

THE Anglican PEACEMAKER

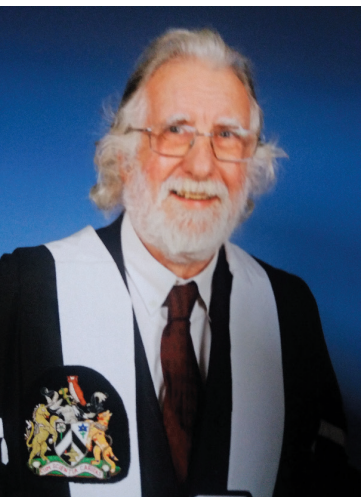
The newsletter of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Winter 2023–4

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In this issue, we reflect on the tragic situation in Gaza. We consider the work of women in peacemaking and meet the winners of the Wilson Hinkes Peace Award.

WHEN WILL THEY EVER LEARN?



Peter Toon

“OH, WHEN WILL YOU EVER LEARN?
WHEN WILL YOU EVER LEARN?”

Pete Seeger

FROM PETER D. TOON

Peter D Toon is a retired GP and medical philosopher. He is an Anglican Reader with Quaker leanings. You can find more about him and his writing on his website www.peterdtoon.com.

Vera Brittain (1893–1970) is best known for “*Testament of Youth*” – her autobiographical account of her life during the First World War. But she also wrote another, shorter autobiography “*England’s Hour*” which covers just fifteen months, from a few weeks before the outbreak of World War II to the end of November 1940, and was published a few weeks later.

She gives a vivid account of the horror of the London Blitz and the problems of the evacuation of children, including the anguish of sending her own son and daughter to America. But she also reflects on how the war came about and the lost opportunities, if the energy and money put into the “war effort” in 1940 had been put into a “peace effort” in the inter-war period. At the end of the book she considers what must be done to ensure that history does not repeat itself and that her children do not face annihilation in a Third World War in 1965.

Her choice of date was fairly prophetic, because there would have been a nuclear war in October 1962 if three men had not kept their heads. Two of these, Nikita Khrushchev and John F Kennedy, were world leaders, whose previous actions had brought the world to the brink of war, but at



Vera Brittain

the last minute pulled back from the brink and behaved like statesmen. The third is less well known; Vasily Arkhipov was one of three senior officers in a Russian submarine carrying nuclear weapons in the Caribbean during the crisis. When they thought (wrongly) that they were being attacked by the US Navy, who were dropping depth charges to signal to them to surface, his two colleagues wanted to launch their nuclear weapons, but he courageously refused to agree, and since their orders required the assent of all three officers war was averted.

Some of the steps Brittain envisaged would be needed to keep the future peace were taken: the creation of the United Nations, a slightly more effective successor to the impotent League of Nations, and the steady progress of peace-building between Germany and some of the nations she occupied. This process led Germany France, Belgium, Netherlands and Luxemburg to create the EEC which ultimately led to the EU, which now makes war between Germany and her 26 neighbours unthinkable.

Unfortunately the unresolved tension between Germany and her neighbours leading to World War II was replaced by tension between the USSR and NATO – the “Cold War” – which only ended with the collapse of the USSR. And as the war in Ukraine enters its second year, one can’t help but see parallels in the history of Germany between the Wars and that of Russia between 1991 and today.

Both countries had lost an empire and a faith in what their country stood for. Both faced economic turmoil and the collapse of their currency; and after a brief flirtation with democracy both countries turned to a dominating autocratic figure who seemed to offer certainty in a chaotic world. And both these autocrats have turned out to be expansionist warmongers unwilling to give up their power.

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I am not an expert in International Relations or Russian history, but I did spend a lot of time in Russia and a little in Ukraine during the decade after 1992. On my first visit to Russia, someone working in the British Embassy described Russians as “*a proud people with holes in their shoes – but you mustn’t notice the holes*”.

The West did offer some help in the chaos following the breakup of the Soviet Union, and at that time there was a great deal of enthusiasm amongst Russians to find out what had been going on in the world from which they been cut off for so long, and to join the Western democratic world. But rather than making serious efforts to bring Russian into that world, in the way so many other countries now members of the EU were brought in, it seemed to me that much of the money and effort was wasted on large projects with limited impact. A lot went to wealthy Western advisors and an already privileged Russian elite. A Russian friend outside this elite once said of one such project “*I think it is a social programme!*” since its most visible activities were conferences, including one on a boat cruising on the Volga. Meanwhile Western entrepreneurs took advantage of the breakdown in the Russian economy to find new markets for goods from Western Europe, whilst Russian oligarchs asset-stripped the state, and robber barons and *mafiosi* took over from communist bosses (sometimes all three being the same people!) In 1998 the rouble collapsed yet again and many people lost all their savings. Shortly afterwards Vladimir Putin was elected President of Russia.

Even then it might not have been too late. George Robertson, a former Labour defence secretary who led NATO between 1999 and 2003, observed of his meetings with Putin: “*They wanted to be part of that secure, stable prosperous west that Russia was out of at the time*”. At one meeting Putin said: ‘*When are you going to invite us to join NATO?*’ Lord Robertson replied ‘*Well, we don’t invite people to join NATO they apply to join NATO.*’ Putin’s response was: ‘*Well, we’re not standing in line with a lot of countries that don’t matter.*’ If NATO had understood Russian pride and insecurity better and ignored the holes in their shoes, perhaps there might not be a war in Ukraine today.

