THE Anglican PEACEMAKER

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In this issue, we hear reflections from Jerusalem on the situation in the Holy Land and share the poetry of the Winners of the Peace Poetry Competition, Zimbabwe

THE LIMITS OF HOPE; THE SEARCH FOR JUSTICE

BY THE VERY REVEREND CANON RICHARD SEWELL OF ST. GEORGE'S COLLEGE, JERUSALEM



Rev Canon Richard Sewell

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The Kairos II statement, entitled 'Faith In A Time of Genocide' begins: 'We cry out from within the suffering in our country, under the Israeli occupation, with a cry of hope in the absence of all hope, a cry full of prayer and faith in a God ever vigilant, in God's divine providence for all the inhabitants of this land.'

Is it possible to proclaim a 'cry of hope in the absence of all hope'? It is certainly a dichotomy, but Palestine and Israel are full of contradictions. This is sometimes used as an excuse by Christian leaders, and many others, for standing aside, unable to make an ethical judgement about how to respond. I do not mean to discount the complexities, nor to condemn those who struggle to comprehend a situation which is enough to confuse anyone not totally immersed in the history and present political realities.

I arrived in Jerusalem in 2018 to take up the role of Dean of St George's College. Five years later Israel/Palestine exploded with the events of October 7 and all that followed. I had not anticipated that we would live through a devastating war, which can justifiably be called a genocide and which has further destabilised an already fractured world.

Even in those early years, which now look peaceful in comparison, the reality of Palestinian life under Israeli occupation was far worse than I had realised, and the stranglehold of the right wing of Israeli politics was more dangerous than I had imagined. It was made clearest by the elections in Israel in November 2022 and the coalition government formed by Netanyahu the following month. Having broken with his usual coalition partners, Netanyahu turned to the far right parties, from the fringes of Israeli politics, condemned by many as extremists who would deepen the already painful fissures in Israeli society, and destroy prospects for a peaceful future with Palestinians. How right that assessment was!

What I have witnessed, gradually and exponentially, is an attack on the prospects for a viable life for all Palestinians – especially in Gaza and in the Occupied West Bank but also for Palestinians with Israeli citizenship.

I believe that Gaza has been subjected to a genocide which has not yet destroyed all the people but which puts the viability of life for everyone in the Gaza Strip at risk. The fearful suffering continues today in every aspect of individual and community life, and there is no realistic plan emerging to address that devastating suffering and to rebuild life for two million people to live with safety and dignity. Israel has a totally different vision of the future for the people of Gaza. We fully expect there to be no Christians left in the Gaza Strip within a short time.

Equally distressing is the future for the many more Christians and Muslims in the Occupied West Bank. Since October 2023, they have been subjected to an accelerating process of ethnic cleansing, effected by terror attacks on vulnerable rural communities, forced displacement by direct Israeli government action, and severe restriction of movement between cities, towns and villages, isolating Palestinian communities. There is a strangulation of economic life in the West Bank, resulting in poverty and the loss of prospects for young people. Meanwhile, illegal Jewish settlements proliferate all over the West Bank. Jewish Israeli life is thriving where it has no right to be, and Palestinian life is being deliberately suffocated. The result? Significant emigration of the brightest and best, including Christian families, and a radicalising of some

of those who remain who can see no future except through violent resistance.

This is why the Kairos II statement speaks of 'no hope'. But, ironically, they express it within an internal contradiction – they describe their statement as a 'cry of hope in the absence of all hope'.

How can that be possible?

We have learned that the idea of hope cannot be used cheaply, simply as a synonym for optimism. We desperately want to believe that, however bad things are, the situation will inevitably improve. Tragically that has not been our experience since October 2023. Almost every week has been worse than the last, and we have not yet seen the promised improvement of conditions in Gaza since the so-called ceasefire at the end of last year. Sadly, I still do not see grounds for optimism. However, I have not lost hope.

In his book of Lamentations, Jeremiah says,

"I remember my affliction and my wandering,
the bitterness and the gall.
I well remember them,
and my soul is downcast within me.
Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:
Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail."

St Paul knew about suffering. In his letter to the Romans he wrote: "Hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently." (Romans 8:22-25). This is not simple optimism but Christian hope: the hope rooted in Jesus's promise just before he ascended into heaven, in his charge to those who continue his ministry: "I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Christian hope has three elements:

Firstly, it is founded on Jesus's promise that he will be with us to the end of time. In Christ God is with us, close to us, sharing in our trials and in our victories. The incarnation is not only about God with us when Jesus lived on earth. The incarnation exists in Christ now as then. Secondly, Christian hope claims that the world is shot through with the grace and goodness of God. Even when all looks bleak and hope feels far from reach, faith will discern God's goodness in creation and in humanity. This defies all inclinations to despair. Finally, Christian hope is eschatological. Whatever occurs in this life is not God's final word. St Paul says that "all creation is groaning as if in childbirth" – the realising of God's full purpose and the reconciliation of the world to Godself. Whatever we suffer in life is as nothing to the comfort, joys and eternal consolations of the destination of God's will in creation.

For me, and I think for many in the midst of this seemingly interminable suffering in the Holy Land, this Christian hope has deep resonance. These convictions help form the resilience, the sumud, for which Palestinians are renowned. Muslims too have their own sources of sumud, which it is not my place to articulate here.

