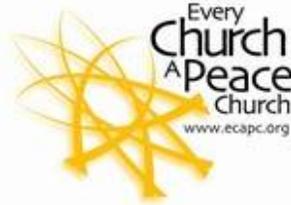


DPF-NEWSNOTES



DPF-NewsNotes
August-September 2011

GA Faithful Conversations: Tolstoy Would've Loved the Disciples

The Council on Christian Unity, in partnership with Disciples Peace Fellowship, engaged General Assembly participants in vigorous, robust discussions on the challenges of putting faith into practice in relation to the issues of unity, war and peacemaking with a new model known as "Faithful Conversations."

The process was introduced at the first business session on Sunday, July 10 by Robert Welch, president of CCU, and several speakers who shared personal reflections as young adults, congregational pastors, laypersons, seminary professors, and military chaplains. On Monday afternoon, July 11, three standing-room only conversation sessions took place, which allowed participants to explore a variety of perspectives around issues of war and peace.

In one session, Sharon Warner, a professor at Lexington Theological Seminary—and member of the DPF Executive Committee—presented information on the three historic Christian positions related to war: "holy war," "just war," and pacifism. This was followed by Craig Watts, minister of Royal Palm Christian Church in Coral Springs, Fla., and co-moderator of the DPF, reviewing the anti-war origins of the Stone-Campbell movement. "As early as 1823, Campbell wrote he was appalled Christians would go forth with a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other," Watts said. "He couldn't understand why Christians would first create as many widows

and orphans as possible, then proceed to minister to them." Newell Williams, president of Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas, also shared information about Barton Stone's position on war.



(DNS picture/story)

Down the hall, another conversation began with a "fish-bowl" presentation among Disciples who hold very different perspectives — as a pacifist (Rita Nakashima Brock, former DPF Moderator), as a military chaplain (Steve Doan), as a young adult working on peace education (Krista Johnson), and as a congregational pastor ministering to families of military personnel (Linda Simmons)—seeking to engage in tough discussion while respecting the other's position. Doug Skinner, pastor of Northway Christian Church in Dallas, then read a letter from the father of a U.S. Marine deployed to Iraq, who said many

(Continued on page 2)

"Refrigerator Notes"

- **Faithful Conversations**
- **DPF Interns**
- **Pablo Stone Awarded Will Wittkamper Award**
- **Peace-Making Resources**
- **Membership Renewal Form**
- **Jon Lacey appointed volunteer Program Director**
- **Convictions Have Casualties**
- **GA Resolution Actions**

Christians are forced to choose between their love of the church and their pride in their sons, daughters, and other relatives who embrace the task of defending the nation. How can a church comfort its children, the father asked, when it condemns them and takes sides in political debates? Ultimately ...

“...the speakers argued the decision to take up arms against fellow human beings is one of the most complex and difficult decisions Christians can undertake.”

In a closing reflection on Wednesday, July 13, John Richardson, regional minister of North Carolina, who had served as a recorder at the Monday afternoon sessions, identified some of the learnings from the conversation model, including (emphasis added): **there is a clear and urgent call for Disciples to educate themselves both to the historic Christian positions around war and peace, and especially to our own Disciples understandings, and that peacemaking is a bigger topic that what is simply identified as situations of conflict and war. The challenge is to address critical issues and challenges of peace among all people, peace in the community, the marketplace, and in care of creation.**

A major recommendation from the process was a call to continue the conversations started in Nashville across the life of the church, especially within congregations, and the possible creation of a “faithful conversations” website with specific resources for study and worship.

“Somehow, somewhere, we need to model honest, genuine disagreements as Christians, and still claim each other as one family,” said Robert Welch, CCU president.

“When we go to camp, we’re in search of those mountain top experiences. We are in search of transformative and rejuvenating moments that will change our lives. We expect to meet God at camp and for God to be as blatant as possible.”

*Erin Taylor, 2011
DPF Intern*

DPF Executive Committee Release

The Co-Moderators, Craig Watts and Bruce Ervin, announce to the membership the appointment of Jon Lacey as volunteer Program Coordinator for Disciples Peace Fellowship. Jon will coordinate a network among Executive Committee members, be supervised by the Co-Moderators toward the goal of renewing and facilitating the Disciples Peace Fellowship’s witness for peace and justice within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), ecumenically and in regional, national and international forums. He will liaise with Disciples Home Missions, Global Ministries, the Office of General Minister and President, the General Board, and other mission units related to the Christian Church (DOC).

