

Keeping Alive the Passion for Peace and Justice

Disciples Peace Fellowship

NEWSNOTES

Don't forget
dpfweb.org

January 2008
Winter Edition

"Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses, but our pride is in the name of the Lord our God." Psalm 20:7 NRSV

In the language of today, Psalm 20:7 might read: Some trust in violence and the technologies of war, and some in military power, but our trust is in the unfailing love and faithfulness of our saving God.

As people of faith and hope, we believe our nation is entering – and must enter -- an era of renewal and re-creation. The conviction is now widespread that it is time to envision and act on a new pathway to true human security – one which seeks not only the absence of tension, but the presence of justice (Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) The 2008 Ecumenical Advocacy Days assembly will explore new visions of security in our homes, neighborhoods, nation and world.

Vision Statement

As people of faith and conscience, we envision a world where security is not measured by military power, closed borders or corporate profits, but by the capacity to achieve the common global good and share the resources which sustain communities. In such a world all children are treasured as sacred gifts and our elderly are regarded for their experience and wisdom. Each woman, man and child is safe from violence and has the resources for a life of dignity and sufficiency. Such a

world looks to secure a safe and productive future for generations yet to come.

As people of faith and action, we have the capacity to create public policies which move nations in the direction of true human security and the responsible care and keeping of the earth. Doing this is the best hope and the most practical strategy for achieving national and global security. The United States as a nation will only be secure if all people here and throughout the world are truly secure. This is a lesson from our nation's historical experience as well as from our Scriptures.

Jesus calls out to the human family to embrace "the things that make for peace" (Luke 19:42). Ecumenical Advocacy Days 2008 is an opportunity to join him in this call.

Ecumenical Advocacy Days
c/o Office of Public Life and Social Policy
United Church of Christ
100 Maryland Avenue NE, Suite 330
Washington DC 20002

Email: info@advocacydays.org
Phone: 202.386.6397

COME AND JOIN THE DPF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN DC!!



2008: Claiming a Vision of True Security

March 7-10 • Washington, D.C.

To Do List:

- [Remember to renew your DPF 2008 membership!! Please don't delay](#)
- [Pray for Peace and the Reign of Justice](#)
- [Register and attend one of the Washington events.](#)
- [Make a special gift to help a young adult get to Washington this Spring.](#)
- [Tell a friend about the Disciples Peace Fellowship](#)
- [Re-read the resolution from General Assembly and study the implications for you, your church, your region and the General Church.](#) How are we living into a vision of peace and justice?
- Pray for ALL in harm's way in Iraq



**Washington, D.C. and your community
March 6-10, 2008**

Pray and Act for Peace

The United States continues to occupy Iraq, so Christian Peace Witness for Iraq must continue to 'speak their peace' through worship and witness.

We invite you, your family, your congregation and your neighbors to come again to the nation's capitol from Thursday, March 6, 2008 through Monday, March 10 to pray and act for peace in Iraq.

On the same date, we also invite you to create worship services in your community. We hope to have more than 200 local vigils empowering participants to advocate for peace in their communities, countries and the world.

Together we will fill houses of worship, remembering and learning anew the ways of the Prince of Peace. Then we will carry our public witness to the halls of government power, calling our leaders to embody values fundamental to the Christian tradition—and shared in other traditions—that truly make for communities of prosperity, security, and justice.

We'll need your help—prayer, time, talents and financial donations.

Information and Resources at www.christianpeacewitness.org

ROBERT L. LEMON — A FAITHFUL WITNESS TO PEACE

Robert L. Lemon died on October 15 at home in Berkeley, CA, at the age of 82.

Throughout his life and ministry Robert championed social justice. He worked for civil rights, marched with Cesar Chavez, was outspoken in the anti-Vietnam War movement, and was active in the East Bay Sanctuary Movement. He founded Richmond Inner-city Ministries to empower African Americans. Later RIM expanded to include Berkeley becoming BRIM. In 2003, DPF honored Robert and Adelle Lemon with the Wittkamper Award. Earlier this year, the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada awarded its first Martin Luther King, Jr. Award to him.

Robert served Disciples congregations in Lima and Havana, IL; Bethany, WV; and San Francisco, Berkeley and Richmond, CA. He taught at Bethany College, University of the Pacific in Stockton, CA and PSR, Berkeley.

*Join our international
community of peacemakers. We need each other now, more
than ever. Fill out the membership form NOW and mail it
with your check. Help assure our continuing witness.*

A PRAYER FOR THE YEAR BEFORE US January 2008

"Beloved", shall we pray.

God calls us "Beloved" as we come humbly into the solitude of prayer. God speaks to our souls that we might be stirred.

"Beloved", LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.

"Beloved", FORGIVE EACH OTHER AS I HAVE FORGIVEN YOU.