Another parallel between the break-up of the USSR and the way the empires of Germany and Austro-Hungary were carved up at Versailles is that both left a lot of disgruntled ethnic minorities feeling they were in the “wrong country”. This is perhaps an experience hard to understand in island Britain (except perhaps in Monmouthshire or Berwick-upon-Tweed?) but it gave Hitler a plausible excuse for his claim that Sudetenland Germans in Czechoslovakia “belonged” in Germany.

After being run essentially as one country with a large amount of internal migration for 70 years, the same problem exists in many of the countries of the former Soviet Union. The boundaries of Ukraine as they are now under international law were set under Stalin, except for the Crimea which was only transferred from Russia to Ukraine in 1954. This history means that most citizens are ethnically Russian in Crimea and some eastern provinces of Ukraine. The international community is understandably unwilling to start redrawing borders, however arbitrary they may be, for fear of unleashing cans of worms all over the world, and many areas in any case are so mixed that a change of border

would merely replace one problem with another. Perhaps the only long-term solution is the sort of cross-community peace-building we have seen in Northern Ireland and South Africa?

Ukraine is fighting for its existence with support from Western nations, as was Britain with the support of the Commonwealth in 1940. Vera Brittain then refused to accept the popular simplistic view that it was all the fault of “the other side” – or even the fault of a small group of politicians on “the other side” led by a megalomaniac. She asked two crucial questions:

How did we get into this mess?

How can we stop it happening again?

She was also prepared to admit that there were faults on both sides, Perhaps peacemakers now need to do the same and ask similar questions about the current situation.

VERA A SONG

FROM SUE GILMURRAY

APF Trustee and singer-songwriter Sue Gilmurray has written the following song about Vera Brittain. (You can find the music score and an audio recording on the website of Movement for the Abolition of War, www.abolishwar.net listed under ‘What we do’)

VERA

There was once a young girl raised in comfort and plenty;
with a life full of promise, her hopes they were high, but
the nations around her were arming for conflict and she
watched the men leave for the battlefield.

And the bright carefree days that her youth should have
brought her, they were stolen away by the dark days of war,
and she tended the wounded and sat with the dying, saw the
wreckage of men on the battlefield.

And the first man she lost was the lover she cherished, and
the last man she lost was her brother and friend,
all her dearest companions whose lives were so precious,
they were cut down in youth on the battlefield.

And it seemed that her pain was a pain beyond bearing, yet
she took up her life and she took up her pen,
and she wrote and she spoke and she argued and pleaded,
calling men to have done with the battlefield.

And the years that came after brought husband and children,
and the words that she wrote brought her fortune and fame,
but wherever she went, and whatever it cost her,
she would call for an end to the battlefield.

And she moves us to tears with the tale of her anguish, and
we smile when we read how she found love at last, but we
don’t understand what she laboured to teach us till we learn
to say No to the battlefield.

Now our children are living in comfort and plenty; with
their lives full of promise, their hopes may be high,
but the nations around us are arming for conflict and it’s
time to have done with the battlefield.

Sue Gilmurray 2006

WILSON/HINKES PEACE AWARD 2023

ADDRESS AT THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE GATHERING BY LYNN AND DAVID MORRIS
(JOURNEYMEN THEATRE)



Lynn and David Morris

Presented annually during the Week of Prayer for World Peace, the Wilson/Hinkes Peace Award is named after two former Chairs of APF and the WPWP, Revd. Gordon Wilson and Revd. Sidney Hinkes. It recognises individuals or groups working at grassroots level to promote peace and reconciliation. The Award includes £500 for the recipients to use how they please. Please see page 6 on how a previous recipient used her grant.

Lyn and David Morris are a husband and wife duo, who, over the past decade, have run 'Journeyman Theatre', creating and performing a range of theatrical productions inspired by Quaker Concerns and Testimonies. The award also

recognises the couple's work with the Seir Women's Co-operative in Palestine

To quote the 1987 New Zealand Peace Testimony, much loved by Quakers:

'The places to begin acquiring the skills and maturity and generosity to avoid or resolve conflicts are in our own homes, our personal relationships, our schools, our workplaces and wherever decisions are made'.

Peace as we all know, isn't an absence of conflict. The process of peace-making, like theatre-making isn't formulaic. It can be messy, seemingly unproductive and ungainly. And it's on-going.

In theatre we say that process is all, that the excitement, the frustrations, challenges and discoveries all happen before a production reaches the stage. Jonathan Miller, the well-known theatre director, said that by the time a play reaches its opening performance, it is already a dying star. So we cannot afford for peace processes to reach a final point. That way lies the danger of complacency and the risk of reverting.

When we as Journeymen, built our theatre projects, we were frequently at odds with one another about the form the work should take, where edits needed to be made, whose writing would bear the brunt of the cuts. These could be exasperating and infuriating episodes where neither of us wanted to give ground, both convinced we each had the stronger vision. Resolution came when we allowed each other space to talk and listen. Compromise was not enough. With compromise, one might win and the other lose for the sake of moving on. We needed to reach Collaboration, where people work together creatively to find a solution that feels right. In this case, both of us

understanding that the project itself was more important than either of us.