Jon will assist members of the Executive Committee who carry responsibilities for communications, planning, fund-raising, and membership development.

Jon Lacey retired as Regional Minister serving the Christian Church Michigan Region in May 2010. He previously served Michigan State University in the Office of International Development and was Director of the HIV/AIDS Education and Training Center within the medical schools of MSU. He had served as ecumenical campus minister at MSU; regional director of United Ministries in Higher Education in Western South Dakota and Chaplain in Residence at Chapman College (now university).

Jon was a member and co-moderator of DPF and member of the General Board, General Nominating Committee and Time and Place Committee.

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Jesus said, "All that take the sword shall perish by the sword." An awful warning! All that take it to support religion, it is confessed, have fallen by it; but it may be feared that it is not simply confined to that; for may I not ask the pages of universal history, have not all the nations created by the sword finally fallen by it? Should anyone say, "Some few of them yet stand," we respond, "All that have fallen also stood for a time; and are not those that now stand tottering just at this moment to their overthrow?" We have no doubt, it will prove in the end that nations and states founded by the sword shall fall by the sword."

Alexander Campbell in his Address on War, Wheeling, WV 1848

Peacemaking is a form of conflict resolution which focuses on establishing equal power relationships that will be robust enough to forestall future conflict ...within a community which previously had conflict. Wikipedia

Greetings, Disciple Friends!

What a wonderful, whirlwind summer! The interns and I are amazed at how quickly it flew and how spirit-filled each step of the journey was. After completing a busy week of information and preparation in Indianapolis for training, the interns set off to be witnesses of peace and justice in camps, conferences and mission events across the country. In 18 different regions and 22 different events, their work touched countless lives and moved youth and adults alike to be advocates for our Creator in their own communities.

Truly, it was a blessing to have worked with the 2011 Interns. The three of them were passion-filled, energetic ambassadors of our cause and it was a genuine privilege to get to know them and share their amazing summer of experiences. As much as I feel this way, I also know that this internship only accepts the best and brightest, and before these three have come over one hundred others who have carried the same torch. As the interns and I prepared for making a video about the internship, we were touched by those who gave voice to their own experiences with a peace intern. I invite you to watch the video we created that used their words: <http://vimeo.com/26526362>

From the perspective of one who was personally touched by an intern as a young person, I am grateful for the impact of this life-changing program! Thank you for your continued support of this important mission and for giving the same opportunity to today's youth and to our whole church!

Many blessings,
Phoebe Spier
Interim Peace Intern Coordinator



It's NOT too late
To help DPF
UNDERWRITE
The
Interns' 2011
Expenses by
Your gifts—
Or to provide
A head start
For 2012
Interns!

p.s. If you are interested in seeing a little more of the summer from the interns' perspectives, I urge you to check out the blogs they created!

Ben Saunders: peaceinternben.tumblr.com/

Chrissy Stonebraker: sotheworldmayliveasone.tumblr.com/

Erin Taylor: <http://pet116.blogspot.com/>

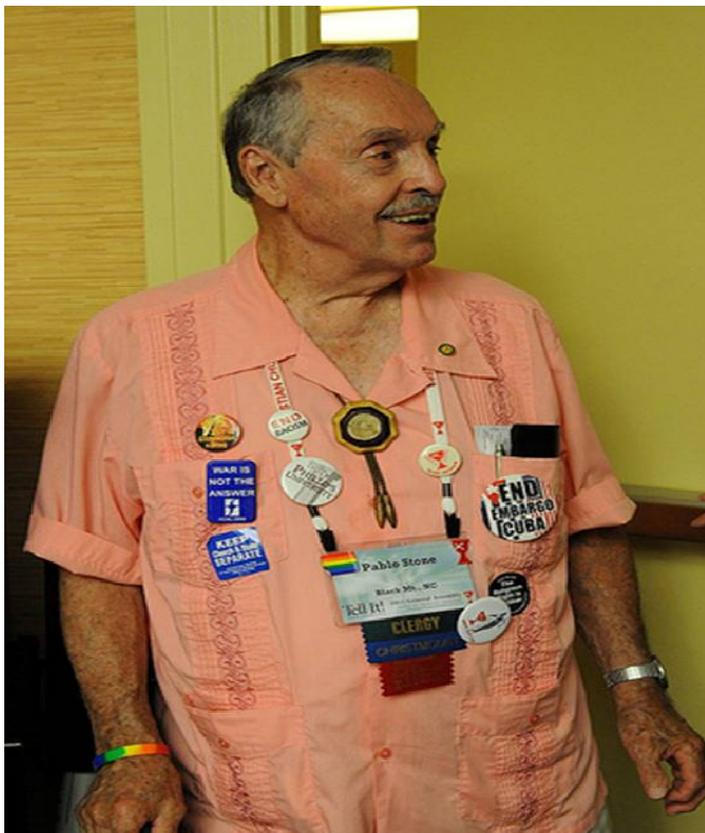
Longtime Disciples Missionary Receives Disciples Peace Fellowship “Will Wittkamper Award”

