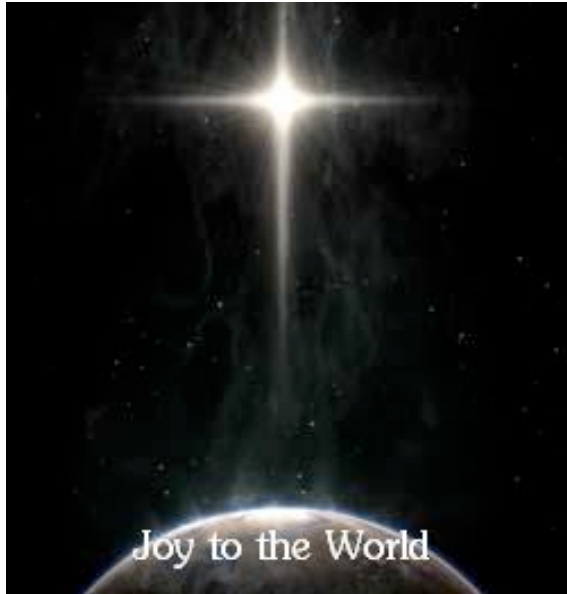




Peace and reconciliation Initiative

WEA Peace and Reconciliation Initiative E-NEWS December - January 2010



Christmas 2009

Every Christmas should be reminder to us all that Christ has come to share his peace in our world. There is no greater witness of God's presence nor of the power of the gospel in our world, than peace-making in Jesus' name.

The real miracle is not walking on water or even raising the dead. The real miracle is the power of Christ to change the hearts of men to lay down weapons, violence and hate to build communities of compassion and justice in His name.

May that be our passion and prayer for the year ahead.

WEAPRI joins the International leadership Team



The WEA Peace and Reconciliation Initiative participated for the first time at the WEA International Leadership Team meetings. These were held from Nov 12-14 at the Hallelujah Church, Seoul, Korea.

Representatives from commissions and initiatives such as Theology, IT, Education, Micah Challenge, Trafficking, Women, Youth, Religious Liberty, Mission met, to discuss the new WEA Strategic Plan and consider how we can achieve greater global

integration and synergy together.

WEAPRI Director Steve Tollestrup commented that the meeting provided an opportunity for various Commissions and other Initiatives to understand the goals and aspirations of WEAPRI as well as discover options to scale up the profile and effectiveness of the initiative through close cooperation. "Everyone at the ILT supported WEAPRI as a needed Initiative that helped build the reach and capacity of the WEA."

Introducing Peace Builders Community Mindanao

Many will have heard the sad news of the Massacre of political aspirants, journalists and by-standers at Maguindanao in the Philippine Island of Mindanao. This out burst of unprecedented violence has deeply shocked the Philippines. We turn our thoughts and prayers to our WEAPRI partner, Peace Builders Community in Mindanao.

PBC is involved in the very front line of reconciliation in very demanding and hazardous circumstances. Led by Pastor Dann Pantoja PBC is part of the world-wide network of Mennonite peace-building Communities, committed to living out the values of peace, reconciliation and justice of Jesus.

Peace Builders Community is built on a vision to four powerful themes;

- Harmony with our Creator. *Spiritual Transformation;*
- Harmony with our Being, *Psycho-Social Transformation;*
- Harmony with Others, *Social-Political Transformation;*
- *and* Harmony with the Creation, *Economic-Ecological Transformation*

Objectives for PBC includes the training and multiplication of Peace and Reconciliation Team leaders, supporting PBC Peace and Reconciliation teams in direct conflict situations, establishing peace communities in troubled regions and to establish Pand R networks.

PBC also works in medical aid and support to marginalized communities



Please remember to pray for PBC at this particular time. Pray for safety, wisdom and peace in Mindanao.

PBC also have training material available as well as seminar training. Information can be requested through seminars@peacebuilderscommunity.org



The work of Peace Builders Community is inspiring as it is important. Take the opportunity to view and be encouraged by their extensive website found at <http://peacebuilderscommunity.org>

“The Ministry of Reconciliation in a Divided World”

2010 Duke Divinity School Summer Institute
presented by the Duke Center for Reconciliation

May 31-June 5, 2010



Limited to 250 participants and held in the restful setting of Duke University, the 2010 Summer Institute offers a community of learning among diverse peers and intimate interaction with a leading faculty of practitioners and theologians. You will experience in-depth teaching, prayer and worship, shared meals, wrestling with real contexts and challenges, and opportunity to reflect on your own vocation and setting.

Who Is Right for the Program?