As specialists in human rights theatre, we had certain dilemmas to address. For one thing, drama requires the seeds of conflict within it to create essential dramatic tension, and for another, plays where differing points of view are all given equal weighting won't make for gripping drama. If a balanced argument is required then a book might be a better medium. This has not always sat comfortably within our Quaker framework, wherein Quakers love a balance of opinion. Then there's the desire for resolution, for atonement even, a sense of hope and a possible way forward. With so many of our projects, this way of concluding a play did not fit with a sense of dramatic integrity. Indeed, with certain projects such as *Feeding the Darkness*, about state-sanctioned torture, or the true story of our Chechen refugee friend in *The Bundle*, it would have felt like a disservice to those involved in real life. So, no, we didn't generally provide an easy ride for our audiences. What we provided was a safe space for contrasting views and an opportunity for people to be heard. The people we played were frequently drawn from real-life, often those who wouldn't normally have a public platform. Sometimes, these were voices an audience would prefer not to hear. There is the vital importance of storytelling. We humans love a good story. Recognition and relationships are central to a shared theatre experience. With intimate theatre such as ours, we needed to bring our audiences into the story, to connect with the human dilemmas and sense the familiarity of strangers. Our audiences became part of our performances and therefore often saw the issues as directly connected to each one of us: we tried to bring the existential into a reality in the room. This, we believe, is central to the process of peace.

We have often said that our work in prisons has given us the most satisfaction. Prisoners can be one of the best audiences ever, with their levels of attentiveness and enthusiasm. Entering a prison as Journeymen Theatre allowed us access to people for whom human rights had become a very grey area. We learnt so much from the people we met inside and our resulting play, *Back Door Parole*, never failed to shock audiences into recognition of how far our standards of humanity have fallen when it comes to people who have transgressed our societal norms. This play enabled us to bring our audiences into a closed world and to appreciate being able to condemn the deed but see the person beyond the wrong doing.

As the peace process rarely reaches any visible conclusion, so our plays didn't attempt this either. Our final play, *Breeding Grounds*, addresses the twin issues of population growth and climate change. It always drew strong reactions and even on occasion, outright anger at the implications the climate crisis has for all of us. We have been able to shine a torch into the dark corners and every performance has been an act of ministry.

ORIGINS OF THE APF PEACE POEMS COMPETITION IN ZIMBABWE

FROM CLOUD MABAUDI, APF TRUSTEE, ZIMBABWE

The APF Peace Poems Competition is a brain child of my wife Accucilia. It was born of the APF Sports for Peace Competition, a predecessor to the poetry competition. It all began on the day when we were handing over peace balls to the winning teams when this young man, Peter Musa, only eleven years old at the time, having been inspired by the caption, “blessed are the peace makers” written on the balls, came forward and volunteered to give a poem on peace. The poem was titled, “I am a Peace Lover.”

Touched by the poem from such a poor child, my wife donated T/Shirts and branded them with the APF logo and encouraged other children to write their own poems and receive some prizes. Though with a shoestring budget and limited resources we soldiered on. So far it has made a difference to the participants, as it has created a platform for the gospel and to teach them peace, non-violence and abstinence from drug abuse. Our main targets are the school leavers who are unemployed due to economic

hardships and involved in drug abuse, crime and violence, rendering them vulnerable to manipulation by politicians. So I and my wife do go into the streets of the ghettos with goodies and food and invite them to join the competition and get some prizes. We encourage them to stay away from drugs and crime and all sorts of vice. Although we are facing financial challenges, our aim is to expand this competition further, involving schools and tertiary institutes.

BRINGING RELATIONSHIPS TOGETHER

BY BEATRICE KASEKE, 18, ZIMBABWE

As rain brings life
Let us create stronger relationships
Through which our area
will be developed.
Let us remove the violence From
people’s minds.
Let us join our ideas, Seek our rights,
Combine our energies,
Make important decisions, and take
the necessary steps. Let us assist
each other

To come out of this burning pain.
Russians, British, Americans, Different
nations,
We are all God’s
creatures. Let us
relate positively
And develop
ourselves
Guided by the
dream Of better
future.
The light of
God Will assist
us our way.



Beatrice Kaseke

WE NEED EACH OTHER

BY JOSEPH SIBANDA, 17, ZIMBABWE

Crushed by the destructive claws of
fragmentation
Only self awareness, constructive
communication and advocacy can
set us free. Let us unite as we need
each other
Like the reeds that make a basket.
We can rejoin what was separated
We need integration, we need to keep
that flicker of light That there is still
hope for the world.



Joseph Sibanda

ALTERNATIVE REMEMBRANCE DAY EVENTS

EDINBURGH

On Remembrance Sunday APF members joined with Peace & Justice (Scotland) to lay peace poppies at the peace tree in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh remembering all victims of war and calling for peace.

WOKINGHAM

An alternative Remembrance gathering was also held in Wokingham, at the Langborough Recreation Ground. The event was initiated by APF member David Chapman. It included a number of prayers and reflections from many faith traditions and drew upon the Week of Prayer for World Peace resources among others.



Alternative Remembrance Event at the Langborough Recreation Ground, Wokingham



Alternative Remembrance Day in Princes St. Gardens Edinburgh

SUPPORTING APF

DID YOU KNOW THAT APF IS FUNDED ENTIRELY THROUGH SUPPORT FROM MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS AND LEGACIES?

For a number of years, it is APF reserves that have enabled the Fellowship to function. These reserves are limited and it is important that APF increase annual income. For those in the UK, If you are in a position to do so please consider a standing order. Standing orders allow for financial planning. Below is the information you need for your bank. Also, again if it applies please consider Gift Aid.

If you are able to make a regular donation to APF:

STANDING ORDER

Bank: NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK Bearsted Branch

Account Name: Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Account No: 79531199

Gift Aid – increasing the value of your gifts

Did you know that, if you are a UK taxpayer, you can increase the value of your giving to APF by 25% at no additional cost to yourself? Your donations will qualify as long as they're not more than four times what you have paid in tax in any tax year.

