

PEACE NOTES

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2009 PEACEMAKING OFFERING WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY Sunday, October 4

Your generous gifts make possible peacemaking ministries in your congregation, presbytery and synod, and support the ministries of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program.

www.pcusa.org/peacemakingoffering

Still the Believers' Calling

Plan now to observe the thirtieth anniversary of *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* in 2010. Adopted by the 192nd General Assembly (1980), this report led to a renewed peacemaking emphasis across the church and to the creation of the Peacemaking Offering and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* was written in response to a 1975 call for a study on peacemaking. This time period saw the end of American involvement in the war in Southeast Asia, changing international power dynamics, a nuclear arms race and growing concern for the oppressed. The space program provided images of a beautiful blue marble suspended in space—a reminder of the interrelatedness of life. Moved by a 1978 visit to South Korea, United Presbyterian Women declared peacemaking a mandate for their next triennium. In this context of



An early display by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program.

Photo from the Program's archives.

challenge, hope and the awareness that God was calling the church to something new, a task force was named. As it worked, Presbyterians continued to seek peace and justice in families, congregations, communities and throughout the world. The task force reported in 1980 and the assembly adopted *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*. Download the resource at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/believers.pdf or call (800) 524-2612 to order PDS# OGA-88-047 (\$1.50 plus shipping/handling) and use or adapt the study questions it contains. Watch www.pcusa.org/peacemaking for more information on marking this anniversary. ■

Building Peace in Sudan

RECONCILE is an ecumenical Christian organization created by the New Sudan Council of Churches in 2003 to promote peace-building through training in civic education and trauma healing.



Photo by Debbie Braaksm.

The Rev. Sarafino Modesto leads a workshop.

RECONCILE is called to areas of high inter-ethnic conflict to conduct about twenty workshops each year that train church and community members as agents of healing and reconciliation. Individuals in these communities with a high degree of commitment to peace-building are invited to serve as Key Mobilizers, RECONCILE volunteers who devote one day per week to peace-building. The Rev. Sarafino Modesto was one of several Key Mobilizers who received scholarships to the RECONCILE Peace Institute for courses in Community Based Trauma Healing and Peace Studies & Conflict Transformation. In Sarafino's mountainous home region of Sudan, the Lotuko and Lango

peoples have been engaged in a vicious and prolonged cycle of killing and cattle raiding. At his own initiative and at substantial risk to his own life, Sarafino walked to fifteen mountain villages to meet with Lotuko and Lango headmen and chiefs. He convinced each of them to promise they would only defend their people if they were raided and not make counter raids. Impressed by his passion and commitment, RECONCILE invited Sarafino to join their staff as a Field Coordinator in May 2009. Extra Commitment Opportunity E052032 supports RECONCILE's work. See www.pcusa.org/give for more details. ■

Love God, Love Neighbor

Over 120 individuals attended the Peacemaking Conference and sampled other Big Tent conferences this June in Atlanta. Through the lens of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, peacemakers pondered the reality that being neighbors is a matter of spiritual relationship as well as geographic proximity. The Rev. Dr. Mark Lomax challenged participants to consider how their love of God might inspire them to love neighbors more

fully. Stated Clerk, the Rev. Gradye Parsons, spoke about his role in the church's public witness. A Presbyterian pastor from Iraq reflected on the challenges and opportunities faced by Christians and churches as they remain and contribute to the rebuilding of their country. Peacemakers gathered for a simple meal at North Avenue Presbyterian Church, hosted by the Peacemaking Committee of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.

Amazing stories of ministry in the church and presbytery were shared. The conference included conversations on topics such as Israel and Palestine, Iraq, immigration and more. Field trips visited sites in Atlanta where peacemaking takes place. In the closing worship, participants committed to next steps in



Photo by Mark Koenig.

Over 100 Red Hands that call for no more child soldiers were made at the Peacemaking Program booth at the Big Tent closing celebration.

loving their neighbors. Read more at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/conferences/2009.htm. ■

See and Be Seen



Photo by Sarah Henken.

Accompaniment involves standing with our sisters and brothers in Christ.

Can you give a month to stand with our sisters and brothers in Colombia? Training for the Colombia Accompaniment Program will be held on September 17 to 21, 2009 at Stony Point Center. This program, now in its fifth year, arose from a request by the Presbyterian Church of Colombia (IPC) to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Colombia has suffered four decades of violent internal conflict, exacerbated by an illicit drug trade. In the midst of this violence, the IPC speaks out against human rights abuses. For this it faces harassment. In this program, Presbyterians practice community accompaniment, a ministry of presence with the churches and the displaced communities and human rights leaders with whom they work. The goal is solidarity—to

see and be seen—with the benefit of increasing awareness for accompaniers and, through them, for U.S. churches. Accompaniers attend a training/discernment event to prepare for service. They serve in pairs for one-month terms with the IPC. Some speak no Spanish and have never been involved in Latin America; others have extensive experience in Colombia and special training in trauma counseling, medicine and other skills. Anyone from the PC(USA) or another church, over 21 years of age, with a valid U.S. passport and a heart for this ministry is welcome to apply. The next training is planned for late February or early March 2010. For more information contact Sarah Henken at sarah@presbypeacefellowship.org. ■

POLES OF PEACE



Photo by Madeline Mastrogiacomo.

