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MakingPeace Now

A Publication of the Peacemaking Steering Team, Ministries of Mission, New Hope Presbytery, Presbyterian Church (USA)

Commit to Peacemaking!

The Presbyterian Church (USA) created the Commitment to Peacemaking in 1983. Since then more than 4,500 congregations and other groups have affirmed the PC(USA) Commitment to Peacemaking and used it to shape faithful and creative ministries of peace and justice. A number of churches in New Hope Presbytery have made this commitment.

Fifty percent of our Peacemaking Offering every year goes to the General Assembly to help our churches live out the Commitment to Peacemaking. To learn more about what the GA does with your money and to commit your church to doing peacemaking, go to <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/commitment.htm>.

Your church will commit to doing peacemaking through one or all of the following:

- worship,
- prayer and Bible study,
- peacemaking in families and community living,
- community ministries,
- study and response to global issues,
- global security,

- making peace with the earth,
- receiving the peacemaking offering.

If your church has already signed the Commitment to Peacemaking, then your church might consider reviewing or renewing this commitment. Because of its importance, a period of study and reflection may prove helpful in making this decision. You will find help with this by going to <http://www.pcusa.org/peacemaking/pubs/pubs.htm>.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days

March 19-22, 2010
Washington, DC

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

For conference information go to: <http://advocacydays.org/conference/glance.php>

For scholarship to attend go to: <http://www.nhpresbytery.org/pdf/PO%20Scholarship%20Form.pdf> or call Wes Hare (919)929-3316 for further information.

Peace Resources for Children

“PIECE WORK/PEACE WORK:

WORKING TOGETHER FOR PEACE IN SUDAN”

is a study which contains 4 sessions for children in grades 1-6 plus a closing intergenerational session.

Participants explore the situations facing Sudanese children, learn about Africa’s largest country, the challenges it faces, and identify how followers of Jesus can respond. The study considers the relationship between making a quilt from pieces of fabric and making peace in a diverse situation. Other activities include games and art projects. The intergenerational session may be used on its own. Order through <http://www.pcusa.org/marketplace/item.list.jsp>



PEACEMAKING COIN OFFERING

Issues of Women Returning from Combat

The NC Area Health Education Centers Program is partnering with Citizen Soldier Support Program (CSSP) and the Veterans Administration to offer a program on providing healthcare to veterans. *Issues of Women Returning from Combat* is a full day program which focuses on issues specific to women returning from combat.

Women military service members returning from deployment to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan face gender-specific readjustment issues as they transition back to their local communities. This full-day workshop will provide an overview of the health/mental health concerns of women veterans within the context of military culture, gender-specific roles, available support resources and effective treatments.

Persons who should attend are psychologists, therapists, counselors, social workers, substance abuse counselors, marriage and family therapists, psychiatric nurses, case managers, clergy, child care coordinators, school personnel, other healthcare professionals who provide services to female service members and their families.

The program dates and AHEC locations are listed below. The cost is \$50 for credit, instruction, program materials and refreshments. Call 919-966-2461 for registration information. For an on-line brochure go to http://www.seahec.net/departments/ce/forms_and_files/brochures/28985.pdf.

March 24, Asheville

April 19, Wilson

April 22, Fayetteville

May 6, Raleigh

May 14, Winston-Salem

May 27, Greenville

June 2, Charlotte

Addressing the Needs of Our Returning Veterans

On January 14, 2010, the North Carolina Practice Improvement Collaborative, a project of the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services hosted a public meeting focusing on key issues facing veterans and their families.

Addressing the Needs of our Returning Veterans was held at the McKimmon Conference and Training Center at NC State University. The presentation “**From the Battlefield to the Home Front and Back Again**” by Col. Elspeth Cameron Ritchie, MD, MPH, Adult and Forensic Psychiatrist and Director, Behavior Health Proponency in the office of the Army, The Surgeon General, can be found at NCPIC Website www.ncpic.net.

MakingPeace Now is a new publication of the Peacemaking Steering Team of New Hope Presbytery. It is being published 3 times a year to coordinate with presbytery meetings. Send letters-to-the-editor or articles about your church or community’s peacemaking activities to the editor, Lynne Marks, at lgmarks@suddenlink.net.

Convocation Of Peacemakers

A national gathering of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship to deepen the commitment to nonviolence and radical discipleship in the PC(USA)

Stony Point, New York

April 15-17, 2010

Go to <http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/> for more information.

Call for a Commission of Inquiry to Investigate U.S. Torture

Sponsored by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture and the NC Council of Churches

The United States must never again engage in torture. Torture is immoral, illegal and counterproductive. It causes profound and lasting harm, especially to its victims but also to its perpetrators. It contradicts our nation's deepest values and corrupts the moral fabric of our society.