"Beloved", FEED THE HUNGRY THAT THEY MIGHT LIVE HEALTHIER LIVES.

"Beloved", TEACH OTHERS THE HOPE GOD BRINGS SO THEY MIGHT FIND STRENGTH TO FACE THE HARSH REALITIES OF LIFE. OFFER THEM FREELY THE MEANS AND THE WAYS TO TRANSFORM AND LIFT UP THEIR OWN LIVES. SHARE YOUR KNOWLEDGE.

"Beloved", CARE FOR THE SICK AND BRING MODERN MEDICINE TO THE POVERTY POCKETS WHERE THERE IS NONE.

"Beloved", DIG WELLS FOR THE THIRSTY, AS WATER BRINGS FORTH A BETTER LIFE.

"Beloved", DO WHAT IS RIGHT IN A WORLD WHERE GREED AND CYNICISM RULE. WALK IN 'BOLD HUMILITY'.

"Beloved", REMEMBER AND TREAT WELL THE PLANET I GAVE YOU.

"Beloved", WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR, BRING HOPE.

"Beloved", WHERE THERE IS IGNORANCE, BRING EDUCATION.

"Beloved", I KNEW YOU BEFORE YOU WERE BORN. ALL THAT YOU NEED HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU. RISE UP AND ACT.

"Beloved", COME TO ME OFTEN AND I WILL GIVE YOU PEACE.

"Beloved", HATRED WAS NEVER MY DREAM FOR YOU.

"Beloved", CREATION AND LIFE CAME THROUGH ME. REMEMBER ME, BE KIND TO OTHERS, AND BE THE GLORIOUS HUMANITY YOU WERE CALLED TO BE.

In humility and compassion, God, we pray to you.....

Mary Ann Reynolds - Burt
Michigan Disciple Leader/poet/prayer

IF "JUST WAR" WERE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

As I recall, Gandhi was once asked what he thought about Western civilization. He replied, "It would be a good idea." Something similar could be said of "just war": it would be a good idea. *Not the best idea, mind you. Following Jesus in the way of nonviolence is the best idea. But "just war" would be a step up from what is normally practiced.* "Just war" thinking calls for restraint and limits to violence in warfare. It demands that certain standards be met both for entering into war and for the execution of war. But in fact those who claim to adhere to the "just war" tradition for the most part don't really take it seriously. They use the phrase "just war" and may even refer to a few of the criteria but show little understanding of the implications or applications.

There are two things that the church cannot do if the "just war" tradition is to be taken seriously. First, it cannot support the state in war -which is often done under the guise of "supporting the troops"- in an uncritical manner. Proper support is given conditionally and with appropriate discernment. Second, the church cannot simply keep silent, offering no judgment about the justice or injustice of a particular war and withholding guidance from Christian warriors or perspective warriors in regard to participation in the war. Military ethicist Shannon French observed that "it is a nation's solemn responsibility not to commit its troops to an unnecessary and immoral war....There is no more bitter fate for a warrior than to be tricked into defending an unworthy cause." The church must not be complicit in this trickery on the part of the state either through silence or by an uncritical "support the troops" posture. But whether trickery on the part of the state is at work or not, the church and its leaders have a responsibility to weigh all available information about a war, draw from its theological resources and speak appropriate words of judgment, guidance and support, particularly to those making the decision whether to engage in a war and to those most likely to be asked to fight in it.

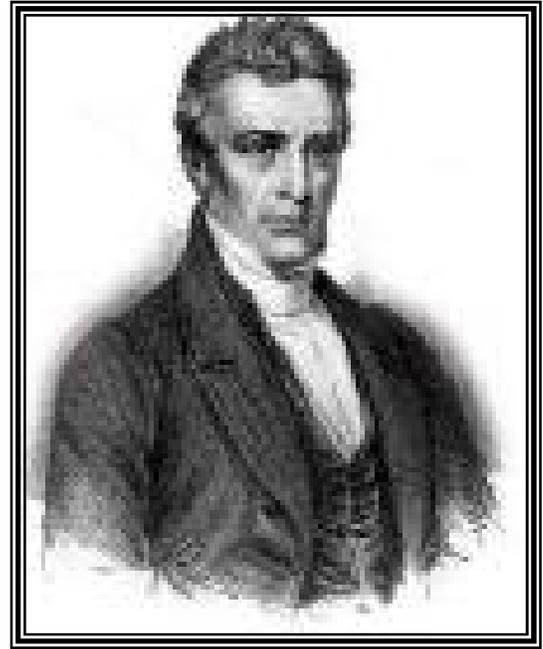
It is an abdication of leadership on the part of the church in a nation engaged in an unjust war to neither call for resistance nor provide clear support to soldiers who refuse to fight. It is not enough to affirm the right of private conscience. It is one thing for the church to say - through its bishops, assembly or another appropriate deliberative body-that it supports soldiers who refuse to fight in a particular war because the church honors the right to act in a manner that is in keeping with their individual consciences. It is another thing for the church to say that it supports soldiers who refuse to fight in a particular war because those soldiers are acting in a manner consistent with the teachings of the church, either the JWT or pacifism. The former speaks to rights, the latter to obligations. If the church is serious about either the JWT or pacifism, it must recognize that there are times when war must be condemned as unjust and wrong. If there are times when war is unjust and wrong then, likewise, there are times when the church must be willing to call for resistance and then stand in solidarity with the resisters.

