

PEACENOTES

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2010 Peacemaking Offering, Sunday October 3rd

Celebrate Christ, Our Peace

Your generous gifts make possible peacemaking ministries in your congregation, presbytery and synod, and support the ministries of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/specialofferings/peacemaking-offering/

Celebrate Thirty Years!

Peacemakers of all ages gathered for a dessert to mark the 30th anniversary of *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* (PTBC) at the 219th General Assembly (2010) in Minneapolis. As long as there have been Presbyterians, there have been Presbyterian peacemakers—Presbyterians who seek peace, act with compassion, and pursue justice in the name of Jesus. The adoption of PTBC led to an intentional focus on peacemaking ministries at all levels of the church and to the creation of the Peacemaking Offering and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. The dessert provided an opportunity for peacemakers to slow down from the General Assembly pace and gather for reflection and fellowship, sharing memories and hopes.

Highlights included: great food, good people, cello music provided by Elianna Thorne, and greetings from the Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church in Bethlehem. Small grants, made possible from the sale of tickets, were provided to the Nonviolent Peaceforce and the African Health Action Corporation (whose staff conducted the HIV testing at the Assembly). Peacemakers from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities helped with the dessert. If your life has been touched by the ministry of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program in some way over the past 30 years, consider a special gift of \$30.00 to the Peacemaking Offering. For those who already give, consider the possibility of an additional gift as a way of



Mrs. Agnes Marsh and Daniel Plummer were among those who enjoyed the dessert celebration. Photo by Tony Oltmann.

saying thanks. Find worship resources and more to celebrate the 30th anniversary at gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/peacemaking/.

Free the Morong 43

In the Philippines, forty-three community health workers were arrested on February 6, 2010. They have been imprisoned ever since. Among them is Dr. Alexis Montes, a member of the health ministry of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. They have been charged with making bombs, a charge they and their supporters, including the UCCP, deny. One woman in the group has given birth by cesarean section and will be separated from her infant to return to prison. Another is pregnant with her due date drawing near. Presbyterians have joined the UCCP in supporting the Morong 43 (as they are known). We pray. We have written letters to government officials in the Philippines appealing for their release. The Office on Asia, Presbyterian Women, and Sacramento Presbytery have provided financial support through the UCCP for the pregnant women. And on May 16, their 100th day in prison, Presbyterians—who were serving as election observers—were



Photo by Matt Lang.

Visiting the Morong 43 required receiving a number of security stamps to enter and exit the prison.

among the first groups to visit the Morong 43. “We listened to their story, shared sandwiches with them, sang with them and prayed with them,” said Roger Powers. Learn more about the Morong 43 and ways you can support them at presbyterian.typepad.com/peacemaking/philippines/. Gifts to the Extra Commitment Opportunity E052070, “Human Rights in the Philippines,” support victims of human rights abuses and their families.

International Peacemakers will make over sixty visits this fall. Check with your presbytery to see if one is in your area.

Peace and justice issues at General Assembly

The 219th General Assembly (2010) considered many justice and peace issues. In response to an Arizona law and proposed legislation in other states that many feel unfairly targets Hispanic Americans, the Assembly voted to “refrain from holding national meetings in states where travel by immigrant Presbyterians or Presbyterians of color might subject them to harassment or racial profiling.” Recommendations approved by the Assembly include:

- An immediate moratorium on all executions in the United States;
- The church at every level to work to prevent gun violence;
- The PC(USA) to become an HIV and AIDS competent church;
- Reaffirmation of the PC(USA)’s commitment to public education for all children;
- Renewed efforts to address violence against women and children along the U.S.-Mexico border;
- An expression of gratitude to those who have served and serve in Iraq and Afghanistan and a call to cease direct combat operations in Afghanistan, except to protect coalition troops, Afghani security forces, and humanitarian efforts;
- The United States to end the use of seven military bases in Colombia;
- The peaceful reunification of North and South Korea;
- Restoration of sustainable agriculture in Haiti;
- Restoration of democracy in Madagascar and Honduras; and
- The protection of religious minorities around the world.

Read more at www.pcusa.org/ga219.

Partner for Peace in Sudan

Pray unceasingly for peace in Sudan. Support the formation of new covenant-based partnerships by PC(USA) presbyteries with presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church of Sudan or the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church. Explore the possibility of an ecumenical or interfaith “Season of Prayer for Peace in Sudan.” Those three steps were at the heart of the action on Sudan by the 219th General Assembly. Begin praying now. Watch the Peacemaking Program’s Web page and blog for opportunities to partner for peace in Sudan.