Pablo Stone was awarded the Will Wittkamper Award at the Disciples Peace Fellowship (DPF) Breakfast on July 12, 2011 at the General Assembly. The Wittkamper Award honors persons who have dedicated themselves to a lifetime of advancing the causes of peace. This is the 30th anniversary of the biennial award.

Pablo worked in food development for 30 years in Latin America as a missionary. Because of his faithful service he was declared “persona non grata” by the Nicaraguan government. He also served as a volunteer representative for DPF in Washington DC for 10 years, followed by service on the Executive Committee of DPF. He is well known for his “bumper sticker” and now vest ministry: his car is easily recognized by its 80-plus peace and justice messages holding his car together.

Pablo was born January 3, 1928 in Hartford, Conn., where his parents were preparing to be missionaries in South America. Because of the economic depression at the time, there were no funds available to support their quest for a missionary appointment and they moved to Kentucky, where Pablo grew up in a number of small communities where his father held pastorates. From 1944 to 1952, Pablo hitchhiked 73,000 miles across 30 states. This was travel to jobs, school and visiting home and friends. He spent three summers working in the Kansas wheat harvests.

With a dream of becoming a missionary himself, Pablo attended Arkansas Tech Junior College, Berea College, and Phillips University, where he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in sociology and history. He was commissioned as a missionary by the then United Christian Missionary Society, forerunner of the Division of Overseas Ministries and Disciples Home Missions in 1953. Pablo spent 30 years serving as a missionary in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador, Columbia and Mexico working on agriculture and food development issues. Pablo is retired and lives in Black Mountain, NC.



The love of one's country
 is a splendid thing,
 But why should
 Love
 Stop at the
 Border?

Pablo Casals

Shalom: Convictions Have Casualties

At the Disciples of Christ General Assembly in Nashville recently, those who attended had the opportunity to hear brief statements by individuals representing a variety of views regarding war and pacifism. I found a couple of the presentations particularly noteworthy.

Katie Hays spoke of the tension within her predominately pacifist family over her grandfather's participation in World War Two, despite his own father's disapproval. She said, "I am very sure that Jesus meant for his followers to lay down their swords, never to pick them up again....But I am also very sure that without the intervention of my grandfather's generation, had we continued turning the cheeks of all those who bore the wrath of one regime's hatred, the world would be much less good now.... And so, I am a Pacifist with Problems."

I found retired army chaplain and chaplain endorser Steve Doan's sensitive statement reflecting a similar ambiguity, though from a somewhat different perspective. He confessed, "War is evil--and it is always a sin. But I also believe from endless study and prayer and reflection that peace without justice, peace with slavery or genocide or tyranny is not peace at all. The slaughter and suffering of innocents leave blood on our hands." He comes very close to saying, "I'm a just war supporter with problems."

War, justice and the pursuit of peace are matters filled with serious practical dilemmas and moral challenges. Regardless of our position, we have problems. On the one hand, everyone opposes war and desires peace. On the other hand, everyone does not agree about what must be done to oppose war and pursue peace. What are the consequences of being against war and for peace?

The just war supporter goes into battle to protect the innocent and to attain peace. But in the process his efforts inevitably lead to the deaths of the innocent -"collateral damage"- and the escalation of conflict. Pacifists refuse to participate in war, believing peace begins by refusing to kill. But the pacifist option may increase danger, not only to the pacifist his or herself but to others as well. Lives may be lost because the pacifist wouldn't kill on their behalf. Undesired consequences.

The practice of peace is no panacea. It will not solve every dispute. It will not dissolve all hatred. It will not end bloodshed. It will not inspire all enemies to become friends. Rejecting violence and instead choosing to live by nonviolent love does not automatically make the world a safer place. Those anti-war idealists who think otherwise will likely remain committed to the practice of peace only until they are forced to face the fact that nonviolent love will not always assure the harmonious outcomes we desire. It is naïve to claim that every violent situation has an identifiable nonviolent solution.