If a resister has only his or her private conscience to cling to over against a larger, dominant body, he or she is far more likely to abandon attempts to resist. The state is much more likely to press into conformity those who are inclined to be resistant if it can isolate them from support they might receive from a likeminded group. Fear of loneliness more than fear of punishment can inhibit people from doing what they believe to be right. Without a sense that by their obedience they are participating with a moral community that advances a good superior to that claimed by the state, the individual will likely falter. Any contest between the conscientious warrior and the military establishment is vastly unequal. "This is what is most difficult," wrote Jean Le Meur, a young French army officer who was imprisoned for refusing to fight in Algeria, "Being cut off from the fraternity, being locked up in a monologue, being incomprehensible....Do tell the others that this is not a time to let me down"

It is not a monologue of resistance that is needed in an unjust war but a discourse that gives rise to action which stands opposed to wars that are unjust. The church has an obligation to make it clear to its members who are in the military as well as to the state that Christian soldiers who refuse to fight in wars that the church has condemned as unjust are not just acting on their own but they are acting as faithful members of the church.

<http://articles.christiansunite.com/article3472.shtml>
Read the full text online:

Alexander Campbell's Address on War



‘War is not now, nor was it ever, a process of justice. It never was a test of truth— a criterion of right. It is either a mere game of chance or a violent outrage of the strong upon the weak. Need we any other proof that a Christian people can in no way whatever countenance a war as a proper means of redressing wrongs, of deciding justice, or of settling controversies among nations? On the common conception of the most superficial thinkers on this subject, not one of the 286 wars which have been carried on among the “Christian nation’s” during 1,500 years was such as that an enlightened Christian man could have taken any part in it, because, as admitted, not one of them was for defense alone; in other words, they were all aggressive wars.’

AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, WHAT RESPONSE ARE WE CALLED TO HAVE AS WE SUPPORT OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS CALLED TO MILITARY SERVICE?

Stories, anecdotes, witnesses, testimonies, thoughts I’d like to share with Disciples Peace Fellowship members and friends about following through on the General Assembly resolution passed in Ft. Worthy — **This is my report card:**

Cut/copy/email to Jon Lacey, Editor, NewsNotes, P.O. Box 4188 East Lansing, MI 48826
Or jlacey2632@aol.com



A blessing for Vigil and Witness planners

May your desire to work with God lead you to prayer,
 May your commitment to Christian nonviolence guide your decisions,
 May the gifts of the Spirit match your inadequacies.
 May God give you the time to plan carefully what must be done and serenity to overlook what can't be completed,
 May Jesus give you a dedicated coworker for support and enthusiasm,
 May the Spirit provide you with community, locally and around the

world, all working for peace.
 May you speak your faith so others can understand,
 May you find hope when the news shouts despair,
 May you be able to love the people who curse you,
 May your passion and rashness be tempered with patience and humility,
 May Christian nonviolence set your heart ablaze.
 May you find the peace of Christ, which passes human understanding.

Excerpt/prayer from <http://christianpeacewitness.org/downloads/liftingversion1.pdf>—a handbook for local efforts.

Your Executive Committee – Disciples Peace Fellowship 2008

Co-Moderators: Tim Longman & Rob Crawford Staff: Kathy Coggins Gideon

Members: Job Cobos ('11); Rob Crawford ('09); David Downing ('09); Jim Higginbotham ('11); Cathy Hubbard ('09); Jon Lacey ('09); Tim Longman ('11); Sandy Messick ('11); Audrey Spindle ('09); Sharon Warner ('11); Craig Watts ('09)

Annual Membership/Renewal /Contribution Form

Name(s) _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-mail address _____

Congregation _____

Annual Dues: \$35.00 Individual__ \$50.00 Household/Congregation __ \$12.00 Students/Limited Income__

I am instead/also including a contribution of \$ _____ for the work of Disciples Peace Fellowship

Send dues and contributions to:

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

Staff Contact/Primary Contact:

**Kathy Coggins Gideon
 (502) 368-5095 or Disciplespeacefellowship@gmail.com**