THE Anglican PEACEMAKER

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In this issue, we deep-dive into peace education and the ministry of early APF Member Rev. W Awdry.

EDUCATING FOR PEACE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM: A BRADFORD MODEL

FROM DIANE HADWEN, APF PEACE EDUCATION NETWORK REPRESENTATIVE



Diane Hadwen

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We need to talk to each other!

'Everyone should do this!' Rehan said, pointing to his peers, busily engaged in teaching children from another school. One child was being encouraged to try on a choir robe, another was searching for pelicans. Two girls were busy explaining to a group of boys that a fragment of a Saxon cross was evidence that in Bradford, people have always come from somewhere else. Rehan continued, *'It's important for us to live together, you know, without falling out. All we need to do is talk to each other like this!'*

Rehan was ten. He was born in Bradford, of Pakistani heritage and a practicing Muslim. Most of his peers were also Muslim; some shared his heritage, while others had roots in central and eastern Europe, and a number of different African countries. All were Year 5 pupils at Lapage Primary School. They had *volunteered* to work at Bradford Cathedral as Community Heritage Volunteers, meeting, and peer-educating, children with very different cultural and religious backgrounds from their own.

The Community Heritage Volunteer Project is an education initiative at Bradford Cathedral. An 'active' approach to peace education, it owes much to an existing Bradford model of multicultural learning outside the classroom, one which situates learning in community spaces and brings diverse citizenry together, to maximise understanding and minimise conflict.

When they walked through the doors of the Cathedral, Rehan and his friends embarked upon encounters with difference: a series of adventurous learning endeavours involving interaction with children and adults from a variety of faiths and none; people whom they would not have come into contact with otherwise, in a space which they would never have visited. They were involved in interpretation, collaboration and negotiation, learning how to manage divergence, in order to live together well.



Community Heritage Volunteers in Bradford Cathedral

One landscape, many views

Learning to live together well remains a recurring theme in Bradford, a city with one landscape but many views, cultural and religious diversity providing opportunities for enrichment, but also misunderstandings. In 2001, community polarisation was identified as fuelling conflict and subsequent reports presented the city as divided into White Christian and Asian Muslim areas. This was an over-simplification even then, and certainly is today, when increasingly where a person lives is less to do with cultural or religious heritage, and more to do with class, income and aspiration. However, this is not to suggest that a degree of segregation does not exist, or that this is not reflected in schools.

Rehan and his friends were growing up and attending school in a predominantly non-White, Muslim, but increasingly culturally diverse area of Bradford. The children they were engaging with at the Cathedral were from a semi-rural, almost exclusively White area, and their school had close links with the local church. Ordinarily, there would have been little contact between their respective schools or communities.

Recognising that a lack of contact increases the potential for conflict, educators in Bradford

have long explored the 'art' of how communities *'may learn to live together'* well, resulting in successive *informed* responses to *difference* and a distinctive Bradford model of multicultural learning outside the classroom. The Community Heritage Volunteer Project (CHVP) is an example of this model in practice.

The CHVP: the Bradford Model in Action

The CHVP aspires to help children to *'grasp the meaning and values of the plural cultures of today's world'* and the *'worldviews which underlie them'*, while maintaining individual and group identities. It acknowledges the kaleidoscopic nature of Bradford and the realities faced by children growing up in a confused and often dangerous world; bringing them together, to learn with and from each other, in an alternative space.

The Bradford model encourages children to take *action* as appropriate to their age and ability, and to *apply* citizenship *knowledge to real situations* in community contexts. In the case of the CHVP, the community context is a Christian sacred space.

The CHVP is the result of a partnership (now in its seventh year) between Bradford Cathedral and Lapage Primary School, born out of a joint aspiration to maximise cohesion and minimise conflict; increasing community engagement 'including that of children and young people, in the heritage and life of the Cathedral' (Bradford Cathedral 2018) and equipping them 'to be thoughtful, caring, and active citizens, who positively contribute to the wider society' (Lapage Headteacher 2020).

Participation in CHVP is voluntary, not dependent on ability, and children are not excluded because they have additional needs. Volunteering, involving action to help others, increases children's confidence in multicultural situations, engendering positive attitudes towards community cohesion, and there is power in volunteering. Children work together towards a common goal, negotiating new meanings, and learning from each other's experiences, balancing self-interest with the common good. Volunteering increases children's individual and collective confidence in their ability to act as citizens, effect change and help people to live together well:

'I know I can do it now. WE can do it!' (CHV 2023).

Every child in Year 5 is given the opportunity to *volunteer* at the Cathedral. This invitation is extended to Year 5 by Year 6 children, who have been CHVs in the preceding year. In the handover session, in the autumn term, Year 6 explain the role of a CHV, stressing what they enjoyed most and why volunteering at the Cathedral is important: *'You help other children find out about Bradford and our Cathedral'*. *'You get to be in charge'*. *'You meet new people'* (CHVs 2024). Working with small groups, Year 6 use pictures and items to introduce Year 5 to the Cathedral, leading learning and modelling the CHV role.

Year 5 are inspired to action: *'They're really good. They know lots'. 'I'd feel excited to be doing this'.' I'd be very proud to be a volunteer'* (Lapage Year 5, 2018). Those children who are interested 'apply', they fill in a form and write a personal statement. In 2024, 34 children from a cohort of 90 volunteered.