This is Gift Aid and the Inland Revenue will send APF the tax paid on all your donations if you complete the form below

GIFT AID DECLARATION

Until I notify you otherwise, I would like the ANGLICAN PACIFIST FELLOWSHIP to treat the donations I make as Gift Aid donations. I pay UK income tax sufficient to cover the amount reclaimed on this Gift Aid. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

£..... from

(Enter the amount and date of the first Gift Aid donation to the Fellowship)

Signed.....Date

Full Name.....

Address.....

Please return donations & this form to: Hannah Williams, Treasurer, The Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, PO Box 822, The Hemming Flower, 822, Redhill, RH1 9LY United Kingdom.

Tel APF Office: 07494 272595. Email: treasurer@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

You can also access this form via the APF website:

www.anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk/donate-to-apf-now/

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BOOK NEWS

TRANSCENDENCE

EDITED BY
BROTHER DANIEL FAIVRE SG

As a tribute to Brother Daniel Faivre SG, and to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Westminster Interfaith, his book *Transcendence* has been reprinted as a new edition. Brother Daniel devoted most of his life to building bridges between the different faiths. At his Memorial Service in 2007, Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor called him a pioneer and a prophetic figure in the work of inter-faith relations.

This book is probably the best known of his many inter-faith publications. It stands as a legacy to his dedication and work. It is a careful selection of prayers and sacred texts on various themes from a wide range of religious and cultural traditions, which Brother Daniel chose and used effectively in his activities. A few additional texts have been added, as well as some photographs, taken mainly from inter-faith prayer meetings and the multi-faith pilgrimages for peace and friendship, which Brother Daniel started in 1986.

A chapter on 'Peace' is included and begins with the comment 'The person of faith recognises that only in God will humanity find true peace and that this requires true justice in our relationships'.

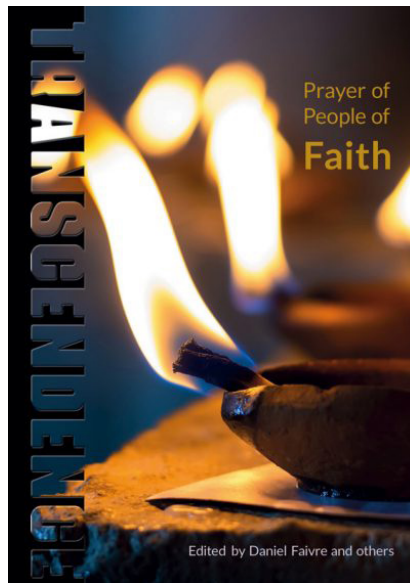
In 2018, Sr. Elizabeth O'Donohoe, a member of Westminster Interfaith was awarded the Wilson/Hinkes Peace Award by the Week of Prayer for World Peace in recognition of her years of work in inter-faith dialogue. She chose to use the award of £500 to publish a further edition of this much valued book.

Copies of *Transcendence* can be bought at New City Online Bookstore <https://www.newcity.co.uk/books/transcendence/>

COMING SOON: ROADS OF HURT AND HOPE – LENT COURSE FROM JERUSALEM

BY REVD CANON DR ANDREW MAYES TSSF

Written whilst he was chaplain at St George's College Jerusalem, this book for Lent (or any time of year), for



groups or individuals will help engage readers with issues of justice and peace in the Middle East.

Roads of Hurt and Hope invites us to walk 5 biblical roads, looking at scripture and key issues, aided by the voices of those who actually live on these archetypal roads today. Abraham and Sarah's *Way of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs* leads us along one of the most dangerous roads in the West Bank to meet a young priest at Nablus who shares his story.

The ancient *Via Maris* becomes the tragic Salaheddin Road at Gaza and leads us beyond, to Galilee. The *Jerusalem-Jericho Road* takes us through the Judean wilderness to meet local displaced Bedouin. On *the Way of the Cross* we engage with Muslim, Jewish

and Christian residents, and on the *Road to Emmaus* we meet those engaged in vital interfaith and reconciliation work.

This is an invigorating and challenging Lent course which features several Franciscan prayer exercises, which close each session.

Roads of Hurt and Hope will be published by Wipf & Stock (<https://wipfandstock.com>) early in 2024. Profits go to the Diocese of Jerusalem for the rebuilding of the Anglican hospital in Gaza.

Look out for a full review in the next issue of TAP.

APF FINANCE GROUP VACANCIES

APF is setting up a Finance Group to assist with the transition to the new financial roles listed above. New members to the group would be asked to commit for a limited time period, during the transition to a new Treasurer and Bookkeeper.

If you are comfortable with finances, and would like to give some time to support APF, but the role of Treasurer would not suit you at this time, than please contact us for more information about this temporary position.

CONTACT:

enquiries@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

07494 272595



APF YOUTUBE CHANNEL

You can catch up on our monthly prayer vigils and reflections by visiting our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@anglicanpacifistfellowship6478/featured>.

Please subscribe, like and share to help our channel grow and thrive!

APF NEWS AND UPDATES

FROM THE CHAIR, SUE CLAYDON

Like many at the start of 2024, I found it hard to wish people a ‘happy’ New Year. It seems that the end of 2023 saw the world in further violence and injustice and the sentiment of ‘happy’ just did not feel right from the safety of my world.