In the midst of suffering it is important to keep one's eyes on the gracious acts of God. It helps to sustain Christian hope when it is under fire and despair comes close. I see signs of God's grace in the midst of the present suffering. Some are found in the institutions of the Diocese of Jerusalem: the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre and Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza to name just two. The stories which emerge from both places are a source of encouragement and strength.

I also find rich grace in working alongside Muslim Palestinians and Israeli Jews. There is a prevailing narrative that the source of the problem is the unbridgeable divide between Jews, Christians and Muslims, but when we unite to uphold and protect the human dignity of everyone, there is real power and encouragement. With Rabbis for Human Rights I find an ethical core which is truly uniting, whether it is providing protective presence against violent settlers or planting olive trees together after they have been uprooted. In the face of the scale of suffering in Gaza and the Occupied West Bank, such acts may seem insignificant. But on such acts and partnerships as these something better can be built.

Finally, the courage and strength shown by our Palestinian friends has been utterly inspirational. Recently I witnessed the return home of Layan Nasir, a twenty-five-year-old Palestinian woman member of one of our churches in Palestine, after her third period in an Israeli jail on manufactured charges. The indomitable spirit of that family, when everything over the past five years could have broken them, is inspirational.

After nearly eight years living through a rapidly worsening situation, I am very far from despair. It's not that I feel optimistic that things are getting better. They aren't. They continue to get worse. But these graces are the root of a conviction for Christian hope: determination is strengthened.

Daily, Palestinians, Christians and Muslims alike, must steel themselves for all that Israel's occupation will throw at them. There are so many dimensions to their oppression. They are not giving up, although many families have decided to leave. There is still a belief that Palestinian Christians represent the unbroken continuity from the first Christians who believed and suffered for their faith, down to the present day. However, the Western world created a much-needed solution to the suffering of Jews in the holocaust, and simultaneously created another problem of dispossession, ethnic cleansing and now, ultimately, of genocide. The countries that created Israel with good intentions must now restrain Israel from committing ever more atrocities. Ultimately it is also about saving Israel from itself.

If peace is ever to come to the Land of the Holy One, it will require more than the sumud/resilience of Palestinians. It will require the faith, hope and love of Christians, together with people of faith and good will everywhere.

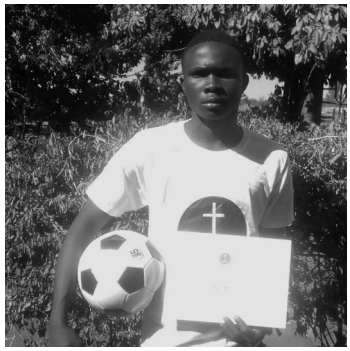
If the dove of peace is ever going to settle on the Land of the Holy One, it will require more than the sumud/resilience of Palestinians. It will require the faith, hope and love of Christians, together with people of faith and good will everywhere.

POETRY OF PEACE

WHAT DIVIDES US

BY PETER MUSA,
WINNER OF APF ZIMBABWE PEACE
POETRY COMPETITION 2026

What divides us?
I can send a message sweet
To say I care for you.
No barrier is too big.
For those who talk peace
In a manner constructive!
Honest dialogue is peace's mother
The silent shall be melancholy's children
Communication that builds not destroys
Is possible in our lifetime
Let us all work together
To shout Hallelujah
By the gates of Eden.



Peter Musa

We're delighted to report that APF has successfully applied for a grant of £3,323 to support the vital peacebuilding work that APF members in Zimbabwe are doing with young people, including the Peace Poetry Competition.

As with all grants there is an element of 'matched funding'. APF needs to raise a total of £1787. So far, we've had a couple of very generous donations, leaving us with around £900 left to raise. We continue our appeal to APF members to help us reach this total. Even small donations add up so we hope you can support this important work.

Details of how to donate can be found on page 5 or via our website. Please mark all donations 'Youth Work'.

YOUR LIFE DEMANDS CHOICES

BY MIRIAM CHITONGO,
WINNER OF APF ZIMBABWE PEACE
POETRY COMPETITION 2026



Miriam Chitongo

I say unto you Man!
Stand up!
Your life demands choices,
Positive choices!
The choice to love and care
The choice to protect what you love
The choice to have conscience and be mindful to others feelings
The choice to learn to grow and help others grow
The choice to acknowledge mistakes and correct them.
The choice to build and not to destroy
The choice to have concern and empathy
The choice to encourage and lead by example
Your life demands choices
Positive choices
Be part of the positive change.

DIVIDED WE FALL

BY MIRIAM CHITONGO,
WINNER OF APF ZIMBABWE PEACE
POETRY COMPETITION 2026

The world is in shambles
The people are in turmoil
Things are falling apart
In Iran, Israel, USA, Russia, Ukraine
Nothing is going according to plan
But why?

An arrow has struck
Directly at the heart of the world
Spouse against spouse
Citizen against citizen
Family against family
Police against demonstrators
Nation against nation
But if I may ask?

Was there an earthquake which
Shook our human nature?
Is there a stone which struck
Our mirror of peace?
Was there any stone thrown into our pond of tranquillity?
The ripples are now too big
And too destructive.

APF MEMBER MOST REV'D ERASTE BIGIRAMANA APPOINTED ARCHBISHOP OF BURUNDI



Archbishop Eraste Bigirimana
Photo Credit Anglican Church of Burundi

We're very happy to report that the Most Reverend Eraste Bigirimana, a long time active member of APF, has become Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican Church of Burundi.