The new CHVs visit the Cathedral in the spring term and meet the staff. First names are used, emphasising the collegiate nature of the team. Taking part in a Cathedral trail helps them to familiarise themselves with the space. They receive the all-important lanyards - proof that they are volunteering at the Cathedral.

Back in school, the CHVs work with a partner, researching objects in the Cathedral and deciding on ways to share stories. Each pair has their own 'station' e.g. the World War I bells. There is no script to be learned: they decide what they think is important and how best to 'pass this on'. They are encouraged to pose questions and use interpretive skills, e.g. to think about what they know about the Muslim Adhan (call to prayer) and compare and contrast this with the Christian use of bells.

The CHVs have a session in the Cathedral peer-educating each other, progressively relegating all adults to supporting roles. The remainder of Lapage Year 5 visit in two groups and the CHVs take over the Cathedral. Six classes from three other schools then visit, over a period of a month. The volunteers act as hosts explaining *'surprising facts to elderly worshippers about their own cathedral'* (Pacitti, 2020). They introduce the building and its stories to first time visitors, most of whom have never been in a church before. Refreshments are served and there is an opportunity to socialise.

Educating for peace does not stop at the school gate. The CHVP brings ordinary people together, contact transcending community and faith leaders. Many leave aware that their beliefs and practices are echoes of each other's, that they honour the same rituals and rites in everyday life and that commonality is as prevalent as difference. The Cathedral is understood not just as an important Christian space, but also as common ground.

Sacred Space as Common Ground

A cathedral is religiously and culturally specific and potentially *exclusive*, but it has a duality of purpose. Because it is a place of worship and a civic building, it has the potential to be *inclusive*. Bradford Cathedral is a shared sphere, where multiple identities may positively co-exist and unifying social belief and practice identified. *'It's our cathedral'. 'It doesn't matter what religion you are. If you live in Bradford, then it's your Cathedral'* (Lapage CHVs 2022).

Children hard to reach with traditional teaching methods consistently respond well to peer education, but also to being leaders of learning, finding the status and responsibility motivational. Being a peer educator appears to increase knowledge and the skills necessary to being effective citizens and to successfully navigating cultural difference. CHVs consistently express feelings of achievement, claiming the experience had increased their confidence in their ability to say, '*This is me*' and to ask, '*Who are you?*'

'*The children's reluctance at first, on entering a Christian building, soon gave way to their engagement with the heritage. They expressed wonder at how many links there are between religions and people and their confidence grew*' (CHVP Teacher 2022).

Finally…

Educating for peace using the Bradford Model necessitates a pedagogical shift, which is more attainable and powerful when it involves contact with people in spaces outside the classroom. Although not a prerequisite for success, and not the only way of facilitating children's active participation in learning, escaping the confines of classrooms gives children and teachers a licence to try something different; it generates opportunities for children to be autonomous, and to

reconstruct normative teaching and learning in a way which is profitable for all involved.

Although the Bradford Model is a response to the local Bradford context, it does transfer to other environments. Schools in Calderdale are involved in a pilot project with Mount Zion Methodist Heritage Chapel using the Bradford Model. To date, the perceived impact mirrors that of the CHVP. It is being received positively by the diverse children and adults involved, whose comments consistently echo Rehan's assertion that what we need to do is ' *talk to each other*'. This suggests that this model is of use in helping communities to live together well, 'something vital' which 'Bradford has to share with the rest of the world'.

To read more about the Bradford model and the Community Heritage Volunteer Project please see: www.ray.yorksj.ac.uk/id/eprint/11819/

POETRY OF PEACE

WHO WILL DISARM THE BOMB?

BY MIRIAM CHITONGO, YOUTH POET, APF ZIMBABWE



Miriam Chitongo

The time is ticking
The end fast nearing
If unaddressed this will leave many regretting.
Some believe we have forgotten
Even if all we want is for them to right a wrong
They think automatically they will be forgiven
And yet our wounds are still not healed
Come let's settle the dispute
Come let's be reasonable
For our future to be tolerable.

Let us go and rebury the bodies
Of those who died in war
Afford them a proper burial.

Let's say sorry to the ones who lost their limbs and property
And compensate them
It won't bring them back but it will certainly remove the offence.

Racism is bad
Tribalism is bad
Factionalism is bad
History should only be used as a point of reference
Not a life manual.

For our present to be better
And our future to be best
It begins with you and I
Let love lead.

CHANGES

BY MIRIAM CHITONGO

Long ago, things were not like this
The world has changed.
Changes come and go
Changes continue.
They bring joy, they bring sadness.
They give power, they reduce power.
Where is the power that kept the community in peace?
Who will bring back the power to maintain humanity?
What will tomorrow be like because of changes?
What will the world be like, for future generations?

BRIAN HAW: TIRELESS PEACE CAMPAIGNER

BY SUE GILMURRAY, APF MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

In March this year, a small bronze statue by sculptor Amanda Ward, of a man called Brian Haw, was unveiled in London, outside the School of Historical Dress and facing the Imperial War Museum. Funded by a campaign led by actor Mark Rylance, and unveiled by 3 of Brian's children, it is a reminder of the extraordinary anti-war action taken by Brian for almost 10 years, from 2001 to 2011.