We call for an impartial, non-partisan, and independent Commission of Inquiry. Its purpose should be to gather all the facts and make recommendations. It should ascertain the extent to which our interrogation practices have constituted torture and "cruel, inhuman or degrading

treatment". Understanding the causes, nature and scope of U.S.-sponsored torture is essential for preventing it in the future and eliminating it from our system without loopholes. U.S. law will determine the extent of any criminal culpability.

As people of faith, we know that brokenness can be healed – both in individual lives and in the life of the nation. All religions believe that redemption is possible. Learning the truth can set us on a path toward national healing and renewal.

The United States must never again allow itself to be driven by

blinding fears and bitter resentments in responding to national tragedy. The use of torture only serves to undermine our security in a dangerous world. Nothing less than the soul of our nation is at stake in confronting U.S.-sponsored torture and completely renouncing its use. Let the U.S. reaffirm its values by establishing a Commission of Inquiry.

Ending U.S.-Sponsored Torture Forever: An adult study resource including a DVD and discussion guide to use with your congregation published by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, <http://www.nrcat.org/>

Weaving a Net of Accountability *to create a Commission of Inquiry for North Carolina*

April 8-10, 2010, 9:00am-5:00pm

Duke Human Rights Center, Durham, NC. Free and open to the public.

Go to: <http://accountabilityfortorturenc.org/> or call (919) 668-6511

MORE CONFERENCES

The 13th Bi-Annual Irish Summer Institute

*A unique travel/study experience through
The Presbyterian Committee for Northern Ireland (PCNI)
And the US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)*

June 14-26, 2010

Visit <http://www.pcni-pcusa.org/> for more information

Re-memering Peace: Still the Believers' Calling

2010 Event Celebrates 30 Years of PC(USA) Peacemaking

Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, New Mexico

August 25-28, 2010

Contact Dayna Oliver at (888) 728-7228 x8700

New Hope Presbytery and Synod of Mid-Atlantic Make Major Contributions to NCCC Peace Position

By Sandy Irving

Ever wonder what happens to that Peace money you contribute to the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program every October? As you are probably aware, the local church keeps a portion for peacemaking within the congregation, but some goes to our Presbytery and some goes to our Synod and some goes to the national PC(USA) peacemaking program. One sees the work of our national peacemaking program in workshops, retreats, and study materials. But one might wonder what happens to the other funds. You can see the work of some of these peace funds given to New Hope Presbytery and Synod of Mid-Atlantic through the work of a peace associate at the North Carolina Council of Churches (NCCC).

The peace associate position at NCCC is a 10 hour/week position funded purely by donations. Thankfully, several presbyteries in North Carolina including New Hope have contributed to funding this position over the years, but recently funding got low and the position was in jeopardy of ending. New Hope Presbytery gave a grant of \$8,000 in 2009 and Synod of Mid-Atlantic contributed or approved a total of \$17,500 for 2009-10 thus guaranteeing

money for the peace associate at NCCC for another 12-18 months.

The peace associate position at the NCCC has been held by Rev. Spencer Bradford, a minister in the Mennonite church. Rev. Bradford recently resigned to take another position and the NCCC is trying to fill the position. This position helps to educate North Carolina church members about Christ's call to peacemaking and its relationship to contemporary issues of international violence. It also organizes advocacy to political authorities on those issues. One can visit http://www.ncccouncilofchurches.org/areasofwork/issues/peace/peace_issue.html to see the work for peace by the NCCC associate. Resources for prayer vigils, worship and study groups are provided on different issues.

The NCCC issues a huge "thank you" to NHP and Synod of Mid-Atlantic for their generous funding to help keep a peace presence in NC churches.

Contact <http://www.ncccouncilofchurches.org/> for more information about applying for the NCCC Program Associate for Peace position.

Steadfast Hope: The Palestinian Quest for a Just Peace

By Mark Davidson

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has mission networks that focus on our denomination's mission in countries around the world.

The Israel-Palestine Mission Network was chartered by the 2004 General Assembly with a special responsibility to educate the church on the pressing issues in the Israel-Palestine conflict, with special emphasis on the Palestinian perspective, since it is underrepresented in the US mainstream media.

The Israel-Palestine Mission Network has developed a wonderful study document, *Steadfast Hope: The Palestinian Quest for a Just Peace*. It comes highly recommended and has been described as "compelling," "eye-opening," "very helpful." It was developed with assistance from our professional staff at Louisville and denominational mission workers and ecumenical partners "on the ground." It is beautifully written, carefully researched, and complete with color photographs.

The study document *Steadfast Hope* comes with a DVD and is ideal for a study series in Adult Christian Education in your church. It is available from Louisville for \$5 per copy. **There will be free copies available at the February Presbytery meeting, first come, first served.**

For more information contact Rev. J. Mark Davidson, Pastor, Church of Reconciliation, Chapel Hill, (919) 929-2127, pastor@churchrec.org.