The peace pole at Afton Presbyterian Church is dedicated.

From different places and traditions, people arrived at the Afton Presbyterian Church (Afton, New York) on June 27. Church and civic leaders, friends and family, a guitar player and a bagpiper gathered to dedicate a peace pole that honors Marguerite “Maggie” Matthews, whose faithful witness included service in the Peace Corps in retirement. The event began with a meal, the quality and quantity of food surpassed only by the joy and blessing of the fellowship. The skirl of the pipes called participants into the sanctuary where a community choir overflowed the choir loft. After prayer and song, public officials

brought words of welcome and reflection. Family and friends shared memories. A brief period of worship in the Quaker fashion was observed. Crosses (a peace pole!) made in Liberia from leftover bullet casings were distributed. After the song “Together We Can Change the World,” the pipes played and participants left the sanctuary to meet by the pole at the front of the church. The dedication followed—dedication of a pole to honor and remember peacemakers and peacemaking—dedication of the participants to seek plant poles of peace in all of life. ■

Cluster Munitions: A Resource Guide for Religions for Peace

Cluster munitions disperse hundreds of bomblets, many of which do not explode on impact but remain where they fall as de facto landmines. They fail to discriminate between combatants and noncombatants and can kill and maim years after they are dropped and the

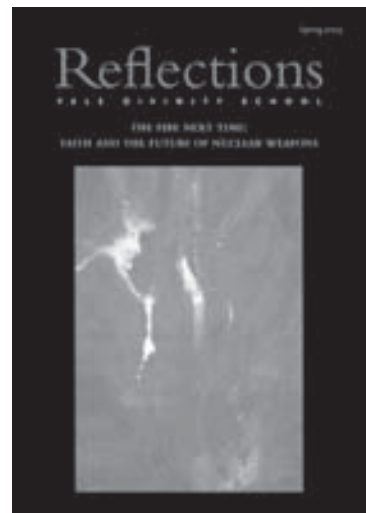
conflict has ended. Download a resource from the World Conference of Religions for Peace on cluster munitions at www.wcrp.org/resources/toolkits/clustermunitions. ■



Toward a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

Since 1946, the General Assembly, acting out of faith in Jesus Christ, has recognized that working for God’s intended order and life abundant involves seeking international disarmament and arms control measures. A new moment

for that work has arrived. President Obama, Senator McCain and others, including former Cold Warriors, have begun to speak of limiting and eliminating nuclear weapons. They have called the U.S. to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. President Obama



Faith and the future of nuclear weapons is the focus of the Spring 2009 issue of *Reflections* by Yale Divinity School. Visit www.yale.edu/reflections for more information.

and Russian President Medvedev have agreed on the basic terms of a treaty to reduce the number of warheads and missiles to the lowest levels since early in the Cold War. Some have applauded this as an important beginning. Others have

criticized it for going too far. Yet others have criticized it for not going far enough. Share your views with your Senators, who will vote on any nuclear weapons treaties. Learn more at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/actnow/actnow.htm#disarm. ■

Advocate for the Congo Conflict Minerals Act

Almost five and a half million people have died due to conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 1998. Millions more have been displaced. The conflict has had a particularly disastrous impact on women and girls, some 500,000 of whom have suffered sexual violence. Children have been and are used as soldiers. Demand for minerals found in the eastern DRC and used in everyday electronics products helps finance the armed groups engaged in this violent struggle. The minerals are cassiterite (tin ore), gold, coltan (tantalum)



United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon meets leaders of the Kitabati camp for Internally Displaced Persons.

and wolframite (a source of tungsten). The Congo Conflict Minerals Act of 2009 (S.891) would provide the authority and direction for the U.S. government to help stop the trade in these

minerals. The bill would require all companies listed on U.S. stock exchanges, including the major electronics companies which are among the largest end-buyers of some of these minerals, to

disclose the origin of their supplies to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. For minerals coming from the DRC or neighboring countries, companies would need to disclose the precise mine of origin. This is a valuable first step toward greater transparency. Urge your Senators to cosponsor the Congo Conflict Minerals Act of 2009. Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for your senators' offices. Find email addresses at www.pcusa.org/washington. Learn more at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/actnow/actnow.htm#congo. ■

Photo by UN Photo/Mark Garten.