Brian had been incensed by the military actions taken by Britain, and voted for by Parliament, in the aftermath of 9/11 (November 11th) 2001. Camping in Parliament Square, he had placards condemning the killing of innocents, especially children, and a megaphone through which he shouted his protest at politicians as they passed on their way in and out of the Houses of Parliament. Attempts to remove him for causing an obstruction failed, as he was not blocking the pavement. As he became well-known, he was often supported by other campaigners for peace and justice.

As Brian was a nuisance, and MPs were apprehensive about the dangers of Parliament Square becoming a hotbed of protest, a law was passed in 2005, banning all unauthorised protests within a square mile around the Houses of Parliament. Yet, by a glorious irony, because Brian was already in Parliament Square before the law came into force, it applied to everyone except him. He stayed.

I didn't know Brian personally, though I saw him several times when visiting London. My most vivid memory is of the Christmas after the new law was passed, when I was one of a great crowd of people who gathered around to sing carols with him, and see whether the police would try to arrest us. They didn't, and it's the one occasion in my life

when I sang just about every carol I knew, sacred and secular, from *O come all ye faithful* to *Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer.*

Despite the introduction of other regulations, such as limiting the number of his placards and the space he could occupy, Brian continued his action until his health failed in 2011. A heavy smoker, he developed lung cancer, and died in June that year.

Mark Rylance said of him that he could campaign non-stop, and yet retain his sanity and his kindness.

Born in 1949, Brian was raised in an evangelical Christian family. His father had been one of the first British troops to liberate the Bergen-Belsen death camp. I don't know whether he explicitly maintained his faith in his later life, but it seems certain that his longing for peace, and his loathing of the indiscriminate slaughter of war, had their roots in what he learned as a child.



Brian Haw in Parliament Square

APF IN VIGIL OUTSIDE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH SYNOD

A lunchtime vigil was held outside the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) Synod on the 5th and 6th of June, calling on the Bishops to raise the church's prophetic voice and speak out boldly for peace and justice in the Holy Land.

Jan Benvie, Secretary of APF, explained "As well as speaking with the Bishops, we spoke with congregational representatives attending the Synod, suggesting ways in which their churches could take prayerful action and offer support to their Palestinian Christian sisters and brothers."

"We also shared the statement issued by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem condemning the Israeli bombing of Al Ahli hospital in Gaza City, which is run by the Diocese."



Talking to Bishop Andrew of Brechin Diocese



Peace Delegation Outside Scottish Synod

PROPOSED WORKING GROUP ON WAR IN UKRAINE

What is the Christian pacifist approach to the war in Ukraine?

How can we work for peace in Ukraine across denominations?

How can we promote reconciliation once the war has ended?

If you would like to help find answers to these questions, consider joining new APF working group led by APF trustee Geoff Smith. It is envisaged that the group would meet online every other month.

Email Sarah if you are interested.
sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

Image credit: Lyona

APF ISRAEL-PALESTINE GROUP

APF's new Israel-Palestine Group is growing.

The aim is to encourage the church to play a role in seeking justice and peace for our Palestinian and Israeli brothers and sisters. This fits in with the fourth Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion. The group meets via Zoom each month.

If you would like to get involved please email secretary@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

Image credit: ZaZa Studio

SUPPORTING APF

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

APF depends entirely on the generosity of its members and supporters for all we do. Currently, our monthly income from donations does not cover our costs, and reserves are getting low. If you value this magazine and the other things we do as the Anglican Communion's voice for peace, please consider becoming a regular donor. Regular donations, large or small, enable us to plan what we can do next.

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

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Email: sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

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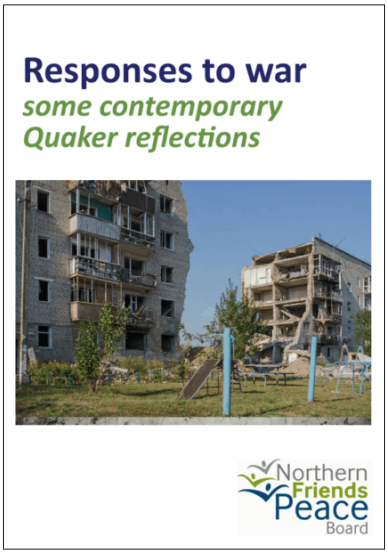
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BOOK NEWS

RESPONSES TO WAR: SOME CONTEMPORARY QUAKER REFLECTIONS PRODUCED BY NORTHERN FRIENDS PEACE BOARD

REVIEWED BY JAN BENVIE TSSF, APF SECRETARY

Of the Quaker Peace Testimony, the primer tells us "*Quakers live their witness to peace through truth-telling, through peace-making, campaigning and education, providing humanitarian aid, quiet diplomacy and conflict resolution.*"



This publication was conceived before October 7, 2023, and was planned as a sharing of Quaker responses to the war in Ukraine. However, the scope was widened following the escalation of the violent Israeli occupation, particularly in Gaza.

The title expresses exactly what this slim volume offers, responses and reflections on two major 'wars' of our time. The roots and the roads to peace are different for each, but they share the same devastating effects on human life.