Visible, tangible and immediate results for justice and peace without deadly side effects are what everyone desires. But there are no methods that can guarantee such an outcome. War obviously can't produce results of this sort. But nonviolent methods certainly can't truthfully promise these results either. We -just warriors and those committed to nonviolence- need to recognize that our convictions result in casualties.

My commitment to oppose war and embrace peaceableness is not contingent upon my ability to know how nonviolent means could have stopped, say, Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik, to say nothing of Stalin or Hitler. But just because I do not always know how to stop the violent from injuring the innocent without using deadly force does not mean that a violence response is the solution that must be embraced. No matter what we do or don't do, sometimes innocent people will die. Nevertheless, because of Jesus Christ I believe it is the will of God to use our nonviolent love rather than our well-intended violence. Suffering cannot be avoided. We should stop it to the extent that we can without deadly force. But if we follow Jesus we will not be the ones to inflict the suffering. Rather we will endure it and trust God with the outcome.

Craig M. Watts, Co-Moderator of DPF

PRESENTATION of the RESOLUTION on ANTI-MUSLIM ACTION

Early this year there was a study conducted by Duke University and the University of North Carolina. It found that the number of American Muslims suspected of or confirmed to be involved in terror operations significantly decreased in 2010. The same cannot be said for anti-Muslim rhetoric and behavior.

As the resolution notes, a major nation-wide poll released late last year showed that the number of Americans with an unfavorable view of Muslims was at the highest level since the 9/11/01 terror attacks. The front of the Nashville *Tennessean* newspaper this past Sunday had a story that dealt with an anti-Muslim organization currently at work right here in this area.

So why all the negativity? A large part of it has to do with unjustifiable claims made by certain political pundits and politicians. Without any evidence, one well-known pundit has claimed that 10% of all Muslims are terrorists. U.S. Representative Peter King alleged that over 80% of American Muslim leaders are extremists, again without any evidence to back up the assertion. U.S. Attorney General Holder has directly contradicted King.

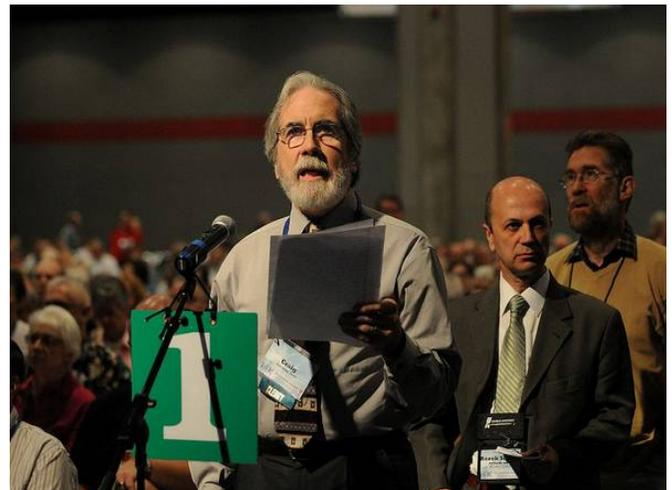
Add to this, certain elements in the Religious Right who have produced a steady stream of anti-Muslim venom by self-annointed "experts." These inspire fear of world domination by Muslims and provoke far-fetched concerns over Shariah law becoming the law of the land, despite the fact that no such proposal has been made by American Muslim leaders.. Frankly, I'm a lot more concerned about extremist Christians who would like to impose their version of biblical law on the rest of us.

This resolution does not attempt to minimize the destructive force of radical Islam or turn a blind eye to the injustice done to women, religious minorities and others in some Muslim societies. Neither does the resolution deny that there are problematic, violent passages in the Koran. But have you opened the Bible and read Deuteronomy 20 lately?

The scriptures tell us that "perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18). Our Lord calls us to be a people of love and that is particularly important in a time when so many are driven by a fear that has led them to issue threats and insults, engage in vandalism of mosques and to practice discrimination toward Muslims in various ways.

Because our lives have been drawn to God by Jesus Christ, "we have been given a ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). This resolution promotes one expression of that ministry that is clearly crucial in our time: standing against anti-Muslim action and supporting inter-faith dialogue through Regions and congregations, in addition to that which is already being done through the General Church. I urge you to support this resolution.

Craig Watts addresses the Assembly.



