶ explore the effects of empire—the convergence of economic, political, cultural, and military systems that force and facilitate the flow of wealth and power from vulnerable persons, communities, and countries to the more powerful; and

- ▶ be equipped to live as disciples of Jesus who work to ensure that all of God's children are cared for and have places at the table through
 - organizing
 - advocating
 - joining existing campaigns and movements
 - educating
 - networking and
 - cultivating peaceful resistance to empire.

KEYNOTE PRESENTERS

- ▶ **Anuradha Mittal**, Executive Director, The Oakland Institute
- ▶ **Roberto Jordan**, Reformed Churches in Argentina, Consultant to the Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth Project, World Alliance of Reformed Churches
- ▶ **Lisa Schirch**, Program Director, 3D Security Initiative and Professor of Peacebuilding, Eastern Mennonite University

CONFERENCE LEADERS

- ▶ **Mark Lomax**—Theological Reflector
- ▶ **Cindy Edwards**—Community Builder
- ▶ **Patrick Evans**—Music Leader
- ▶ **Dianna Wright**—Worship Coordinator

Details on the conference will be posted at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/conferences/2008.htm.

Interfaith Connections

The 2007 Interfaith Listening Team built and nurtured interfaith connections and addressed stereotypes through dialogue and direct action.



Hadja Sharifa Mujalla and the Rev. Marilou Rezane listen intently during the orientation.

The Rev. Marilou Rezane and Hadja Sharifa Mujalla, both from Mindanao in the Philippines, talked with over 1,600 people about Christian-Muslim relations, human rights, and ecological concerns. They visited six presbyteries and engaged with people from churches, community colleges, and state universities. A visit to National Capital Presbytery in Washington, D.C. included an intense day and a half of briefings on the current

situation in the Philippines with congressional representatives and their staffs.

The Interfaith Listening Teams program brings inter-religious teams from a variety of countries to the United States for visits in local communities. For more information, visit www.pcusa.org/interfaith/. Learn more about the situation in the Philippines at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/actnow/actnow.htm#philippines. ■

Photo by Joe Williams.

Importing Hope: Olive Oil Partnerships and More

From the moment he arrived, Peter Mann saw how important the olive harvest is for the wellbeing of the Palestinian people. A participant in the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program's 2006 travel/study seminar in Israel and Palestine, Peter saw the grave economic realities in the occupied territories and wanted to make a difference. Upon his return to Minnesota, he launched Import Peace (www.importpeace.org), which sells fair trade, organic Palestinian olive oil and contributes all profits to charity.

The 216th General Assembly (2008) made a commitment to "development and compassionate action in Palestine." One avenue for this effort is to help



An olive grove outside Jerusalem.

Photo by Debby Vial.

expand international markets for Palestinian olive oil, embroidery, carved olive wood, and other products. Consider buying olive oil or other fair-trade items to support Palestinian farmers, artisans, and their communities.

Learn more about Import Peace and other options for purchasing olive oil at www.pcusa.org/worldwide/weekofprayer/olive_oil.pdf.

Learn more about Palestinian crafts at www.pcusa.org/worldwide/weekofprayer/crafts.pdf. ■

Iraq Network Created

The inaugural meeting of this new network was held in Louisville in June. The Iraq Network is an ecumenical network that includes members from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, and the United Church of Christ. This reflects the long history of the United Mission in Iraq supported by these three churches since 1924. The network is open to congregations and individuals with an interest in



Iraqi Presbyterian young people gather.

Photo by Victor Makari.

► partnership and solidarity with the Protestant congregations in Iraq,

- Kurdish ministries,
- refugee services, and
- education, advocacy, and peacemaking in Iraq.

Learn more by sending an email to richards@comporium.net. Larry and Evie Richards serve as the coordinators of the network. ■

Violence in Myanmar

Myanmar (Burma) has been under military rule since 1962. The current junta is accused of human rights abuses, including the forcible relocation of civilians, the widespread use of forced labor for the armed forces (including the buying and selling of children), and violent acts towards peaceful protesters.

The general secretary of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, the Rev. Dr. Dengthuama, says, "The

Christian church is called on to be a community of grace, living among all the realities of today's world." The PC(USA) and many other faith communities are responding as this "community of grace" through prayers, resources, and financial help. Learn how you can join the church in sympathy and action for all those in suffering in Myanmar at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/actnow/actnow.htm#myanmar. ■

Pray daily with our sisters and brothers in Christ in Iraq.

www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/iraq/today.htm



Find prayers for peace, for those serving in the military, and for all touched by the war in Iraq at

www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/iraq/prayers.htm.

THREE THINGS TO PRAY FOR...