This is a mix of poetry and prose that explores the Quaker Peace Testimony and attempts to answer the question *What do love, truth and justice require of us?* (closing sentence of the introduction)

Each piece offers a slightly different perspective, which comes from the varied background of the contributors – some peacebuilders, or campaigners, Friends (Quakers) who have particular concerns and/or connection to the regions they are writing about.

The reflections are short, but offer a deep look at the challenges of living a peace testimony. The writers don't shy away from these challenges, but openly and honestly acknowledge and reflect on the struggles which I am sure many of us working for peace experience.

You can order a copy (or perhaps buy a few to give to others) from Northern Friends Peace Board, Quaker Meeting House, 50 Silverwell Street, Bolton BL1 1PP, OR nfpb@gn.apc.org. Related resources are also available on a dedicated web page (www.nfpb.org.uk/responses-to-war).

PEACE – RELATED EXHIBITIONS

UNSILENCED: SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

23RD MAY – 2ND NOVEMBER 2025, FREE
THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, LONDON

The Imperial War Museum may seem an unlikely place to learn about peace, but this exhibition provides powerful testimony to the lasting harm unleashed by upon civilians, particularly women and children, far from the battlefield. Ranging from the abuse of child evacuees in Britain during WW11 to the sexual enslavement of Yazidi women and girls by ISIS in 2014, this exhibition aims to let the voices of survivors be heard.

Details of the exhibition on the IWM website: www.iwm.org.uk/events/unsilenced-sexual-violence-in-conflict

UN Report on Women and Girls Affected by Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: www.unric.org/en/women-and-girls-are-disproportionately-affected-by-conflict-related-sexual-violence

IN COMMON

3RD JUNE – 14TH SEPTEMBER, FREE
THE PEACE MUSEUM, SALTAIRE

This exhibition explores the story of a group of women who set off from Wales to Greenham Common in 1981 to protest against the US cruise missile base - and ended up staying for 20 years!

www.peacemuseum.org.uk/news/new-exhibition-in-common

CND/STOP THE WAR WEBINAR 'NO WAR ON IRAN'

BY SARAH MAGUIRE, APF COORDINATOR

On the 13th June, Israel unleashed a series of pre-emptive attacks on Iran, targeting nuclear and military installations and assassinating numbers of high-ranking military officials, nuclear scientists, politicians and their families. As Iran retaliated and the US waded in with a bombing raid on Iranian nuclear sites on the 22nd June, many worried that a full-scale war was about to break out. (APF held a well-attended online event to pray for peace. You can see a recording of that session on APF's Youtube channel.) Thankfully, the ceasefire agreed on the 24th of June is holding, but the underlying tensions remain.

On the 20th June, CND and Stop the War held a joint webinar responding to the situation. It was led by Tom Unterrainer, CND Chair.

The first speaker was Maryam Eslamdoust, transport union leader, speaking in her personal capacity as a British Iranian. She gave a human perspective , describing her concern that she has been unable to make contact with her father in Iran because of the disruption to communications and the chaos in Tehran as many sought to evacuate the capital. She also stressed that despite the differences that many Iranians have with the Iranian state, there is remarkable unity of conviction that liberation and justice will not come to the Iranian people from Israeli or US airstrikes.

Independent MP and CND vice chair, Jeremy Corbyn spoke with dismay of the government's Defence Review which he described as being very glossy but short on content, with many pictures of new weaponry and almost no mention of peace. He underlined that just as the Prime Minister is proposing a huge increase in defence spending, the Treasury is attempting to claw money back from the most vulnerable via cuts to Personal Independence Payments.

Sophie Bolt, CND General Secretary emphasised the risks of radiological leaks resulting from bombardment of Iran's nuclear sites and the possible environmental and human costs of this. While there is no evidence that Iran has a nuclear arms programme, the escalation of hostilities makes it more likely that they will seek to become a nuclear power in the future. Iran has threatened to withdraw from the Non-proliferation Treaty. Sophie stressed the urgency of working towards a new world order based on international peace and cooperation rather than the current situation in which the 'might' of nuclear weaponry is wielded as a constant threat .

Paul Rogers, Emeritus Professor of Peace Studies at the University of Bradford, offered some useful background to the current conflict. He urged that we put pressure on the UK government as one of Israel's biggest backers, to withdraw support for their war on Gaza and call for the recognition of the state of Palestine. While the huge demonstration against the Iraq war in 2003 did not prevent it from happening, there is evidence that it was a factor in deterring the US from launching a war against Iran three years later, under George W. Bush. Paul ended by recommending the Alternative Security Review produced by Rethinking Security https://tinyurl.com/3jzetfrd as well as the resources on the CND website https://cnduk.org/

Lindsey German of Stop the War Coalition, noted that the world seems to be sleepwalking into a war of aggression with the potential to develop into a worldwide conflict. We need to communicate the argument that the onslaught against Iran is more likely to provoke nuclear war than to prevent it.

Union organiser and peace activist Sean Vernell focused on the role of trade unions. There have been regular 'Days of Action' promoted in workplaces against the actions of Israel against Gaza and Iran. It is important for union activists to counter the argument that a war-based economy would mean job creation and prosperity as in the 1950s.