Formerly known to us as the Bishop of Bujumbura Diocese, a position he held from 2013, Archbishop Eraste was elected on the 21st of May by the House of Bishops. He succeeds the Most Rev'd Sixbert Macumi as the sixth Archbishop of Burundi.

His formal installation as Primate took place at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Bujumbura on the 23rd of August. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev'd and Rt Hon Dame Sarah Mullally preached at the ceremony, reminding the congregation of Saint Peter's calling by Jesus (John 21:15-17) to be a shepherd to his flock, sharing the ministry of the Gospel of Christ with the whole people.

At his installation, Archbishop Eraste promised "to uphold justice, truth and love. In the ministry entrusted to me by God, I will seek to be a good example to the flock of Christ. I will endeavour to fulfill these responsibilities with the help of God."

Over the years, we have reported on the many peace-building projects of Archbishop Eraste in Burundi, where a bitter civil war ended in 2005. He is assured of the prayers of all of us at APF as he embarks on his new ministry.

IN MEMORIAM

PROFESSOR JAMES READ – A LIFE IN LAW, A PASSION FOR PEACE

Jim Read, who died this year in Surrey at the age of 93, first subscribed to APF in July 1953 and remained a life-long member. Recently graduated in law, he had returned to rural Wales near Magor for national service, with perspectives deeply shaped by his faith, his father's experience of the Great War and a strong interest in international affairs.

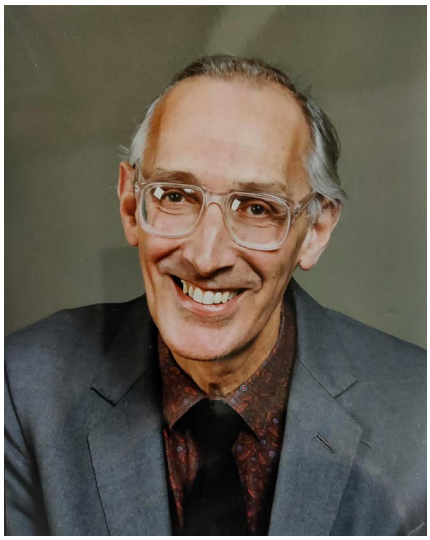
Serving briefly with the Royal Signals, he appeared before the authorities pleading conscientious objection with the support of fellow students and friends in the Student Christian Movement, testifying to his sincere religious and moral conviction. He was permitted to complete his national service working in a hospital. During his recent final months as a patient himself, he recalled with pride his time as a Bristol Royal Infirmary porter.

His father had enlisted with the Household Cavalry in 1914, serving for 12 years. He told Jim stories of transporting horses from Flanders to the Middle East by train, victory parades for Prince Albert of Belgium in Brussels (1918) and serving at the first London Cenotaph armistice commemoration (1919). Later in life, his father also told stories of bitter winters under fire, so many lost friends and days spent turning a machine gun handle as young Germans fell before him. Respecting that service, father and son had compelling knowledge of the horrors of war. At Remembrance Day, these reflections always filled Jim's mind.

A barrister at Gray's Inn, Jim went on to teach law at University College London and at the School of Oriental and African Studies, including a 20-year professorship and appointment as head of the law department.

His specialism was the legal systems of British East Africa, as countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda gained independence. He lived and taught in Kampala, Uganda and Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania where his family grew, becoming known as a leading international legal scholar, supervising over 50 doctoral students – some going on to be Presidents of Ghana and Malawi or Chief Justices of Bermuda, Kenya, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. He was General Editor of the Law Reports of the Commonwealth for many years.

Learning of his death, Justice Shirani Bandaranaike, former Chief Justice of Sri Lanka, noted both Jim's vast knowledge of constitutional law and his fairness and kindness to his students.



The Honourable Michael Kirby, former Justice of the High Court of Australia and one of the Commonwealth's leading advocates of human rights, summarised Jim's impact, saying, "I am proud to have worked with an unforgettable scholar and lawyer. He was an outstanding legal expert but most of all he was a lovely man and fine human being."

Professionally, Jim sought to show that disputes of every kind may be resolved peacefully through law, not war. He travelled a long way from Magor, but his care for the people around him – expressed in his passion for human rights and peace-making – never dimmed.

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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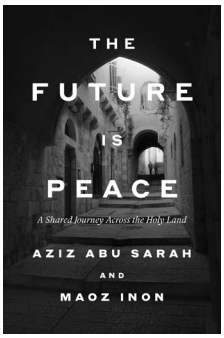
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BOOK NEWS

THE FUTURE IS PEACE - A SHARED JOURNEY ACROSS THE HOLY LAND BY AZIZ ABU SARAH AND MAOZ INON

REVIEWED BY DONALD REECE, APF COUNCILLOR



This book shows how a joint pilgrimage can be a means of building peace between peoples in conflict.

Aziz Abu, a Palestinian who had lost his brother in the First Intifada, heard about the killing of the parents of Maoz an Israeli on October 7th 2023. Many would expect them to be enemies, but Aziz wrote to Maoz in personal sympathy for the death of his parents. Maoz replied that he was crying for the loss of his parents, but also for the loss of children in Gaza. This led to a bond of brotherhood between the two. They had both been involved in the non profit International Interact dedicated to peace in the Middle East. Hoping and believing in a culture of dialogue, the two experienced guides for travellers in conflict zones planned to share a seven day journey to known places of suffering. They chronicle each others experiences in each location. Beginning in The Negev Kibbutz Nir Am; continuing in Israeli Tel Aviv and Palestinian Jaffa, they continued to East Jerusalem and Bethany; then to Jerusalem/Al-Quds where the Muslim, Jewish and Christian Quarters meet.