New Associate at Presbyterian United Nations Office

The Presbyterian United Nations Office announces the appointment of Jessica Hawkinson as Associate for International Relations and Education. In this one-year term position, Hawkinson will cultivate educational and advocacy programs for the Presbyterian United Nations Office. She will help facilitate the office's long-standing seminar program. Additionally, she will help manage the January term course in conjunction with Columbia Theological



Jessica Hawkinson, Associate for International Relations and Education.

Seminary, coordinate the Presbyterian presence at the Commission on the Status of Women and strengthen Presbyterian participation at official United Nations advocacy sessions. ■

Photo by Ricky Velez-Negron.

Observe the International Day of Peace

September 21 is the International Day of Peace as set by the United Nations General Assembly. Each year this brings a global call for a day of ceasefire and nonviolence. It is a time to reflect on the benefits of peacefully resolving disputes. This year, consider that gun

violence claims some 30,000 lives annually in the United States. What might it look like to observe a day of ceasefire in our country? How might we work to address the tragedy of gun violence? Find resources at www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/worship/worship.htm#dayofpeace. ■



Support Our Partners in the Philippines

Since 2001, hundreds of cases of extrajudicial murder, abduction, illegal detention and torture have been documented against those who work for human rights in the Philippines. Church leaders are among those who have been targeted. Presbyterians support our partners in many ways. We pray. We advocate. We played a role in the release of Berlin Guerrero, a United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) pastor who was abducted and held for over a year. In February, the Moderator of the General Assembly and



Bishop Eliezer Pascua, General Secretary of the UCCP, is among the followers of Jesus who work for human rights in the Philippines.

others were present when UCCP pastor Edwin Egar was abducted and released (see www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/conference-videos.htm). Now we can give. Gifts to a new ECO—E052070, Human Rights in the Philippines—will provide financial support to those in the UCCP who are victims of human rights abuses. See www.pcusa.org/give for details. ■

Photo by Evan Silverstein.

THREE PRAYER CONCERNS

- ▶ *Pray for the people of Pakistan as they seek to address violence between Muslims and Christians.*
- ▶ *Pray for the people of Honduras as they work to maintain and strengthen democracy in their country.*
- ▶ *Pray for those who participate in the International Peacemakers program and the Interfaith Listening Team and for the Presbyterians who host them.*



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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SEE YOU NEXT SUMMER!

2010 Peacemaking Seminar

► August 26-29, 2010 • Ghost Ranch
Abiquiu, NM

Peacemakers from across the country will gather in the sacred space of Ghost Ranch to open ourselves to the Holy Spirit as we dream dreams and make plans for future peacemaking ministries as individuals, congregations and presbyteries.

We will celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* and look forward to future peacemaking ministries following Jesus Christ. This seminar is for young adults and adults.

Registration is limited. Watch www.pcusa.org/peacemaking for more information. ■



► March 19 - 22, 2010
Washington, DC

A Place to Call Home: Immigrants,
Refugees, and Displaced Peoples

Visit www.advocacydays.org for more information. ■

January Term at the UN



► January 11-22, 2010
New York

The Presbyterian United Nations Office and Columbia Theological Seminary will host a Doctor of Ministry Course at the United Nations on the church and children in a changing world. The course will take place on January 11-22, 2010. Interested students should contact the Presbyterian United Nations Office at unseminars@pcusa.org for information on the course and registration. ■

RESOURCES

Praying for Peace Around the Globe

This book, by the late James McGinnis, co-founder of the Institute for Peace and Justice and the Parenting for Peace and Justice Network, invites prayer and action for peace in forty countries and around thirteen peace and justice issues. Order *Praying for Peace* at www.ipj-ppj.org. ■



Songs of Grace

Find over seventy new hymns by the Rev. Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, co-pastor of Limestone Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, DE, that celebrate biblical stories, the church year, sacraments, peacemaking and more. New words, written to well-known hymn tunes, offer expressions of hope, joy and spiritual enrichment. Each hymn comes with a reflection that helps it be a devotional for personal prayer and a resource for worship services. Order *Songs of Grace* at www.upperroom.org. ■



50 Ways to Help Save the Earth

*How You and Your Church Can
Make a Difference*

This guide outlines ways to address global warming, live as followers of Jesus and renew connections with God's creation and our sisters and brothers. Each chapter addresses a topic related to global warming and provides action ideas. Rebecca Barnes-Davies, former coordinator of Presbyterians for Restoring Creation, is the author. Order *50 Ways* at www.cokesbury.com. ■



Read and download *Peace Notes* online

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

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