Others have commented on Gaza in this TAP, Ukraine continues with deaths on all sides, in Sudan a peace agreement seems as elusive as ever, and the bombing of Yemen just adds more tensions. All our Governments continue to increase spending on militaries/arms.

Looking ahead for 2024, it can seem that hopes for peace are an elusive vision.

I was recently interviewed on the Voice of Islam Radio. The interviewer wanted to know what the goals of APF were in continuing ‘to promote its message of non-violence and peace in the face of contemporary challenges?’ While I discussed APF’s three aspects of praying, educating and acting (campaigning), I also went on to say that a central aspect for many Christians is maintaining ‘hope’. That working individually and collectively is a fundamental way to keep ‘hope’ for ourselves and the world alive.

Recently I read an article by Rt. Rev. Lord Rowan Williams in the Guardian. It was about an action 100 years ago, by Welsh women. *‘In May 1923, the Welsh women’s peace petition was initiated – a plea from the women of Wales to the women of the US, urging the US to take its place in the newly formed League of Nations and encouraging its full participation in the permanent court of international justice, which had come into being in 1922. The text refers to American-Welsh cooperation in the 19th century, and welcomes the steps taken after the first world war to control the arms trade and tackle what we now call human trafficking and the movement of illegal drugs.’*

These are issues that give it a startlingly contemporary ring. But more startling is the fact that nearly 400,000 women in Wales signed’.

The Women’s peace petition, long forgotten has been returned to Wales. The fact that all those thousands of

women (there was not even universal suffrage then) acted should encourage us to keep campaigning.

APF online prayers (see pg 11) continue as a means of both worship and support. This year on Holy Innocents Day (28 Dec) we gathered not only remembering the current innocents in Gaza and Ukraine, but those in Sudan, where the largest number of displaced children are. We also remembered other ‘innocents’ of the past, including those in the Residential Schools in Canada.

We will be trying a new ‘reminder’ scheme for 2024 and if you wish to be included please email chair@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk.

In September (27 – 29th) APF will join with FoR England/Wales and others to hold a residential conference. Covid put a pause on residential conferences; however, it is timely to hold another, as the majority of action has been online, meaning in-person fellowship has missed out. It will also offer streaming of a couple of key sessions.

The potential theme is ‘where now for peace?’. The aim will be to have 3 distinct streams of workshops – ideas / skills / worship. The keynote addresses would focus our attention on a key peace topic and be clearly linked to a form of action. If you are interested, please contact Sarah or myself and details will be sent out as soon as they are available.

Now I have a confession to make. I find it very hard to ask people for money. To keep APF going we must increase our income. Please see page 5 and if possible consider updating your Standing Order or other forms of donation this year.

I also want to welcome our new APF Treasurer, Hannah Williams. She has helped APF already in a number of ways.

So, no ‘happy’ new year, but my wishes that we will all have a more peaceful 2024.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE 2023-4



WEEK OF PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE

‘In the turmoil of a world increasingly dominated by violence, and characterised by bewilderment and confusion, created by the apparent impotence of man to alleviate the sufferings caused by injustice except by more recourse to violence, it seems to us that an unprecedented spiritual initiative is urgently required.’ Although these words could well have been written in the past few months, they were written 50 years ago this year by the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship commending a World Week of Prayer for World Peace.

They went on to write, ‘It seems appropriate the Anglican Church should take the initiative in this matter particularly in view of the strong resolutions of the 1968 Lambeth Conference on the importance of prayer (4), condemning war (8), on the need for consultation on world peace (10) and on the desirability of co-operation with other faiths (11).’

In working to address these points, the first Chairman, the late Dr Edward Carpenter, former Dean of Westminster Abbey, established the guiding principle of the Week in the words “The peace of the world must be prayed for by the faiths of the world”, and this is still the basis of WPWP.

During this 50th Anniversary year, it is hoped that a number of special activities will take place. Suggestions include:

- A new revised leaflet for children and young people
- An online seminar with some those who have received the Annual Wilson/ Hinkes Peace Award

(named after two APF Chairs, Gordon Wilson and Sidney Hinkes

- A special in person/streamed Gathering during the WPWP
- Encouraging more activities at the local level throughout the Anglican Communion.

Many TAP readers will have been involved in WPWP over the five decades and we would like to hear from you with your memories and also any new ideas. As APF was the initiator of WPWP we are setting up a small working group to support activities throughout the Anniversary Year. Please contact Sarah by emailing sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk if you would like to take part.

The WPWP saw a number of innovations this year (including this new logo). It was decided to offer the Prayer Resource free. This resulted in a greater uptake than for many years. Donations came in and mostly covered the cost and so the same system will operate in 2024.

This year WPWP collaborated with the Iona Community and Alignment: Interfaith Contemplative Practices to offer a digital experience during the Week of Prayer. It was used by individuals and faith communities around the world. People continue to click on the direct link to the digital week of prayer with a total now of just over 3500. There were over 30,000 views via social media, and 1649 views directly to the Iona Community website posting.

This collaboration will continue with special work for the 50th Anniversary year.

If you have prayers you would like to suggest for the 2024–25 Prayer Resource, please email them to wpwp2021@yahoo.com

WEAPONISING WOMEN IN WAR: WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES WEBINAR DURING 16 DAYS AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

BY SARAH MAGUIRE, APF COORDINATOR

On the 8th December, the World Council of Churches held a hybrid seminar from their Ecumenical Centre

in Geneva: ‘Weaponizing Women in War’. The event was timed to coincide with the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence.

It featured a number of impressive speakers giving their unique perspectives on how women are specifically affected and targeted in war, about how to heal this harm, and women’s work as active peacemakers.

