



# ... BRIEFLY

## Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

Special Peace Discernment Issue Vol. 68 Fall 2012

[www.presbypeacefellowship.org](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org) [ppfwitness@gmail.com](mailto:ppfwitness@gmail.com)

**Trusting the Nonviolence of Jesus Christ Today**

### Peace Discernment (Could Be) Coming Soon to a Church Near You!

Historic Process Seeks at least 45 Presbyteries & 1500 Congregations to Reflect Together by May 2013

Count PPF in! For the next months, PPF will focus its energy on the church-wide Peace Discernment Process now underway. Stated officially, the purpose of the process is to help the PC(USA) "seek clarity as to God's call to the church to embrace nonviolence as its fundamental response to the challenges of violence, terror and war; and identify, explore and nurture new approaches to active peacemaking and nonviolence."

Between Sept. 2012 and May 2013, the national goal is that at least 25% of the presbyteries (45) and 15% of the congregations (1500) will engage in a small group study and discernment process, each reporting back to the national Discernment Team. The team has made it easy for people to plan and facilitate these studies by developing a Facilitator's Guide and other resources.

The new resources "invite participants to consider the message and example of Jesus more extensively than previous work in this area," says Rev. Mark Davidson, pastor of Church of the Reconciliation in Chappell Hill, NC and chair of the Discernment Team.

PPF has called Rev. Christine Caton to lead and coordinate our work on discernment. To join Christine's monthly conference calls to share experiences and ideas, or for other discernment help or suggestions, contact her at [christine@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:christine@presbypeacefellowship.org) In this special Peace Discernment issue, see p. 4 to hear from Bemene Piaro and Kevin Moran, above, as they share their Peace Discernment experience so far.



**Iran and Syria**- the PPF and PC(USA) urge us to contact our representatives and the president to call for long-term diplomacy and other nonviolent approaches to Syria and Iran, instead of military action. For updates, see [www.presbypeacefellowship.org](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org) and [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/washington](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/washington)

### Close the SOA! Nov. 16-19 Vigil

Join PPF on Nov. 16-19 at the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, GA for a weekend of educational activities and powerful witness on behalf of the human rights of our brothers and sisters in Latin America. You can even decide to come at the last minute.

The SOA, renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, leaves a trail of blood in its path. But recent events have made closing the School of the Americas a real possibility. Ecuador and Nicaragua have both announced they will no longer send soldiers to Fort Benning for training. For the first time, White House officials have agreed to meet with SOA Watch activists, including a representative from the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship! Attending the annual vigil this Nov. will send a message that people of faith demand that the SOA be closed for good.

On Saturday night, the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship will host a gathering and workshop on "Creating the Local Peace Church" at the downtown Columbus Convention Center. Is your congregation, college or seminary a place where a commitment to nonviolence provides a foundation for activism for peace and justice? In this participatory workshop, we will share our frustrations, successes and dreams. See [soaw.org](http://soaw.org) for time and room number of PPF's event.

On Saturday afternoon, visit the PPF information table at the gates of Fort Benning and on Sunday morning march with fellow Presbyterians behind the PPF banner in the solemn memorial procession that is the highlight of the weekend's activities. For more information about how you can join PPF in Columbus, GA for some or all of the events, please email Marilyn White at [marwhite@igc.org](mailto:marwhite@igc.org) or call 512-450-2766.

## From the Editor

By the time this reaches you, the election will likely be over but the Presbyterian Peace Discernment Process will be just gearing up. I've never been accused of being much of a process person, but this is an historic process that we all need to join in together. It could lead to a breakthrough in Christian thinking and acting on how to best respond to the violence and war that overrun our world from Syria to Iran to Aurora.

PPF's Executive Director Rick Ufford-Chase tells me that when you search the PC(USA) website for "peace discernment," you get 547 results. It's been a long time coming and the end result will be to update the 1980 policy, "Peacemaking: The Believers' Calling," which rejects the idea of a just nuclear war. In the aftermath of 9/11, of Iraq and of Afghanistan, we now seek to discern: is any war just? And, if not, then how do we best deal with conflict?

We have been numbed to violence for too long. Advertisers, hear this: when the ads come on TV for bloody scenes such as "The Hatfields and the McCoys," and other war-violence-as-entertainment, I now turn the TV off. Sorry, Kevin Costner.

This issue of Briefly is dedicated to "The Hatfields and the McGoverns"--- that far better version of ourselves that we saw in the lives of the late Senators Mark Hatfield (R-OR) and George McGovern (D-SD). May their legacy of the "search for peace as practical politics" inspire our deepest discernment for a new way to live on this little planet together.