- **Pray for the lives and safety of children and youth in the Democratic Republic of Congo.** The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reports that many young people remain involved in fighting across the country.
- **Pray for the people of Haiti and the passage of H Res 241, which would provide immediate debt cancellation for Haiti.** Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere; its international debt is estimated at 1.4 billion U.S. dollars and is rising. Instead of being able to invest in education, health care or the environment, Haiti's people are forced to repay a debt they did not incur or benefit from.
- **Pray for the people of Bangladesh affected by Cyclone Sidr.** In the aftermath of this category 4 storm that hit Bangladesh on November 15, 2007, more than 3,100 people are reported dead, many areas of the country have roads that have been washed away, and transportation and telecommunications links have been disrupted.

For Peoples Everywhere

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on September 13, 2007. This is the first declaration that honors collectively held rights of indigenous peoples. Created with substantial participation by the rights-holders themselves, the Declaration took over 20 years of negotiation before adoption by the UN Human Rights Council and then by the General Assembly. The declaration relates to long-standing human rights concerns of many Presbyterians.

June L. Lorenzo, Laguna

Pueblo and Navajo, is a Presbyterian elder and attorney. She is a member of the PC(USA) General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission and the tribal council at Laguna Pueblo in New Mexico. Lorenzo was present at the Declaration's passage at the UN and spoke to its significance for the work of the PC(USA): "Many issues in which the church is already engaged are included in the Declaration. Globally, the most biologically-diverse areas are inhabited by indigenous people. So people in our denomination who care about stewardship of the Earth

could look at preservation of these areas by supporting indigenous peoples' rights surrounding their lands and territories."

The Declaration addresses concerns that affect all humanity—the right of peoples to survive, the right to a safe environment, and the right to protection against military occupation. Lorenzo affirms that it provides "a holistic sense of who we are

and what we want as peoples, not just for indigenous peoples but for peoples everywhere."

Follow the UN's work on indigenous issues at www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/. ■



Photo by Sallie Charesma.

Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Council members prepare for the 2007 Bear Dance parade in Towaoc, CO. The Ute Mountain Ute Presbyterian/Methodist Church plays a central role in the community. Learn about the PC(USA) Office for Native American Ministries at www.pcusa.org/nativeamerican.

Climate Change Refugees of Pacific Island Nations

- ▶ There are at least 20 million environmental refugees worldwide—more than those displaced by war and political repression combined (United Nations University - Institute for Environmental and Human Security).
- ▶ Nine of the ten most vulnerable countries to climate change are small islands (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

- ▶ Pacific Islanders from the Vanuatu chain have been relocated due to repeated flooding, soil erosion, and aggressive waves caused by climate change (United Nations Environmental Programme).



Photo by Bruce Whearty.

In Vanuatu, the PC(USA) works with mission personnel,

a partner church, and Onesua Presbyterian College. See

www.pcusa.org/worldwide/vanuatu/index.htm for more information. Learn about the PC(USA)'s work with other Pacific Island nations at www.pcusa.org/worldwide/asia.htm.

Learn about Presbyterian work on climate change at www.pcusa.org/hunger/features/climate.htm and from Presbyterians for Restoring Creation at www.prcweb.org. ■

Human Trafficking Affects Indigenous Peoples

- ▶ There are almost one million self-identified Aboriginal (indigenous) people in Canada. Aboriginal women are the most vulnerable population in Canada due to marginalization, poverty, abuse, racism, and trafficking. Over 40 percent of Aboriginal women live in poverty and are likely to suffer violence (Erin Wolski, "Sexual Trafficking of Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada").
- ▶ Domestic workers in Guatemala, many of whom are indigenous women and girls, are denied key labor protections and are among the most exploited and abused workers in the world. Most domestic workers are migrants. Their dependency on their employer increases their vulnerability to abuses (Human Rights Watch).

PC(USA) Work on Human Trafficking:

- ▶ Presbyterian Women Justice and Peace Committee www.pcusa.org/pw/justice/links/2007-issue4.htm
- ▶ "The Worth of Women: Trafficking in the United States of America," Winter 2007 issue of *Threads of Justice*, the Women's Advocacy newsletter www.pcusa.org/womensadvocacy/thread-justice/winter-07/contents.htm
- ▶ Synod of the Northeast Overture on the Trafficking of Children (2005) www.synodne.org/article.php?story=20051109125345165&query=trafficking ■

Displacement and Indigenous Peoples in Colombia

- ▶ Colombia contains the world's second largest population of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) with a non-official estimate of 3.8 million (Latin American Working Group).
- ▶ Indigenous peoples make up 8 percent of IDPs even though they constitute only 3 percent of the population. All of Colombia's 84 indigenous groups have endured killings of their leaders and forced displacement of their members (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre).
- ▶ Since the start of 2007, more than 10,000 members of

the Awá indigenous people have been displaced. In September, more than 1,000 people, nearly half of them children, were forced from their land and took refuge in a school to escape violence (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees).