The first speaker was Ukrainian human rights lawyer, Oleksandra Matviichuk, head of campaigning organisation Centre for Civil Liberties. Ms. Matviichuk painted a stark picture of the devastation wrought by invading Russian troops on civilians throughout the invasion of Ukraine. Chillingly, she described rape utilised as a ‘technology’ of repression against the population of occupied territories, paralysing resistance through a toxic combination of guilt, shame and fear. Ms. Matviichuk emphasised that this tactic was a global phenomenon, requiring a much stronger co-ordinated global response.

Ms. Matviichuk’s is involved in building a database of war crimes committed by Russian troops against civilians. The aim is to bring Putin and Russian soldiers before a special tribunal to answer for their war crimes in Ukraine. By holding perpetrators to account in this way, she argues, others will be inhibited from committing such atrocities in the future.

The second speaker was Dr. Thomas Tongun Leone, Co-ordinator of the Catholic Medical Commission of South Sudan. His devastatingly factual and compassionate presentation detailed the lasting physical and psychological harm inflicted upon women subjected to wartime sexual violence. He emphasised the lack of medical care available for survivors in South Sudan, where there are not enough doctors to support a population ravaged by years of brutal conflict.

Dr. Leone discussed the stigma affecting survivors of sexual violence, affecting their standing in the family and community. This deters survivors from seeking medical and psychological support.

Dr Leone recommended that the church in South Sudan establish a

Trauma Healing Centre to provide psycho-social healing to survivors and a place where they can talk safely about their experiences.

Joy Eva Bohol, Regional Migration Specialist, Europe, United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) spoke next in a recorded presentation. She outlined disturbing reports of women and child migrants and refugees being subjected to sexual humiliation and abuse by border police both in Mediterranean landing points such as Lesbos and Lampedusa and at the Polish border with Belarus. Racism seems to be a factor in this abuse. Ms. Bohol said that the Church Commission would continue to challenge individual governments and the EU on their treatment of refugees and migrants.

Carla Khijoyan, Programme Executive for the Middle East, World Council of Churches explored differing roles of women in war; as combatants, spies, propaganda material, and as victims of sexual violence. She emphasised that to build a lasting peace, women must have a voice as peacemakers, negotiators and politicians.

After audience discussion, Sikhonzile Ndlovu, Advocacy Officer for Gender Justice, The Lutheran World Federation and Madeleine Rees, OBE, Secretary General, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) took the stage. They discussed UN Resolution 1325, issued in 2000, which aims to reaffirm the role of women as active peacemakers and protect women from gender-based violence in conflict. They agreed the resolution ‘lacked teeth’ with little to ensure implementation. Madeleine Rees drew attention to the ‘elephant in the room’ – the continued legitimisation of armed conflict in general, motivated in part by the lucrative nature of the arms trade.

The seminar ended with a brief theological reflection.

You can watch the full seminar on YouTube here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t86m-FPTZa4>

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: SUPPORTING PEACEMAKERS IN THE HOLY LAND

FROM JAN BENVIE TSSF, APF SECRETARY



Christ in the Rubble, Lutheran Church, Bethlehem with Rev. Munther Isaac

In the week before Christmas, we saw further Israeli military attacks on the small Christian community of Gaza. An Israeli sniper killed two women sheltering in The Holy Family Church, and an Israeli military attack destroyed their generator as well as further damaging Ahli Anglican Hospital, kidnapping/ detaining many of their staff.

Only one group:

- receives full recognition as a state from the world community;
- has military might, including nuclear weapons;
- has militarily occupied the other's land;
- has imprisoned thousands of people under a system of no charge or trial.

Both groups:

- long for a safe and secure home;
- suffer the agony of grief;
- have people who want a peaceful resolution and people who reject it.

Statements by UK politicians and church leaders have rightly acknowledged the pain and anger felt by Israelis, but have generally ignored the context in which the attacks on 7 October took place. While in no way condoning them, it is important to recognise, as UN Secretary Antonio Guterres has stated, these attacks “*did not happen in a vacuum. The Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation.*”

During the recent truce/ceasefire the voices we heard, those deciding who should be freed, and other conditions of the truce, were those who believe that violence is an acceptable way forward. The voices for peace are too often sidelined by political forces and the media.

I was struck by something that freed Israeli hostage, Yocheved Lifshitz (a peace activist), said: “*Simwar [the leader of Hamas in Gaza] was with us three to four days after we arrived, I asked him how he is not ashamed to do such a thing to people who all these years have supported peace. He didn't answer. He was silent.*”

How many remained silent in 2018, during the Great March of Return, a non-violent protest in Gaza, met with violence from the Israeli military, resulting in 214 killed and over 36,000 injured? What scenario might have unfolded if the leaders of this nonviolent movement had been engaged with? If Palestinian refugees from Gaza had been granted the right to return to their homes, a right enshrined in international law?

By the time you read this we will be into a new year, a time when we look forward. Here are a few examples of voices for peace that we need to raise up in 2024.

There are many, many more.

The **Palestinian Christian community** is small, but are at the forefront of campaigns for peace and justice. You can support Sabeel and Kairos Palestine through Sabeel-Kairos UK <https://www.sabeel-kairos.org.uk>.

You can read about Wi'am Conflict Resolution Center in Bethlehem on page 10 in the report from Peace & Justice (Scotland) who presented their 2023 Carnall Peace Award to Wi'am.