Final speaker, Jose Nivoi, of the Autonomous Collective of Dock Workers in Genoa described how they have been blocking the military cargo of 'ships of death' at the port. The collective is part of an international federation of dockworkers motivated by solidarity and the immiseration that war brings to working people. Workers in Marseilles and Genua recently coordinated to prevent a shipment of weapons to Israel.

You can watch the full webinar http://tinyurl.com/558fp9uf

APF NEWS AND UPDATES

FROM THE CHAIR, SUE CLAYDON

Having postponed writing this short piece, it seems that saying 'positive' things grows more and more difficult. I will not go into all the terrible things happening: you get enough of that in the media. So, I decided to be rather brief this time. I am therefore moved to share with you something an APF member wrote to me many years ago. She wrote:

Surrounding APF in prayers does not just mean a quick nod in the direction of the Almighty at the start of meetings but relies upon individual members being soaked in prayer. There is a famous occupational therapy (my profession) article called 'Doing, being and becoming'. Yes, we need to do our peace promoting activities, but we also need to be prayer. So that we are all becoming peace. The balance between doing and being will be unique to each individual, and the balance will lie in different places at different times of our lives, but as individuals and as a group we emphasise one to the total exclusion of the other at our peril.

In order to be taken seriously and be viable as the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, we must be primarily and centrally the Anglican Praying Fellowship.

J. Robinson.

So, what has prompted me to share this communication that has been sitting in an old file on my desk for months? It is that in the past few weeks I have had a number of opportunities (something we did not have in Julie's day) to pray with others around the world. In sharing not just the formal worship but in fellowship expressing our fears and frustrations, I have been encouraged to keep both praying and acting for all the issues of peace and justice that confront us.

Among the opportunities are not just the APF monthly prayers, but the monthly Litany from the Community of the Cross of Nails, quarterly prayers from the Anglican Peace and Justice Network, weekly Friday peace prayers from FoRE and Church and Peace. I am sure there are many more, but it would be good to hear your thoughts on this.

The Week of Prayer for World Peace is 12-19 October 2025. The free Prayer Resource will be available in September. This is an opportunity to bring prayers for peace to your local parish, prayer group etc. You can pre-order copies from wpwp2021@yahoo.com

Over the next few months while the world seems to tumble into further violence and injustice, let us all work in our way to address the three aims of APF – pray, educate and act.

MESSAGE RECEIVED

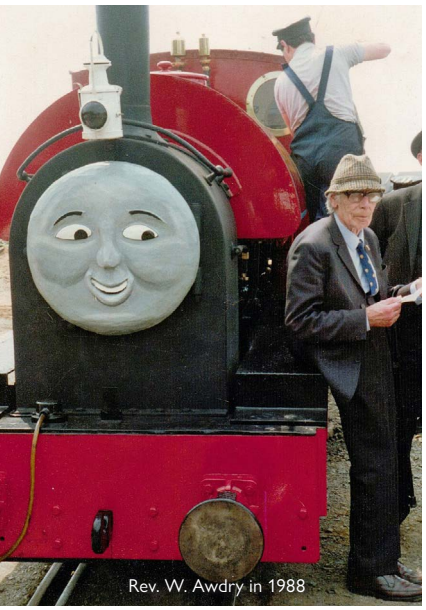
BY APF MEMBER JOANNA HOBSON



THE PUFF-PUFF PEACEMAKER –

THE ANGLICAN PACIFIST WITNESS OF THE REV. W. AWDRY

BY APF MEMBER JOSHUA S. LEWIS


Rev. W. Awdry in 1988

The year 2025 is the eightieth anniversary of the Railway Series books, with the first volume published on May 12th, 1945. Many will undoubtedly reflect on the legacy of Thomas the Tank Engine and his creator, long since immortalized as "the Rev. W. Awdry." Awdry as an individual has not been subjected to the same level of academic analysis as other literary luminaries such as Beatrix Potter, J. M. Barrie, and A. A. Milne. Nevertheless, many treatments of Awdry's work directly invoke his background, and especially his clerical calling. One article for The New Yorker described Awdry as one who "disliked change, venerated order, and craved the administration of punishment," linking this to Awdry's holy orders. Another article from the Daily Mail was more positive, but characterized Awdry as a "grumpy vicar." Awdry's most popular nickname – 'the Puff Puff Parson' – began as a title of derision. Varied as they are, these perspectives share one thing in common, as they recognize the primacy of the Christian faith and priestly vocation in the life of the Rev. Wilbert Awdry.

If the reader should wonder what any of this has to do with the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship, then the question itself may well reflect the need for a renewed consideration of Awdry's life. Awdry was not only a committed priest in the Church of England, but a determined pacifist. Among the earliest members of the APF, Awdry's commitment to the belief that war should never be the solution resulted in his being ejected from his curacy in one parish, and denied another parish altogether. This position was not a marginal element of his faith. Rather, it was one of the key elements of the faith of a clergyman who came to his faith and calling between two world wars. While the Rev. Wilbert Awdry may rightly be regarded as a figure of lighthearted children's stories, he also stands as a quiet, determined witness to the necessity of peacemaking as part of the Christian life. In this way, Awdry's life and faith have much to offer us today.