While visiting Yad Vashem, Palestinian Aziz comprehends it within the experience of his Israeli partner Maoz, not as a spectator. Similarly, when Maoz visits Gaza he grasps the experience of his Palestinian brother. They understand each others painful histories, yet despite the continuing trauma of Palestinians, they affirm a future in One State with equal rights for every person. They visit the West Bank on days 5 and 6. In Jericho, Rabbi Paula Marcus joins them.

At Nazareth, a Christian city with a Muslim majority, within the Jewish state, Aziz takes them to Fauzi Azzar Inn which he established for hikers on the Jesus Trail to Capernaum. Maoz introduces the Tzippori olive groves developed by Israelis twenty years earlier. The olive groves were of a historic origin. Aziz gently asked the owners "When you came to Tzippori and bought this land, did you know that there used to be an Arab village here?" The owners said that in partnership with Ali, a Palestinian worker, they began to learn the local history including the expulsion of Taha's family in 1948. Together, they joined Olive Oil Without Borders involving three thousand Palestinian and Israeli growers. Sadly this folded when the first Trump administration cut aid to Palestinians.

Overlooking Nazareth is Kibbutz Lavi, founded in 1949 for the kindertransport Holocaust survivors, with a memorial of the names of those who did not survive. It was built on the ruins of Lubya Palestinian village. There is no national memorial to the Nakba. Maoz and Aziz stood together, comprehending each others sorrows.

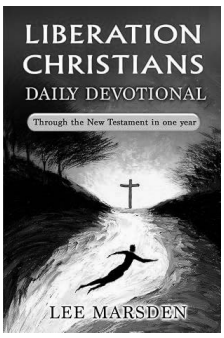
As they asked how can Israelis forgive October 7, and how can Palestinians forgive the Nakba and Gaza brutality, they remember the peacemakers of S. Africa, N. Ireland and Rwanda. As Aziz, Maoz and Paula took the Jesus Trail they remembered that Jesus blessed those who forgive and love their enemies. Paula spoke of hope through those they had met, and a solution which will come from the ground up.

In May 2025, Pope Leo XIV invited Aziz and Maoz to the Vatican. This book deals with peace building in the Holy Land and is also a model of reconciliation for others in conflict.

You can purchase The Future is Peace here *https://thefutureispeace.com*

LIBERATION CHRISTIANS DAILY DEVOTIONAL: THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ONE YEAR BY LEE MARSDEN

REVIEWED BY SARAH MAGUIRE, APF COORDINATOR



The format of this book is simple and comprehensive: there is a page for each day of the year which begins with an inspiring quote from a 'liberation Christian' followed by a usually longer summary of that person's life and activities. There is then a reading suggestion from the New Testament, a prompt to pray the Lord's Prayer, and a short, individual prayer for each day, often reflecting back on the life and words of the 'liberation Christian' of the day.

In his introduction, Marsden shares his essential criteria for inclusion as a 'liberation Christian': they must be doers and not just hearers of the Word. Otherwise, the selection is truly eclectic, from Church Fathers to 21st century activists. One rule is that the person is no longer living.

The book offers a handy and thoughtful daily prayer resource for an individual or a group. It is also a potentially useful resource for anyone planning a prayer event or reflection and looking for a seasonal subject.

A more immediate delight of the book is simply leafing through it and meeting the fascinating panoply of Christians of all times and places who populate its pages. I think it will send many of us down research rabbit holes as we encounter intriguing and inspiring individuals that we have somehow never heard of before.

Of course, this very eclecticism will provoke many to raise their eyebrows on reaching different pages and mutter that this person is not their idea of a liberation Christian! This possible mild provocation is all to the good, and will hopefully prompt further reflection.

As might be expected, however, there is a strong emphasis on peacemakers throughout, as well as those campaigning for social justice and equality.

Liberation Christians is available from Amazon: *https://www.amazon.co.uk/Liberation-Christians-Daily-Devotional-Testament/dp/B0GWV2JDBX*

AN UNEXPECTED LINKAGE: PSALM 2.1-12., ISAIAH 42.1-4., MATTHEW 3. 13-17.

SERMON DELIVERED AT ST. OSWALD'S CHURCH, WESTMERE WHANGANUI 20TH APRIL 2026

BY REV. DR. V. JONATHAN HARTFIELD

Psalm Two, our first reading and dating from about 700 years before Jesus, was known by the Jews as a Messianic Psalm. It talks of a future idealized leader of the Israelites who would fulfill God's purposes. He is called 'Son of God' verse 7. There are some 15 other Psalms that also talk of this future anointed one.

The early Christians – as well as us later ones – know that Jesus is that Messiah. Jews don't believe this. He doesn't fit their idea of a Messiah. However it is a psalm for today's world for it begins, 'Why do the nations rage together?' and goes on in verse 9 when talking of unbelievers, 'You will rule them with an iron sceptre and dash them to pieces like pottery'. To update this image think of Israel and Iran, drones and missiles, as a modern version of how the Messiah will rule and deal with his adversaries.

In the time of Jesus there was much Messianic expectation for they were under the cruel and oppressive regime of Rome.