The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem (including Anglican Archbishop Naoum) called for Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem to be muted. (<https://en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info/blog/2023/11/11/statement-on-the-celebration-of-advent-and-christmas-in-the-midst-of-war-on-gaza/>)

Hamas' attack on 7th October, killing 1,200 (many of them civilians), and Israel's heavy bombardment of the Gaza Strip resulting in at least 20,000 civilians killed and 53,000 injured (as of 19/12/23), have resulted in some of the most shocking and cruel acts of recent wars -

- The kidnapping, abuse and killing of civilians,
- The denial of basic food, water, electricity to a civilian population.
- The bombing of hospitals, schools, mosques, churches.
- The destruction of whole neighbourhoods.

“We cannot possibly think that the destruction of Gaza and the killing of children is going to create peace in the region. That's utterly nonsensical.”

UNICEF SPOKESPERSON JAMES ELDER 30/11/23

Peacemakers in both Palestine and Israel report feelings of helplessness, anger and pain as the level of hatred publicly displayed, in words and actions, increases. We, as peacemakers from the outside looking in, have a role to play when pain blinds people so that they can only feel the pain of one side, of one people – their own.

Whilst challenging the false binaries of “bad guys” and “good guys”, we do need to truthfully acknowledge and name structures and systems of power that privilege one group at the expense of the other.

This letter from Palestinian Christian leaders to President Biden in November, is as pertinent now as it was then:

For years, as followers of Jesus, we have called for peace that is based on justice. This land has been crying for peace and justice for 75 years. ... The Palestinian and Israeli children deserve to live, hope and dream. Dear Mr. President, there can be no peace and security without justice and equality. There can be no peace and security without equal rights for all. Siege, violence and war cannot bring peace and security. A comprehensive and just peace is the only hope for Palestinians and Israelis alike. (https://www.globalministries.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/BethlehemChurches_Letter-11-27-23.pdf)

Many in the Jewish community speak out for peace. Na'amod is a movement of Jews in the UK campaigning for freedom, equality and justice for all Palestinians and Israelis (www.naamod.org.uk)

For years the Center for Jewish Nonviolence (www.cjnv.org) has taken Jewish activists from around the world to Israel-Palestine, joining with Palestinian and Israeli partners in nonviolent civil resistance to the Israeli occupation.



Erella, an Israeli activist holding Shu'eib, the baby of her Palestinian friend

can there ever be one. The only way to stop the bloodshed is a political agreement that will guarantee security, justice, and freedom for both nations. There are no winners in war. Only peace will bring security.

Signed: Mesarvot; Mothers Against Violence; New Profile; Yesh Gvul; Parents Circle Families Forum; Women in Black; Zochrot (<https://my.zazim.org.il/petitions/a-joint-jewish-arab-declaration-for-peace>)

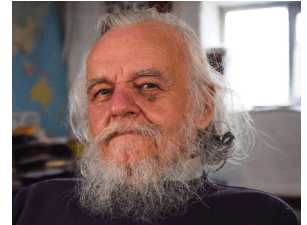
In mid-December a number of **joint Israeli-Palestinian groups** working for peace issued this statement.

We – movements, organizations and activists, Jews and Arabs – write these words out of heavy mourning for the thousands of people killed in recent weeks, and out of terrible anxiety for the safety of the abducted and those who will still be harmed in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank.

... We have all experienced the rounds of violence. Time and time again it is evident that there is no military solution to this conflict, nor

REMEMBERING PEACE CAMPAIGNER/HISTORIAN BILL HETHERINGTON

BY SUE CLAYDON, APF CHAIR



Bill Hetherington

Bill Hetherington, a presence in the UK peace movement for over six decades, died aged 89 on the 5 November 2023. A fervent pacifist, Bill became involved in direct action in the 1960's. A committed member of the Peace Pledge Union (PPU) and War Resisters' International, he also worked with many other peace organisations. His activism included supporting conscientious objectors on both sides in the Cold War and this dedication never wavered, including a number of arrests. His commitment to pacifism started as a child in the Second World War. In an interview in 2017 he remembered, "One day we happened to be chatting during playtime, and then the next day she wasn't there. Her house had had a direct hit by a bomb. She was dead. Her elder sister was blinded. This is the human cost of war."

Bill was 'the' historian of pacifism in the UK. His knowledge of facts and individuals was astounding. Bill set up the PPU's database of British conscientious objectors, building it from scratch to the point at which it contained details of over 12,000 individuals. This has proved a lasting resource of those men and women who challenged war, often under very trying circumstances.

You would find Bill at any gathering for peace with his stall of leaflets and he always had time to chat and share his views.

During the APF/EPF Pilgrimage to the 1998 Lambeth Conference, Bill spoke to us in the cloister of Canterbury Cathedral. He stood beside the grave of Canon Dick Sheppard, founder of PPU, and a major influence in the founding of APF. He talked of Canon Sheppard's life and also of Vera Britain and Sybil Thorndike, associated with APF over many years, whom Bill greatly admired for their pacifist stance in WW2.

Bill's contributions to the UK peace movement will be missed, but he leaves a legacy in his archive that will inform future generations.

APF was pleased to be represented on 25 July 2023 at the ordination of Lucy Barbour. Gloucester Cathedral was filled with families and friends of the Ordinands. Lucy is a former APF Trustee and manages the APF YouTube channel. We send her our best wishes in her new Ministry.



Lucy Barbour at her Ordination

DIARY AND EVENTS

30th January

PROTEST 'DINING ON DEATH – NO TO THE ARMS DEALERS DINNER!'