Christians engaged in grassroots ministries and social agencies, congregations, pastoral and lay leadership, global contexts of community building across divides, the university or seminary, parachurch ministries, social entrepreneurship, or denominational work. Duke center strongly encourage groups from communities, churches, ministries, and institutions to come together.

Here are some comments from last years school.

“I was energized by the Biblical teaching and theological reflection, enriched by the diversity of the participants and experienced faculty, and inspired to continue the journey as we celebrated the wonders of reconciliation and lamented the deep places of pain and division in our world.”

--Paula Fuller, Vice President and Director of Multiethnic Ministries,
InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

“The Institute offered me the most important continuing education experience I have had in my 15 years of ministry.... I thank God for the experience.”

--Rev. Chip Edens, Pastor, Christ Church, Charlotte, N.C.

Need more info or want to register?

Goto: <http://www.divinity.duke.edu/learningforlife/programs/summerinstitute>.

Thoughts on Peace-building for the year ahead

Dr Martin Luther King considered that there were six essential principles in nonviolent direct action and peace-building. As Christian Peace-Makers it is good for us to think and reflect upon them for the year ahead.

1. Nonviolence is the strategy of the strong

Persons who hide behind non-violence of fear, safety or because they cannot access weapons are not true peace-makers. As King wrote; *“True pacifism . . . is a courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love. Better to be a recipient of violence than an inflictor, which only multiplies violence.* “Darkness said King could not be defeated by hate, only by love.

2. Reconciliation is the goal of Nonviolence.

The goal of nonviolence is not the humiliation of an opponent, but winning the enemies understanding and regret for injustice. The goal is always redemptive and reconciling.

3. The Opponent as a symbol of greater Evil.

Nonviolence depersonalizes the goal, by defining it in terms of reconciliation. King sought to depersonalize his campaigns by focusing on issues rather than personalities. After all King concluded, the perpetrator is also a victim of an evil system. It is on an important level a battle between ‘principalities and powers on high.’

4. Redemptive Suffering

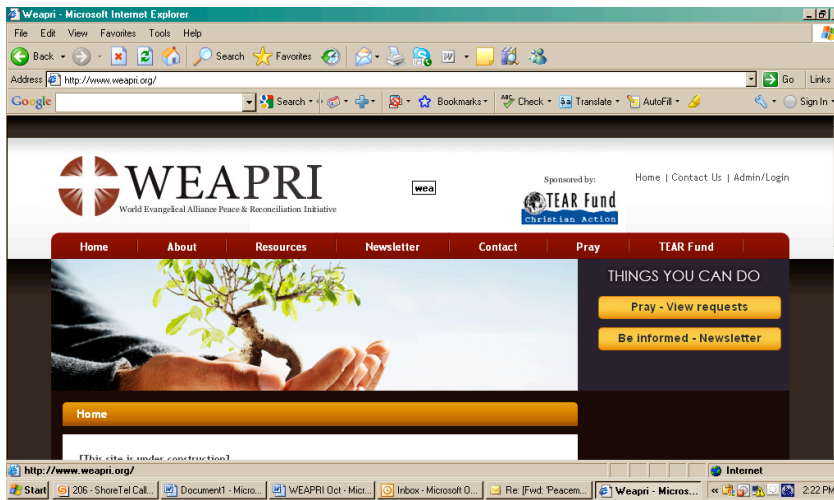
The acceptance of suffering rather than inflicting it on others, is itself a form of power, demoralizing those who use violence without experiencing it in return. *“ We will match your capacity to inflict, with our capacity to endure.”* For King, redemptive suffering in the name of Nonviolent resistance was at the heart of the Christian message *“ Some still find the cross a stumbling block, others consider it foolishness, but I am more convinced than ever that it is the power of God unto social and personal salvation”,*

5. Agape

This fifth principle insists that Nonviolence must avoid not only outward violence, but inward. That it not only resists shooting or attacking but also refuses to hate the adversary. This requires an unromantic and sentimental love which the New Testament terms ‘Agape.’ *“ We never get rid of an enemy by meeting hate with hate; we get rid of an enemy by getting rid of enmit. By its very nature hate destroys and tears down.; by its very nature love – Agape – creates and builds up. Love transforms with redemptive power.”*

6. The Universe as an Ally of Justice

King's belief in Nonviolence was grounded in his belief in God. He believed that God was in Christ redeeming the world to himself. For King there was an eschatology of hope that Justice would necessarily defeat cruelty, violence, oppression and injustice. Whether evidenced or not, the Nonviolent should in faith hold, that they are on the path of victory.



WEAPRI Website is now up:
www.weapri.org. News, prayer points, training and educational opportunities, case studies, theological reflection, and other useful resources. . . and growing.

Want to contact us about something?

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Grace and Peace

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