Our second reading was Isaiah's vision of a servant who suffers to atone for the rest of humanity. It starts at chapter 42 verse 1, 'Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight'. A different figure from the one depicted in Psalm 2, for he is so gentle that in carrying out his mission, verse 3, ' He won't break a bruised reed nor snuff out a smouldering candle': he suffers rather than making others suffer.

The Jews were uncertain about who this servant was for he is not named. Was it the prophet Isaiah himself? Was it someone he knew about, or was it collectively the Jewish nation, as we are collectively called after an odd little bird. The Jews are still uncertain who it is, but it is certainly not the Messiah. We think it is. They could think that Jesus fits into the servant picture, but not as a Messiah. We believe it predicts Jesus, but the description is somewhat different from the Messiah of Psalm 2 where the last verse 12 states, 'Kiss the son lest he be angry and you'll be destroyed.'

Both Psalm 2 and Isaiah's four servant poems are part of our Bibles but they give opposite views on how to handle opposition. So which is right? If one is compatible with the life and teaching of Jesus and the other isn't, then as Christians we are to choose the option that accords with Jesus, and put the other option aside. I have a Beatitude test where the action or idea must live happily amongst the Beatitudes.

Fast forward 500 years for Isaiah and maybe 700 for the Psalm and we have Jesus of Nazareth, son of Mary and the late Joseph - Carpenter - who at the age of 30 is making a major career move.

He goes to be baptized by his cousin John prior to beginning his ministry of revealing to us what God is like, and ushering in God's Kingdom on earth. As he comes out of the waters of the river Jordan the Holy Spirit of God descends upon him as a dove, and God speaks to him in a special direct way, and we have the words recorded for us in Matthew chapter 3 verse 17. 'This is my son whom I love, with him I am well pleased.'

Jesus then goes into the wilderness for 40 days where he is tested by Satan. The devil does not dispute that Jesus is the Messiah who will usher in God's Kingdom. What Satan is doing is to be a lobbyist for the forces of darkness. He wants to change the way that Jesus will live and teach, and influence how Jesus will fulfill his calling. There were those words from God at Jesus' baptism, and the devil would have liked to change six of them as put in our English translation, the ones from Isaiah, 'in whom I am well pleased'.

His lobbying, in the wilderness and later, was to undermine what those 6 words pointed to, which was how Jesus would use his Messiah power, the means Jesus would use to gain the ends that the devil was also opposed to, the Kingdom of God. We would say now that he would act non-violently to achieve his purposes. None of that 'Iron Rod destroy you' stuff.

Satan failed on the cosmic scale but he does have some wins in our daily earthly life. All is not as God wills on earth today. The Daily News is frightening.

So back to those words spoken by God to Jesus at his baptism. God links two parts of the Bible that have probably never been linked before (William Barclay): first a verse from Psalm 2, verse 7,' this is my son' which states Jesus as Messiah, but instead of going further in the Psalm to the way he would rule in verse 9, iron sceptre and broken pottery, we find that instead God moves to Isaiah 42 verse 1. 'with him I am well pleased', or as some translations put it, 'with whom I am delighted'.

The next two verses are not spoken by God for God's direct speeches are short, but we would be expected to read on. The next verses are how the servant will act, the means of bringing the Kingdom. Low key, verse 2, gentle and kind, verse 3, 'not bruise a broken reed', and the Messiah is a servant not a dictator or a Field Marshal, the total opposite of Messianic behaviour as stated in Psalm 2.

This sermon started life because I was thinking a couple of weeks ago of the different ways that two prominent Americans were using their power to run our world.

Pope Leo is an Isaiah man calling for peaceful ways for the nations to live together and settle their inevitable differences. And for just about everyone - except the arms manufacturers and their shareholders, and a few others, including some national dictators - just about everyone wants peaceful coexistence in our world.

The question is how to do it - the means to that end that nearly all of us wish for. Pope Leo would not have us bruise a crushed reed in our response to difference and conflict.

President Trump, the other prominent leader, is carrying on into Psalm 2, so the way to coexistence and peace for him is definitely by smashing pottery.

Why do the nations rage? (Psalm 2, verse 1) The short answer is, of course, oil money and power, and some leaders, particularly dictators who have some degree of personality disorder, in the case of President Trump, a narcissist disorder.

But the long term answer to this waging is the way that Jesus chose, that of the servant, sharing, forgiving, serving and loving enemies, suffering on the cross but not crucifying others. This means in our present world scene long and patient negotiation, not a mere 21 hour dialogue which happened this week, which one suspects was a bit of a rant by both sides. Mediation is a long process, so good on Pakistan for trying, and I expect they will go on trying behind the scenes.

The early church followed the way Jesus chose for 300 years but then compromises set in, bringing tensions between broken pottery and bruised reeds, and at some moments like the Crusades, there was a lot of broken pottery around, for which many are now ashamed. But for the early Christians and in our times, for example, Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela in South Africa worked so that the pottery remained intact and crushed reeds were nurtured and healed.

Well – this may all seem very theoretical. We are a tiny group of people far away from the nations currently waging war, yet it is influencing all of us now, unless we walked here, but even if it didn't affect us no one should inflict suffering on others.

In war, it is the women and children and the old that disproportionately suffer. God's desire is that all nations would live at peace (Revelation 7.9, 21.4.)

More than that, we all live in a community of some sort, and each of us houses a little of the Kingdom of God within us to be expressed in the lives we live, so that the Kingdom will spread. And each of us has a little bit of power, so it matters how we use it, and there is often tension between healing bruised reeds and smashing pottery, so we need to choose between them when contention arises. And I expect we've all done a bit of both. So obviously it matters locally.