Photo by Nancy Eng MacNeill.

George Lynch and Sue Trei-Conrad served as the Moderator and Vice-Moderator of the Peacemaking and International Issues Committee.

Upcoming peacemaking study

Several overtures to the 219th General Assembly (2008) suggested steps to strengthen the Peacemaking Program and the church’s peacemaking ministry. The overtures proposed to build on existing policy and call the church to explore new ways of thinking about peacemaking and new ways of engaging in ministries seeking peace and pursuing justice. After prayer-filled and careful deliberation, the Peacemaking and International Issues Committee blended the overtures and the Assembly voted to direct “the General Assembly Mission Council, through the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) and the Peacemaking Program, to appoint a five-person steering team, at least one of whom shall be a college

student or other young adult, to work with ACSWP and Peacemaking Program representatives to design and implement a broadly participatory four-year process to do the following: 1. Seek clarity as to God’s call to the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror, and war; and 2. Identify, explore, and nurture new approaches to active peacemaking and nonviolence, reporting to the 221st General Assembly (2014) with recommendations for policy and action.” The process will involve as much of the church as possible. Visit gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/peacemaking/ to read the full recommendation. Watch for opportunities to become involved.

Middle East Peacemaking at General Assembly

The 219th General Assembly (2010) voted 558–119 to approve “Breaking Down the Walls,” the report from the Middle East Study Committee established by the 218th General Assembly (2008). The amended report, which was hotly debated in the days leading up to the assembly, affirms Israel’s right to exist as a sovereign nation within secure and internationally recognized borders and commends for study “A Moment of Truth”—a statement by Palestinian Christian leaders that emphasizes hope for liberation, nonviolence, love of enemy, and reconciliation. It calls the Israeli and Egyptian governments to limit their blockade of Gaza solely to military equipment and authorizes a seven-member Monitoring Group on the Middle East to assist with implementation of the church’s policy in the region. The assembly deleted

two historical analysis sections from the report and called for “a series of eight narratives of comparable length, four arising from the range of authentically Palestinian perspectives (including both Christian and Muslim), and four arising from the range of authentically Israeli perspectives.” Read the action at www.pcusa.org/middleeastpeace.



Photo by Doug Dicks.

His Excellency Avraham Burg, former member and speaker of the Knesset, and the Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, pastor of Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church, Bethlehem, prepare for a pre-assembly event sponsored by the Middle East Study Committee.

Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations

Presbyterian Red Hand Campaign

Photo by Mark Koenig



Acting out of faith in Jesus, who welcomed children, participants at the 2010 Presbyterian Youth Triennium made over 800 red hands to call for an end to child soldiers.

Red paper. White paper. Broken crayons and busy hands of all shapes, sizes, and colors from around the United States and the world. Visible testimonies call for an end to the use of children as soldiers. More than 800 young people at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium traced their hands and wrote their messages to the world: "Children should be children, not soldiers." United Nations' reports reveal that over 300,000 children are currently used as active participants and soldiers in armed conflicts around the world. The Red Hand Campaign is an international effort that calls all nations in the world to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, a series of international laws that condemn the use of children as participants in war. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has initiated a Red Hand Campaign. Find more information on how you, your congregation, and your community can participate at www.pcusa.org/children.

3 things to pray for

1. Pray for the sixteen individuals in the International Peacemakers program and those who will host them. May the visits be a time of growing discipleship for all involved.
2. Pray for the people of Sudan as the country moves toward the January self-determination referendum in South Sudan.
3. Pray for the safety of aid workers who go into conflict situations.

International Day of Peace

In 1981, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed September 21 an International Day of Peace. Since 1982, communities around the world have observed the International Day of Peace as a time for reflection, prayer, and reconciliation. The day offers an opportunity to work concretely for peace, conflict resolution, and nonviolence locally and globally. September 21 also serves as a day of global ceasefire. Observing such a ceasefire is one step toward fulfilling the hope that peace is not so far off. Praying on the International Day of Peace gives people of faith the opportunity to stand alongside the millions of our brothers and sisters whose daily lives remain threatened by ongoing conflict. Visit gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/peacemaking/ for more information and worship resources.