6pm, London, near Marble Arch. Check here for updates: <https://caat.org.uk/events/dining-on-death-protest-vs-arms-dealer-dinner>

Mid-April

DAYS OF ACTION ON MILITARY SPENDING

Publicising the wider cost of military spending. Check here <https://demilitarize.org.uk/global-days-of-action/> for 2024 dates.

September 27th – 29th

RESIDENTIAL CONFERENCE WITH APF & FOR ENGLAND/WALES

The provisional theme is 'Where Now for Peace?'. The aim will be to have 3 distinct streams of workshops – ideas / skills / worship. Some sessions to be streamed. Details will be sent out as soon as they are available.

APF ON FACEBOOK

Keep up to date on APF activities and peace news by following us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/anglicanpeacemaker.

Let us know if there are things you'd like to see more of on our Facebook page. Email enquiries@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

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APF MONTHLY PRAYERS

A regular opportunity for fellowship and prayer online at 8pm (London)
Our Monthly Prayers are usually held on the third Thursday of the month.

Thursday, 15th February

Thursday, 21st March

If you are not able to make these times, you can view these meetings, and other previous ones on the APF YouTube channel: www.tinyurl.com/2232rszw

Email: sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk for the link

ANGLICAN PEACEMAKERS

PRAYING, EQUIPPING AND INFLUENCING FOR PEACE

Find out more about becoming part of the Anglican Peacemakers:


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CHRISTMAS 2023 AND LIVING THE CHOICE FOR HEALING, NOT HARM

FROM BISHOP PHILIP HUGGINS, APF COUNSELLOR

On December 10, 'Pearls and Irritations' published a picture and story from a Church in Bethlehem where baby Jesus is placed in a setting devastated by war. (See page 9 for image) This reflection aims to convey the peaceful universality of Christmas and how that particular image can be changed by our human choices.

At our traditional Midnight Christmas Service, we bless the Crib praying:

"You came to us as a helpless child to share our vulnerabilities, our joys and sorrows, and to teach us your way of love, our hearts and our homes to become Bethlehem spaces, open to receive the Light and Love of God and share it with others."

The prayer invites us back to Bethlehem to renew our sharing of the Light and Love of God, vivid in the Nativity scene.



Icon of the Mother of God in the Church of the Nativity Bethlehem

God's gift of God's self encourages our gifts to one another, including how we will live the message of Christmas. So what most matters this year?

Here is one suggestion based on the very human choices of adults in the Christmas story.

Reading the first and second chapters of Matthew's Gospel, we see the faithful loveliness of

Joseph and Mary. They adjust their lives when the divine comes to them through the messages of angels. They go to Bethlehem. Jesus is born. Wise ones, the Magi, come from the East. On their knees in wondrous delight, the Magi offer their gifts and speak of the star they had followed.

When the Magi depart, an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph and says, "Get up, take the child and his mother with you, and escape to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, because Herod intends to search for the child and do away with him." [Matthew 2.13]

In sum, we see Joseph, Mary and the Magi respond to their spiritual messengers with love and trust, notwithstanding all the complexity this brings to their daily lives.

By contrast, and here is the contemporary poignancy, Herod, the one with political power, finds this spiritual news perturbing and soon becomes violent. His response is egocentric. He seems to feel threatened, unable to share the delight of the Magi as they tell their wondrous tale. In anger he then inflicts suffering on the innocent. Herod orders and others then obey his decision to have all the male children, two years old or under, killed in the Bethlehem district. [Matthew 2.16-17].

The lesson for us is stark.

This year we have seen so much suffering of innocents caused by those with power and those who obey their orders. The contemporary manifestations of Herod's angry violence are in many places, but clearly in the sufferings caused by conflicts between and within nations. Frankly, people who cannot control their capacity for angry violence should be in therapy, not in political power. Their hearts hold the wrong intent and their capacity to rationalise their violence can seem utterly bottomless!

It is an old wisdom that if our first reaction to someone else's delight is negative – resentment, bitterness and the like – we should stop everything we are doing and go immediately on retreat to seek greater purity of heart!

Hence, poignantly too, as we bless the Crib, we recall what Jesus later teaches us about the 'way of love,' including our need for attention to the "things that come out of our mouth from our hearts." [Matthew 15.18-20]

For out of our hearts can come thoughts that are pure and beautiful or "evil intentions, murder..." What we think and let influence our thinking shapes our words and actions, for good or ill. As the Buddha and other spiritual guides also teach, we become what we think!

How important therefore are the choices we make!

The choice to nurture love with words and actions that bring healing as compared to the choices which just cause more harm. When the repeated choice is to harm, we see tragically where this leads.

How will the current citizens of Israel and Palestine, including in Bethlehem, heal and recover trust? How will those in such places as South Sudan, Sudan, Myanmar, Iran, Ukraine and Russia also heal and recover trust? (If, that is, the violence ever ends and there is some negotiated peace-building.)

Exactly when and by whom the cycle of violence began is often a contested narrative. But we do have spiritual and relational learnings that can help us build a sustainable peace culture.

Our learnings include the practice of meditation so that, with self-awareness, we make more careful choices as to our thoughts and words. Meditation helps us become more aware of our own projections and mistakes in times of egocentricity.

This aspiration accords with all that is enchanting about Christmas.

To help us be more peaceful together we are encouraged to adopt and renew "a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard."

<https://www.laudatosi.org/faiths/human-fraternity/>

This is the path to our better future together.

Copies of TAP are available on our website apf.org.uk