But do we have any influence on Tel Aviv and Tehran and Mar a Largo golf course?

I think we do.

First, we contribute to public opinion and that does drift up to government, and that may be amplified through the groups we support, like Amnesty International or Pax Christi or Forest and Bird and many other groups who are lobbyists for their causes and so make it easier for us to make our beliefs known.

Second, there is that mysterious activity, prayer. Jesus expects us to pray and I don't think he would ask us to do something totally useless. So in praying, 'Your Kingdom come on earth', we are contributing to that happening, and we can follow that with more specific hopes for peace and justice in the Middle East or the Ukraine and many other places and people.

So back to our beginning. Two Bible verses quoted by God at Jesus's baptism that bring power and compassion together – an unlikely connection for some, but essential if we are to follow Jesus. So in the present difference of opinion, I am all for Pope Leo.

APF NEWS AND UPDATES

FROM THE CHAIR, SUE CLAYDON

Love thy neighbour, no exceptions

I am sure you have recently heard this or similar comments. I have always thought this direction from Jesus along with 'love your enemies' to be an ongoing challenge. As the world shrinks and the constant barrage of both true and fake news assaults us daily, that challenge can sometime seem too much and it is easier to just turn away.

Then, I hear reports of really positive things, like Klaudia's report (see below). She and other young people around the world are aware of the world they are living in. So many are rising to the challenges around them.

In a recent webinar with the Anglican Communion Youth Network, I was reminded again of the situations in which young people find themselves in places like the West Bank, Papua New Guinea and Zimbabwe, and how they are still having the courage to use nonviolence.

While writing, I want to thank those who have contributed so far to the expanded youth work projects in Zimbabwe. Among the issues APF members have raised is the recruitment of young men by Russia to fight in Ukraine. This is occurring throughout Africa where youth unemployment is high and the offer sounds good. The reality is the recruits are sent into the war front with little training and the continent has grieving families everywhere.

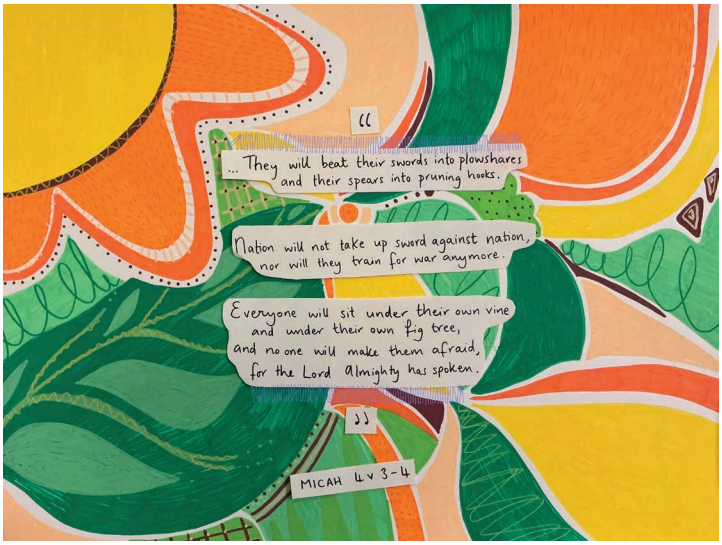
Finally, we are moving towards the Week of Prayer for World Peace (11-18 October). Do try and get this on your Parish/Cathedral calendar. Hard and electronic copies of the new 'look' Prayer Resource are available – *wpwp2021@yahoo.com*

Also, do check the APF Facebook page as a number of online opportunities are coming up for worship and information.

Sue Claydon

WORDS FROM MICAH

BY APF MEMBER JOANNA HOBSON



APF ISRAEL-PALESTINE GROUP

AF's 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 every month. If you would like to get involved please email *secretary@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk*

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*

YOUNG RECONCILERS' GATHERING

In August, APF sponsored Klaudia Bobin to attend the Young Reconcilers' Gathering at Coventry Cathedral. For four days, young people from across Europe gathered to learn Coventry's story and its significance in a world in conflict. It brought together young peace-builders of different nationalities and included sessions on:

- Facing our unconscious bias
- Gracious Dialogue: a model for navigating difference
- Encountering the 'Other': dialogue skills
- A visit to the local Sikh Gurdwara,
- A Coventry city interfaith peace walk
- Creative responses to the Coventry Litany
- Joining the regular rhythm of the Cathedral's prayer and worship.

Here is Klaudia's report:

Visiting Coventry Cathedral was a memorable and inspiring experience. As I arrived, I immediately saw the contrast between the old Cathedral ruins and the modern Cathedral standing beside it. When I looked at the ruins of the Cathedral, it reminded me of the destruction caused during the Second World War, while the new Cathedral represents hope, peace and rebuilding.



Klaudia Bobin with Young Reconcilers Group

Inside the Cathedral, I was amazed by the beautiful architecture, colourful stained-glass windows and the peaceful atmosphere.

We had a number of activities to increase our understanding of reconciliation. In one (Facing our unconscious bias) we were shown four pictures of different people. We discussed how easy it is to judge people by how we perceive them on first sight. As humans we often do this but we learned not to jump to conclusions which often lead to disconnections. This has made me think, and given me confidence to engage with people unlike me.