"Brother's Twopence" and the Roots of Awdry's Pacifism

Born on June 15th, 1911, Wilbert Awdry was born into a family well-acquainted with the life of the Church. Awdry's father, the Rev. Vere Awdry, was the beloved Vicar of Ampfield, while his uncle was the Rt. Rev. William Awdry, Bishop of Southampton, Osaka, and South Tokyo. Both men would remain lifelong influences for Wilbert. There was another role model for Wilbert among his family: his older brother Carol. Despite being seventeen years older than Wilbert, the bond between the two was almost instant. Carol was one of Wilbert's godparents, and a frequent pastime found the young Wilbert going for rides on Carol's bicycle.

Their mother Lucy recorded that one of Wilbert's nicknames for himself was "Brother's Twopence."

It was not to last. As with so many families throughout Britain, this tranquility was shattered by the First World War. Carol Awdry became a Second Lieutenant with the Royal Munster Fusiliers; for Vere, it was the culmination of a frustrated dream, having planned to go into the army before his family encouraged him to become a solicitor. This joy was short-lived, as Carol was killed at the age of twenty during the retreat from Mons. The Rev. Wilbert Awdry later reflected that "it was the supreme tragedy of my father's life."

Biographer Brian Sibley noted that "the ghost of that brother would haunt Wilbert for many years as he strove to measure up to the idealized hero-figure." The memory of Carol and his father's grief would doubtless shape Awdry's response to one of his first ministerial crises – the outbreak of the Second World War. Ordained to the diaconate in 1936, and the priesthood in 1937, Awdry's first major work was as the curate of the Rev. Percival Sexty, in Great Cheverell, Wiltshire.

A Curate's Quiet Stand – from Salisbury to Birmingham

The relationship between Awdry and Sexty soon proved to be a strained one. Sexty could not accuse Awdry of a lack of productivity. By now, he was married to Margaret (nee Wale) whom he had met as an educator in Jerusalem, and had demonstrated himself as a capable curate and evangelist in Odiham. (A member of the Toc H organization, Awdry managed to establish a branch in Odiham.) Rather, the issue concerned the question of war.

Awdry would not be dissuaded from his doubts surrounding a 'just war.' The memory of Carol could not be dismissed that easily. In a letter to his college tutor, the Rev. Julian Thornton-Duesbery, Awdry explained that "We have been pacifists since 1937." Awdry's belief had not been taken up amid the outbreak of the war. Rather, Awdry appears to have been among the first members of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship after its organization in 1937 by Archdeacon Percy Hartill. Awdry refused to condemn wholesale those who did feel compelled to engage in the war, however. "Every soldier has got a soul and if he joins up in a belief that what he is doing is right," Awdry argued, "that may, indeed, be the right thing for him. I simply couldn't be sure that it was the right thing for me." Even so, Awdry was determined in his refusal to countenance war. Biographer Brain Sibley notes that Awdry "remained … firm in his conviction that mankind ought always to view war as an unacceptable option."

Awdry's views had been known to the Rev. Percival Sexty before the war. Now that war had come, Sexty issued his curate an ultimatum – either serve as a military chaplain, or leave the parish by September 14th, 1940. Awdry, rather tired of Sexty's treatment, was initially more than happy with the latter arrangement. The young curate believed his troubles to be over when he found a position at a church in Salisbury, only to be denied the post by the Rt. Rev. Ernest Neville Lovett. Bishop Lovett, like Sexty, was opposed to pacifism. One of the few writers to consider Awdry's pacifism at length, Owen Dudley Edwards, characterized Awdry's treatment by the clergy of the Diocese of Salisbury as "bullying and abuse," a description particularly apt in light of the fact that Margaret Awdry was pregnant during this time. Their first child, Christopher, was born just two months prior to the date of the Awdry's proposed eviction.

The Awdry family did not have to suffer this ignominy thanks to the intervention of the Bishop of Birmingham, the Rt. Rev. Ernest Barnes. Bishop Barnes and Canon Thomas Sheldon sympathized with Awdry's dilemma, and found him a curacy with Sheldon in King's Norton, Birmingham. Awdry was not only delivered from his plight, but to some extent vindicated. Sexty could not accuse Awdry of cowardice when he was being sent to a diocese subjected to aerial raids, as the Birmingham Blitz had begun in August 1940. Awdry later said that the good news from the Bishop of Birmingham came "out of the blue, when I was rather down in the dumps and unsure what to do." One may well see this as a providential move, as Awdry did – it was in King's Norton that the Railway Series began to be written, which would come to allow Awdry to better provide for his family.

A Peacemaking Legacy – Learning from the Rev. W. Awdry

Awdry's attitude was marked by a balance of tolerance and determination. While Awdry felt that war was immoral, this did not stop him ministering to those who felt differently. Awdry's membership in the APF appears to have been concurrent with his organization of the Toc H branch in Odiham, "with the aim of integrating the RAF personnel into the life of the village." Awdry's appeal that "every soldier has got a soul" was not an individualistic approach to the question of war, but emerged from a lived experience of ministering to those of a different opinion and station than his own. Another example may be found in Awdry's own family. Awdry's brother, George, had been involved in the Second World War, having been put to work with his knowledge of the German language. If there were any strain on the relationship, it had been sufficiently resolved to allow the brothers to collaborate on future literary endeavors. This attitude of reaching out across differences extended to those with whom Awdry found himself at odds. Although Percival Sexty barred Awdry from any preaching for fear of pacifist sermons, Awdry later said he would never have attempted this out of loyalty to Sexty – who was not only Awdry's vicar and superior, but had been his chaplain in adolescence at Dauntsey's School in Wiltshire. In the words of Canon Poole's Litany of Reconciliation, Awdry sought to avoid "that pride which leads us to trust in ourselves, and not in God," and "that hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class."