United Nations Day

On October 24, 1945, the United Nations was officially established following the ratification of its Charter by fifty-one countries, including the five permanent members of the Security Council. The United Nations was not born into a peaceful world. It was established in a world traumatized by decades of war and the decimation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by nuclear weapons only three months before. In signing the Charter, nations committed themselves to unite for international peace and security, fundamental and equal human rights, justice, and the promotion of full lives for every human being. The

world observes United Nations Day every October 24 as a reminder of the UN's history and the hopes for its future. Read the Charter at www.un.org/en/documents/charter/index.shtml. Visit gamc.pcusa.org/ministries/peacemaking/ for information and resources.



On UN Day in 2009, thirty-four students from the University of Timor-Leste's Peace Centre re-enacted the historic 1999 Security Council session that set in motion the process leading to Timor-Leste's independence. Photo by UN Photo/Martine Perret.

Trick or Treat for UNICEF

Sixty years ago, Presbyterians Clyde and Mary Emma Allison helped shape the now widespread Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF program. In those early days of the program, children dressed in international garb and collected change for UNICEF in old milk cartons covered with orange paper. Young people have collected millions of dollars through Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF and the tradition continues. Monroe Allison accepted an award recognizing his parents at this year's General Assembly. Find out more about the Presbyterian Decade of the Child and Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF at www.pcusa.org/children.

The Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations offers a unique and dynamic opportunity for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:

- Inspire, equip and connect God's people as faithful disciples in the global community with a particular focus on nurturing Presbyterians of all ages in ministry with a global community.
- Witness to the nations of the world that God sends the church in the power of the Holy Spirit to share "with Christ in the establishing of God's just, peaceable, and loving rule in the world." (Book of Order, G-3.0300)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Songs for Peace and Justice

Find Your Voice: Music for a Just and Caring Church

October 10–14, 2010

Stony Point Center

Be part of a four-day multicultural creative gathering. Join pastors, church musicians, hymn writers, activists, and singer/songwriters to explore, discover, and create music and liturgy to inspire and empower congregations in the pursuit of peace and justice. The 30th anniversary of *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling* will be celebrated. Learn more and register at www.stonypointcenter.org.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

Celebration of Presbyterian

Public Witness

March 24–28, 2011

Washington D.C.

A celebration of sixty-five years of social justice and public policy advocacy by the Presbyterian Office of Public Witness is planned for March 2011 as part of the annual Ecumenical Advocacy Days event. This year's theme is human rights for women and girls. The conference will address the issue of human trafficking of women and children, a major PC(USA) concern. Related activities will include a day-long training sponsored by the Compassion, Peace and Justice ministries on March 25. A banquet will celebrate sixty-five years of Presbyterian ministry and witness in Washington on March 26. A full schedule will be released in late September.

2011 Peacemaking Conference under the Big Tent

June 30–July 2, 2011

Indianapolis, IN

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Conference, as a 2011 Big Tent partner conference, will feature music by Sharon Youngs, communications coordinator, Office of the General Assembly, and presentations on "Deepening Discipleship by Bearing Witness to Christ in the Public Arena" by J. Herbert Nelson, director, Presbyterian Office of Public Witness; "Nurturing and Equipping Christ's People to Serve as Peacemakers" by Sara Lisherness, director, Compassion, Peace and Justice, and Bruce Reyes-Chow, pastor, Mission Bay Community Church; and "Seeking Peace for God's Diverse People" by Margaret Aymer, associate professor of New Testament, Interdenominational Theological Center. Come and participate in Growing Christ's Church Deep and Wide!

Resurrection Living: Journeying with the Nonviolent Christ

This study guide is designed as a journal to help individuals explore the theology and ethics of nonviolence and ways to practice

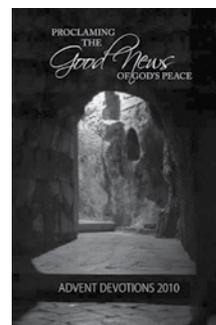


it in their daily lives. It invites users to engage in prayerful reflection on Scripture, documents of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the writings of theologians and practitioners of nonviolence through the ages. The fifty-two entries may be used individually or in community on a daily or weekly basis. Ideas for using the journal in various settings are included. However the journal is used, at its heart is an invitation to ponder, "What does it mean for me to follow the nonviolent Christ today in the place where I live and around God's world?" Call 800-524-2612 to order PDS #24-358-10-007; \$7.50 plus s/h.

RESOURCES

Proclaiming the Good News of God's Peace: Advent Devotions 2010

Authors for this year's book of daily devotions for Advent are individuals who have played a key role in the life of the program, including members of the writing team for *Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling*. Call 800-524-2612 to order PDS #24-358-10-006; \$.40 plus s/h.



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