There were exercises to help us listen more effectively; also, to understand that we all have good days and bad days, but God is always with us. We were encouraged to be creative and I have produced a poster and handout to welcome people to our Parish Church.

My visit to Coventry Cathedral was educational and unforgettable. It helped me understand an important part of British History and made me think about the importance of peace, forgiveness and hope.

Also, it showed me how to put into practice the words of St. Francis – to love and not to be loved, to understand and not be understood.

KAIROS PALESTINE II RECEIVED AT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND SYNOD

BY APF SECRETARY, JAN BENVIE TSSF

"*Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream*" (Amos 5:24)

In July the Church of England Synod overwhelmingly* voted to 'hear' what some term a controversial document, *Kairos Palestine II.*

Kairos Palestine II is a theological reflection, written by a broad coalition of Palestinian Christians - theologians, patriarchs, bishops, priests, pastors and laypeople from across the Christian churches in Palestine.

More information on the Synod debate, and the range of views, including the full text of the final motion, can be found here in this Church Times article.

Disagreement has always been part of the life of the Church. I believe that whether we agree with everything in the Kairos document or not, the lived experience of our Palestinian Christian sisters and brothers deserves the dignity of being heard. *Kairos Palestine II* can be read critically; we may wish to challenge some of it, but it is important that it is debated honestly.

The document is available online, and UK group Sabeel-Kairos has produced a high-quality A5 booklet of the document, with the artworks of renowned Palestinian artist Sliman Mansour. These booklets could provide a resource for personal reflection or church or TSSF study groups. Booklets are free but there is a charge for p&p. Delivery within the UK only. To order your copies go to: *https://sabeel-kairos-uk.sumupstore.com/*

At the end of June the Methodist Conference (representing the Methodist Church throughout the UK) agreed a 'Notice of Motion', which requested a study resource that can be used for churches to be produced, based on Kairos II. This resource, when available, can also be used for church study groups.

I will conclude with quotes from two of the co-authors of Kairos Palestine II.

The first from Rev Munther Isaac, pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hope in Ramallah – *Kairos Palestine II explicitly honors [sic] the growing number of Jewish voices who oppose the war and confront Zionism from moral, faith-based, and human conviction. We name them as partners in our shared humanity, in the struggle for freedom and human dignity, and in genuine religious and political dialogue.*

The second from Fr Fadi Diab, Rector of the Anglican churches in Ramallah and Birzeit, and who attended the Synod - As we wrote in Kairos Palestine, "*Our word is a cry of hope, with love, prayer and faith in God" That hope remains alive today. The Church of England has reminded Palestinian Christians that they are not forgotten, that the Body of Christ hears their cry, and that the Gospel continues to call the Church to stand with those who suffer, to speak truth in love, and to seek a just peace where every person is able to live in freedom, dignity and security.*"

*Bishops: 25-0 (5 abs)
Clergy: 115-20 (30 abs)
Laity: 113-27 (35 abs)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

With the Presidential assent of the unpopular constitutional amendment bill, tensions are now high. Youths from the national youth service have been secretly deployed to scare away those perceived to be against the act. In response to the Presidential assent, civic organisations, churches, war veterans and political activists have come together under the banner of the Constitution Restoration Movement to challenge this act. Nationwide mass demonstrations have been planned. Vulnerable youths have been caught in between and we are afraid they might be exploited. As APF we are praying for Peace to prevail in this toxic situation. We appeal for your prayers.
Thank you so much.
In Peace

Cloud Mabaudi, APF Trustee, Zimbabwe

Dear Editor,

June 25th marks 76 years since the outbreak of 'The Korean War'. With the 2024 Nobel Prize in Literature having been awarded to Korean author Han Kang, awareness is thankfully on the rise concerning the fact that there were 'diabolical' massacres and mass atrocities which took place prior to June 25, 1950; the bottom line as to why these truly shocking mass killings and crimes against humanity happened is, arguably, in a word: 'power' – the sinful/rapacious aspiration to it, a murderous idolatry surrounding it – amid the fog of which, human beings ceased to be seen as sacred, as having basic dignity. An all-too-familiar pattern.
Relatively few understand today that what we term 'The Korean War' was among the most brutal and savage wars in the history of humanity; a staggering 10% of the domestic population was killed (some estimates go even higher). Although we adamantly are instructed to call it 'The Korean War', the weapons involved were provided by 'outside',

DIARY AND EVENTS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR CONTINUED

non-Korean actors and entities; it was fought over an artificial border no Korean had a say in establishing (there were, in actuality, family members 'stuck' in 'opposing' zones – thoroughly against their wishes – and not a few); obviously, the money involved was 'foreign' – Korea then being indigent, having endured several brutal decades (c. 1910-1945) as a colony prior to being divided into the two 'spheres of influence'.

Much more can be said, but the last thing I will be emphasizing here, in the interest of prayer, is that violence did indeed play a role in establishing within a single country on the one Korean Peninsula two rather diametrically opposed regimes (ideologically, etc.), made over in the image and political/economic/'hegemonic' interests of their respective 'patron-superpower'; there were no 'free and fair elections', for either side (at that time); those who did not consent to such dehumanizing processes were further brutalized, imprisoned, libeled, smeared and killed – and, as if 'a matter of course'. Peradventure, it is for the above cited and other like reasons that Korea's is also known as 'the forgotten war'.

In one's humble, broken opinion: there's, ultimately, absolutely nothing to commemorate here (and I somewhat pity the ones whose 'job' it might be to attempt an extraction of meaning out of all of this).