At the same time, Awdry could not close his eyes to "that indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee," and all those threatened by warfare. The twenty-nine-year-old curate demonstrated a remarkable resolve as he remained firmly convinced of the unacceptability of war, even when his reputation in the parish of Great Cheverell was "down with the wines and spirits!" With Awdry's unwillingness to castigate those who disagreed with him, it was a quiet determination – quite literally, given that his family knew nothing until

Brian Sibley's research into Awdry's history for his 1995 biography. For his part, Awdry reasoned this would have been unnecessary – "I did not tell my children because the war was over, by then." At the same time, it was a stubborn determination, refusing to yield to pressure, and one that emerged from the same faith that fueled much of the drama in his stories for children. These were stories of chaos resolved, derailments cleared, and friendships reconciled. Awdry did not intend for his stories to be evangelical tracts. If anything, they were a reaction to "Sunday readings" that the Awdry children had been weaned on, with "children so horribly good you wanted to smack them." Nevertheless, the Railway Series operated with a Christian morality, and one that quietly emphasized peacemaking and reconciliation. "This world," Awdry would explain, "is God's world, and we cannot choose to disobey him and live happily our way. … We all make mistakes; but if we express our sorrow, God's forgiveness is complete."

In the language of his Railway Series, however, Awdry would always conclude, "They may be punished … but they are NEVER 'scrapped!'"

The Rev. Wilbert Awdry found that he could not disobey what he understood to be one of God's fundamental rules – "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." (Mt. 5:9) For Awdry, it was pure Christianity, and nothing less than his affirmation of the vow he had made as a priest, having been asked to "maintain, and set forwards, as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace, and love, among all Christian people." Awdry did so with a tolerance for those who disagreed, and yet with a faithful determination, trusting that God actively seeks peace in our hearts, as well as in the world around us – in short, nothing less than loving one's neighbors, loving one's enemies, and loving the God who made them all. Awdry's witness was one of quiet but determined Christian discipleship. It is an example that continues to present a challenge to us as Christians and peacemakers today – to remain faithful not only in the face of our enemies, but our neighbors as well.

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THE MEDICINE OF BOTH/AND

BY DR. ALLAN J WHYTE, RETIRED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

A friend of mine was recently invited to facilitate a one-day women's retreat for a local church. After a brief round of introductions with the planning committee and wide-eyed reactions to the news regarding the blockade of Gaza preventing all aid from getting through, one woman urged, "We need to take action." There was a pause, and her co-chair said, almost apologetically, "I think they won't come if we do that. We need a retreat for nourishment. I mean, spiritual community is for that, too...isn't it?"

Yes. We must do both…and then some other things, too.

Empire continues to tell us this is an "either/or," birth-death moment. The ways of Empire place almost no care on life but instead on birth (producing to meet demand) and death (once consumed, it's worthless). The ways of Creation suggest something more nuanced. Creation respects the growth that happens between birth and death. Creation recognises the immeasurable relationships that co-create fertility and decay to make the "both/and" phenomena of birth-(life)-death-(rebirth!). To become spiritually mature—to feel well, whole, and capable—we are asked to hold tensions, to trust, not truncate the process. Jesus prescribed (Matt 5:44), Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you.

This goes against our limbic systems. Within each of us, there is a tendency toward Fight (rage, shaming, blaming, and worse), Flight (avoidance, addictions, attempts to "fix"), Freeze (dissociation), or Fright (physical distress). But in the moments when we fully inhabit the "both/and" practice of loving and praying for our enemies, what happens? We transmute the trauma instead of transmitting it.

It's as simple and as awesome as that.

Activist, attorney, and Sikh faith leader, Valerie Kaur, says, "The way we make change is just as important as the change we make." An eye for an eye is how part of our brains are wired; and thanks to curious, courageous humans who have done the hard and gutsy work of collaborating with other neuropathways, we have identified the cycles of trauma and how to stop them with our own somatic intelligence and collective healing practices. We know that our healing efforts do not have to be overly serious or laden with panic. Humour and self-care are essential antidotes to the rigidity of this moment (consider the clever signs and artistic displays that have been part of marches and demonstrations since the inauguration). We also know that collective healing, the kind where we have loved and prayed one another into new states of understanding, requires contemplation and action.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

DIARY AND EVENTS

APF MONTHLY PRAYERS

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

Thursday 18th September 80th Anniversary of the UN

Thursday 16 October Week of Prayer for World Peace

Thursday November 20th 'Prayer for Indigenous Peoples'

Thursday December 11th 'Human Rights'

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Do you want to respond to comment on something you have read in TAP? Perhaps you'd like to tell us about peacemaking initiatives you are involved in.

Please send your thoughts to the Editor at sarah@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk

Letters may be edited for length.