General Assembly Actions to Adopt Resolutions:

Following discussion and debate the Assembly voted "to adopt" the following resolutions: 1116: Addressing Anti-Muslim Action in the United States and Canada (submitted by DPF); 1117: A Call for Reflection and Advocacy on Behalf of the Democratic Republic of Congo; 1119: Moral Injury and Spiritual Care in a Time of War; 1120: Human Trafficking; 1121: Justice in Education Reform; 1122: REVISED: Preventing Sexual Abuse and Ministering to Its Victims; 1123: Support of Children and Youth by Opposing Bullying in Schools, the Church and the Community. Combined with the "Faithful Conversations" process, worship and celebration—and the actions of the Assembly made it too good to miss.

Peace-Making Resources

We're on the !
www.dpfweb.org
Internet

Faith-based Groups and Congregations Offer Resources for 9/11/11 Observances (10th anniversary):

If your congregation is looking for resources to commemorate the 10th anniversary year of the Sept. 11 attacks in the U.S., a variety of materials are available. The National Council of Churches has compiled resources that offer ways for spiritual reflection for those touched by the events. Litanies, Hymns, worship ideas and films are included: www.nccusa.org/news11072nineelevenresources.html

Ron Allen, a Disciples pastor and professor of Teaching and New Testament at Christian Theological Seminary, has compiled an annotated list of books that address preaching and ministering to others specifically in a time of crisis. Among the titles are *Crisis Preaching: Personal and Public*, and *In Times of Crisis and Sorrow: A Minister's Resource Guide*. His information is included in a recent blog post from the Congregational Resource Guide (CRG), a project of the Alban Institute: congregationalresources.org/blogs/september11-decade-aspirins-and-more

On the congregational level, Disciples pastor Paul Koch of St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Washington, Mo., will have a Sept. 11 Sunday worship service that is truly "service worship." The congregation will gather an hour early for opening liturgy, then head to schools, low-income homes, parks and other work sites to assist in community work: stpeters-washington.org

University Christian Church in Fort Worth, Texas has organized a "9-11-11 Hands of Hope" weekend to honor the past and celebrate what is coming. Activities will include a 12-hour prayer vigil with multi-sensory stations and resources. Morning worship that day will incorporate a litany or prayer and a children's sermon. A special evening worship will culminate with a concert: www.universitychristianchurch.org

These are thanks to DNS (Disciples News Service): please share what you are doing in your setting.

Peace Sunday Resources: Available from Disciples Peace Fellowship's web page: www.dpfweb.org Look for these and other resources.

FOR—Fellowship of Reconciliation: forusa.org Locate related Religious Peace Fellowships and groups. Materials, videos, interfaith resources. Through the publication of analytical insights, spiritual visions, and personal journeys, *Fellowship* magazine helps people of faith commit themselves more deeply to a nonviolent world of justice, peace, and freedom. *Fellowship* has been published consecutively since 1918, and since 1934 under its current title. Disciples and DPF have been long-time supporters and participants with FOR activities. Representatives of 22 different national faith-based peace and justice groups gathered March 14-16, 2011 at Stony Point Center were convened by the Fellowship of Reconciliation to network, strategize, and organize for social change. The interfaith convocation pledged to oppose Islamophobia, address gun violence, and advocate for a just peace in Palestine/Israel.

From Advent's Alleluia to Easter's Morning Light: Poetry for Worship, Study and Devotion by Ann Weems Weems's lyrical poetry is a reminder to us all of the importance of true discipleship. She challenges us to look past the ongoing distractions of the "busy work" of church meetings and socials, new programs and technology, and inevitable conflict, while reminding us in her singularly expressive voice that the "institution" of the church is, at heart, quite simply all about Jesus. This collection of poems, written to be used in worship, in personal devotions, and in discussions, is organized to follow the liturgical year from Advent through Easter. <http://store.pcusa.org/9780664234911?sc=8&category=4551> Video: Ann Weem's Poem: Another Day, Another War. View/available from: www.presbypeacefellowship.org/node/458

From Disciples Home Missions: The Disciples' Advocate carries helpful information, a helpful calendar of events both within and of interest to Disciples of Christ. Published three times a year it is available for free on the web as a pdf or by mail in print form. Go to the DHM web site at Disciples.org or call (888)346-2631. While free, contributions are always welcome.

Disciples Justice Action: (DJAN): DJAN is a multi-racial, multi-ethnic grassroots network of individuals, congregations, and organizations within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), all working together for greater justice, peace and diversity in our churches, communities, our nations (Canada and the United States) and the world. DPF and DJAN often partner with advocacy efforts. Quite a number of Disciples are members of both fellowship/networks. www.djan.net

Disciples Peace Fellowship; P.O. Box 1986; Indianapolis, IN 46206-1986

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