O, Adonai Elohim: somehow, and now, most lovingly and tenderly wipe away the tears of Your international people – such as those of us Koreans who suffered the singular humiliation of praying for one mere reunion with their beloved ones 'in the other zone' after decades apart, some 81 years – yet to no avail.

Dan Dongjeong Yi, South Korea

✣ ✣ ✣

Would you like to respond to this letter or comment on something else 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 MONTHLY PRAYERS

A regular opportunity for fellowship and prayer online at 8pm (London)

Our Monthly Prayers are usually held on a Thursday.

Thursday 17th September
'UN International Day of Peace'
Thursday 15th October
'Week of Prayer for World Peace'
Thursday 19th November TBC

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***

ANGLICAN PACIFIST FELLOWSHIP AGM SATURDAY 7TH NOVEMBER

This year, we will be holding a hybrid meeting for our AGM, returning to Peace House in Oxford (19 Paradise St, Oxford OX1 1LD). We will begin with Communion at noon followed by a shared lunch with the formal AGM commencing at 2pm which people can join via Zoom. Further details will be made available nearer the time.

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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REFLECTION FOR ST. JAMES' DAY: TRUST-BUILDING AND BEING TRUSTWORTHY

FROM BISHOP PHILIP HUGGINS, APF COUNSELLOR



The 'Botafumeiro' made in 1851 for the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, Spain. This immense censer weighs 80 kg and stands 1.60m high.
(Source: Christian Art info@christian.art)

Little children are so spontaneously trusting. On our relatively safe Bellarine Peninsula in Victoria, one observes their interactions with parents and grandparents in the winter-time pools and at playgrounds. The adult voices are generally kind. There is lots of humour and the kids ask their innocent questions with tones of trust. It is all quite beautiful and reminds me of Jesus' encouragement that we become again like children in order to receive all God's beauty, truth and kindness.

Of course, and sadly, we know that my benign picture of little children with adults I see on the Bellarine is not true for all children. There is the terrible abuse of little children's trusting innocence. There are war zones in which children see the fear in adult eyes and hear the sounds of destruction from the sky. The destruction caused by violence and retaliatory violence is vivid when trust between and within nations breaks down.

The sadness is amplified when there seems to be no clear-cut strategy for renewing trust through peacebuilding initiatives. We feel this sadness now for the dear people impacted by retaliatory violence in Ukraine and Russia; in and around Iran; in Israel, Palestine and Lebanon; Myanmar, South Sudan and Sudan and...and…

Jesus' teaching in Sunday's Gospel for St. James is about humble service. This seems as relevant as ever! Nurturing trust and being trustworthy is a noble and beneficial peacebuilding initiative we can all offer, in humble service. As Jesus says in the Sunday Gospel then, and as we see now, there are leaders who 'lord it over people' and make their power felt in vain, often cruel ways... (Matthew 20.20-28) St. James was killed by one of history's banal thugs. (Acts 12:1-2).

And so, what are some learnings we share about Nurturing Trust in Humble Service?

Listen to others as well as we can.

I remember Morton Kelsey, a Jungian therapist and priest, saying after a lifetime's service: 'Very few people feel well listened to by anyone! …'

Morton's is a confronting insight. We know, don't we, what it feels like to be well listened to and what it is like when the listener interrupts and then even brings the conversation back to themselves!

Better understanding comes with careful listening…Understanding and being careful about seemingly simple things like our tone of voice, does help people feel cherished and respected.

It can even help enemies become friends, thanks be to God! Therefore, we try to practice that quality of 'empathic repair' which allows for the possibility of new beginnings.

Be mindful of the wounds of history – both in personal biographies and in the story of other people's gender, race, religion, culture…

Be mindful and listen to learn of the continuing impact of these wounds on people's ability to trust now...to trust us now…

Be therefore patient…be very, very patient.

Healing takes what time it takes. Our consistency of trust-building behaviour is the gift we can offer. It may be received now. It may be received later. We may never know what difference we have made.

Given the wounds we may carry ourselves from various hurts, betrayals and deceits, it can be a challenge to ensure we are consistent in our own attempt to offer trust building words and acts!

In the UK last week, the Archbishop of Canterbury addressed the General Synod about the necessity of trust building. Archbishop Sarah concluded by saying: "Let us tend the soil of our lives; let us tend the soil of trust in our Church in which hope can grow, that we might witness the remarkable harvest God will yield."

In my experience and that of many pilgrims, as we walk along things that are long forgotten come to mind, seeking attention and perhaps closure.

In *The Neuroscience of Forgiveness*, Dr. Melike Fourie reminds us of the necessary giving and forgiving that builds trust..She reminds us that this is "exquisitely context dependent".

But, if we are emotionally intelligent about our context, then both history and neuroscience show that the life-giving choice of 'empathic repair' allows for the 'emergence of the unexpected' in Dr. Melike's phrase.

There is a lovely atmosphere when there is trust between people, like when I see and hear those little children, with their parents and grandparents, in the safe places of our region. Building and renewing trust in our Australia is so in symmetry with our own National Anthem: '*Australians All Let us Rejoice for We are One and Free*'.

May we truly be '*One and Free*' in Australia. Locally and in our wider context, the nurturing of trust is so important. It is so attuned to the grace of Jesus who says to us in the St. James Day Gospel, "I am amongst you as one who serves".

Amen. Amen. Amen.