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*

This year is the 80th Anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. APF and Christian CND will be holding an online Vigil on 6th August, 8pm BST.

One of the contributors will be Revd. Patrick Comerford, retired priest in the Church of Ireland and former President of Irish CND.

Please share this invitation.

You are invited to a Zoom meeting for the Hiroshima Vigil organised by CCND and APF When: Aug 6, 2025 08:00 PM London

Register in advance for this meeting:
www.us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/qKRv40NwQaycy6R6fozGfw

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting

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

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!

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THE MEDICINE OF BOTH/AND CONTINUED

BY DR. ALLAN J WHYTE, RETIRED CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST



Jesus emphasises that loving and praying for our enemies is counter-cultural, a practice of bringing heaven to Earth.

Living heaven on Earth means leaving the ways of Empire and embracing the wisdom of Creation, the ways of Kin-dom. Psychiatrist Judith Herman suggests three non-linear stages in the process of transforming trauma. To encourage us beyond Empire's "either/or," I invite us into Creation's "both/and," by embracing these spiritual practices individually and with kin in your spiritual communities:

1.Reconnecting for Safety

Very importantly, Jesus says "pray for," not "stay with," those who hurt you. To give ourselves to transformation, we must feel safe enough physically, mentally, and emotionally to stop the cycle of perpetuating hurt. Before praying for the ones who are hard to love, it is fundamental for us to feel loved. We are not doing this work alone. We are participants in the living, breathing web of Creation; we are held within an interdependent, responsive planet teeming with creativity and love. Thank Goodness!

Every day, let's make it our practice to re-member ourselves to the larger community that cares for us – the humans who love us and also the trees, water bodies, rocks, the ones with four legs, wings, scales, or fins...everyone. We give gratitude and love for the ones who give us oxygen as we give them our CO2. We embody awe for the gravity that holds our stargazing bodies fast to the grass even as Earth spins us round through the cosmos. We are grounded in reverence for the mighty pollinators and fungi who, by feeding themselves, also feed us.

As we turn toward the realities of Creation, we reconnect with the generosity and solidarity that is here supporting us, rather than scarcity and isolation. Let our practice be conscious and intentional so that as we put our bodies in water or our hands in soil, we feel the nourishment shared across mirrored membranes.

2. Lamenting Loss

Knowing how hard we try to avoid the agony of losing what we love, how can we get better at sharing our grief and moving through it together? The pain of this moment is multi-faceted. Our impulses of lashing out, devouring distractions, or feverishly trying to make things "more right" are all understandable. And there is medicine in the ancient practices of Creation: gazelles physically shake off the fear accumulated in their bodies, trees care for dis-eased grove members through their roots, elephants travel great distances to encircle the deceased body of another, geese make sure two or three members of the gaggle hang back when a goose is unwell or dying.

Right now, when the losses are absurd, nonsensical, and wide-reaching, we need to be proactive in creating spaces for shared lament. More than ever, as churches and spiritual communities, let's use the sacred medicines crafted by humans: art, ritual, and sharing circles. The grief, loss, and harm that gets stuck in our bodies can become the trauma that begets more trauma. Art, ritual-making, and sharing our feelings help us to release what we are hiding or holding. We get to recognise ourselves in each other. Even as a cascade of harm ripples across our world artists and authors are flooding our culture with both/and medicine – have you noticed? When we do this, we move through denial, despair, or paralysis into the wisdom of our expanding hearts. Together, we resolve to choose Life over fear, to trust in the teachings of Life again and again.

3. Loving and Praying Actively

When we feel our place within the web of Creation and sense the support of Life's creativity and love, we can't not feel an eagerness to participate. As members of divine creation, it is our birthright to show up, to put our creative gifts toward Life's flourishing.

What does loving our enemy look like right now? For the ones in power who are mono-cropping society, believing that one seed is the best and only seed, loving them looks like protecting the commons and biodiversity in every form for they are not understanding that the diverse weaving of flora, fauna, water and soil is the only web that sustains not just "our" children, but "their" children as well. All children.

What does praying for those who hurt us look like right now? Our prayers are embodied prayer. We need to ask those in power who are inflicting harm to stop. We need to continue to thank those in power who are bravely speaking up and doing their best to halt the harm. And we need to open our doors wider and wider still to the ones being most hurt. We get to do this with phone calls and letters, songs and theatre, artwork and rituals. We get to do it by generously funding efforts that uphold the ways of Creation.

Superficially, whatever our choice let's choose neither. Law professor and civil rights expert, John A. Powell offers, "Belonging is where people co-create the future together." Let's discipline ourselves to move beyond the seduction of smartphones and TVs and get ourselves outdoors to be alongside fellow humans and other kin, too.

Like the brackish water in wetlands, social change is messy business. We will try things that won't work...or don't work immediately. And this is not new in the ways of Creation. That which appears dead is transforming in the time and wisdom that is rebirth. It doesn't happen on its own, but as an integral part of the both/and unfolding. Some call it faith, moving beyond the either/or to find our right-sized selves within the Living, Loving Whole.

What medicine do you need right now to feed your both/and wisdom? In whatever order, please seek out your kin to reconnect, share your sorrows, love generously, and pray actively. Rest and repeat.