Learn about the PC(USA)'s work in Colombia at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/actnow/actnow.htm#colombia.

Learn about the PC(USA) Accompaniment Program with the Presbyterian Church in Colombia at www.presbypeacefellowship.org/colombia/accompany.php. ■

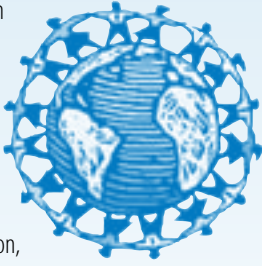
The Presbyterian UN Office represents the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the United Nations. Staff members help to equip Presbyterians for discipleship by training them to put their faith into action in the global arena. The Presbyterian UN Office bears witness to Jesus Christ by advocating the concerns of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) General Assemblies to the United Nations. The Presbyterian UN Office is one way in which the church responds to Christ's call to bring good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives and let the oppressed go free.

RESOURCES & EVENTS

2008 Ecumenical Advocacy Days Claiming A Vision of True Security

▶ **March 7–10, 2008**

Participants will learn about domestic and international policies that move toward a new vision of true human security that seeks not only the “absence of tension, but the presence of justice,” to paraphrase the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. During lobby visits on Monday, participants will call our elected officials to conceive and implement new visions of security in our homes, neighborhoods, and world. Over 1,000 religious advocates from an array of Christian communions are expected for this gathering. For registration information, visit www.advocacydays.org/conference/glance.php.



Peace and Justice Week Ghost Ranch • Abiquiui, NM

▶ **July 28 - August 3**



Join the exploration of *Paths toward Peace and Justice: Spirituality, Earth-Care, and the Prophetic Word in a Time of Violence*. Each morning will feature seminars on a variety of issues and artistic expressions related to peacemaking, justice and earth-care. Afternoons will include optional activities and free time to enjoy Ghost Ranch. Evenings will center on all-Ranch worship. This event is a partnership between Ghost Ranch, the Witherspoon Society, the Peacemaking Program, the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, and Presbyterians for Restoring Creation.

Africa's Children

One of the most tragic consequences of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa is the increasing number of vulnerable children. Millions of children have been affected by the loss of one or both parents as a result of AIDS. HIV/AIDS has added to the myriad of obstacles to overcoming chronic poverty at household, community, and national levels. This resource reviews the models of care existing in sub-Saharan Africa and evaluates them in the context of the African culture and the realities of limited resources. Additionally, this resource includes discernment questions for congregations and individuals who want to help. Copies of this free resource are available from PDS (shipping/handling costs apply). Order PDS# 25384-07-003 by calling 800-524-2612. Download the resource at www.pcusa.org/aids-international.



SPECIAL OFFER



When God's People Travel Together

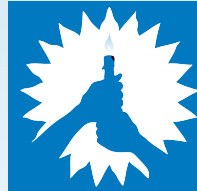
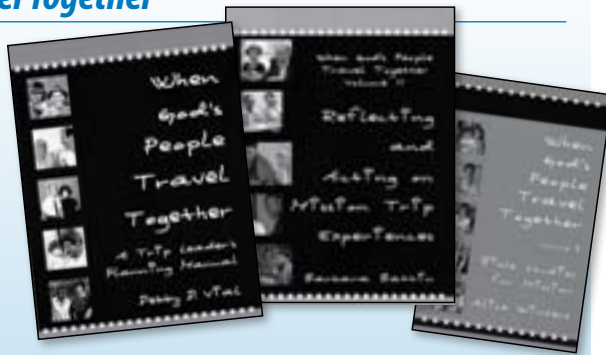
These resources contain all that is needed to plan a successful mission trip. They provide guidelines and procedures to follow before, during, and after the trip.

Volume I: *A Trip Leader's Planning Manual*

Volume II: *Reflecting and Acting on Mission Trip Experiences*

Volume III: *Bible Studies for Mission*

Purchase all three volumes for the special price of \$20.00. Shipping and handling charges will apply. Call 800-524-2612 to order PDS# 24358-07-014.



**Christian
PEACE
Witness
for Iraq**

▶ **March 7, 2008**

If the United States continues to occupy Iraq, the Christian Peace Witness for Iraq (CPWI) will create another opportunity for Christians to “speak their peace” through worship and witness. CPWI will invite people to gather in Washington, D.C. on or near March 7, 2008. Resources will be provided for those who wish to organize local events. Visit www.christianpeacewitness.org/ for details.



Read *Peace Notes* and *Paths of Peace* online

pcusa.org/peacemaking/pubs/pubs.htm#1

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