---Jan Orr-Harter, Co-Editor, Aledo, TX

## A Peacemaker's Calendar

**Oct. 25-29** Colombia Accompaniment Training. Churches in Colombia have endured over 50 years of violence in their beautiful country. Can you give a month to act as an international accompanier to provide a measure of safety—international eyes—for their work? Contact Linda Eastwood [colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org).

**Nov. 16-19** Close the School of the Americas annual vigil and gathering. See p.1 [soaw.org](http://soaw.org)

**Jan. 18-20, 2013** Peace Discernment Convocation at Montreat, NC for PC(USA) related colleges and seminaries, see [www.montreat.org](http://www.montreat.org)

**March 14-18** Colombia Accompaniment Training [colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org)

**April 5-8** Ecumenical Advocacy Days, Washington DC. Theme: "At God's Table- Food Justice for a Healthy World" [www.advocacydays.org](http://www.advocacydays.org)

**April/May 2013** Peace Discernment Reports due

**Oct. 24-28, 2013** Colombia Accompaniment Training [colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:colombia@presbypeacefellowship.org)

## Doing Discernment? Need Discernment Help? Have Ideas?

Contact Christine Caton, PPF  
Peace Discernment Coordinator  
[christine@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:christine@presbypeacefellowship.org)  
h: 860-443-1714 c: 860-772-7045

A member of PPF's National Committee, Rev. Christine Caton will be encouraging, empowering, and enabling PPFers and others throughout the church to lead conversations around the issues of peace discernment in presbyteries and churches all over the country.

Prior to serving as PPF's Discernment Coordinator, Christine has served as a pastor, campus minister and hospital chaplain in New Jersey, Rhode Island and Connecticut. She has traveled three times to Colombia as a PPF Accompanier and spent three years doing nonviolent accompaniment with the Christian Peacemaker Teams in Palestine. Christine loves movies, theatre, concerts, music, Bruce Springsteen, the color pink, travel and being a peace activist. Currently based in Waterford, CT, she holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dramatic Arts from the University of Connecticut and a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary.

"Let us come together," says Christine, "to study and pray our way to being a peace church!" If you are interested in, engaged in or planning a peace discernment process--or just plain stumped--- please let Christine know. Welcome, Christine, to this ministry!



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# Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

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Fall 2012

Dear Friends,

**On Sept. 21, the *Huffington Post* listed 23 religious groups that work for peace. PPF was 7<sup>th</sup> on the list!\***

The next several months and years are crucial for the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. Since 1944, PPF has worked for the day when the Presbyterians would sit down together and consider the implications of the nonviolence of Jesus for the church and for the world. That day has come.

**Be Bold –  
Nonviolence  
Works.**

PPF worked to encourage the Peace Discernment process now occurring in the church. We are called to do everything in our power to support it and to strengthen it. We must make sure that this rare opportunity is not lost.

At September's annual meeting of the National Committee (our 54 person board), we welcomed a half a dozen new members and made several commitments to one another. The most exciting commitment fills the pages of this issue of *Briefly*.

Between now and May of 2013, churches and presbyteries within the PC(USA) have the opportunity to contribute to the Peace Discernment process launched by the 2010 General Assembly. Each National Committee member has committed to move the process forward by participating in or leading one of the conversations. We hope to be responsible for having a church in each presbytery across the United States participate in this process. To reach and possibly exceed that goal, we have hired Rev. Christine Caton as our Peace Discernment Coordinator. This eight month call is part-time and Christine's job is to organize all of us (including all of YOU!) to be involved in the process the denomination has laid out for us.

We have also renewed our commitment to the work that you know us best for. We will continue to work to close the School of the Americas. We will continue to send people to accompany our sisters and brothers in Colombia. We will continue to look for effective ways to reduce gun violence in the neighborhoods of this country. We will continue to work for peace in Israel and Palestine through the peaceful use of boycott, divestment and sanctions.

These commitments are ones we take to heart.

They also call us to make other commitments. And those are financial ones. This is evidenced by some decisions we made. Among other things, we decided to unify our budget so that projects such as the Colombia Accompaniment Program will be part of our annual budget and will not need to raise all program funds on their own.

We're upping our game with our time and our finances. We're doing this because we dare to imagine a day when peacemakers are not a small portion of our church and our world, but are the whole itself. We're inviting you to join us. Get your congregation or presbytery to participate in the Peace Discernment Process. If you haven't given to PPF in the past, or it has been a while, now is a good time to do so. Peace needs you. There is a reply card and return envelope in this issue. Please consider returning it to us with a gift of \$100 or another amount.

Thank you for your support.

Peace always,

Fritz Gutwein, Associate Director  
Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

\*See [www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/21/religious-interfaith-organizations-peace](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/21/religious-interfaith-organizations-peace)



# Peace Discernment Process

## *Guide our Feet into the Way of Peace* Resources for the Road

**1. Discernment Resources are all at:  
[www.pcusa.org/peace-discernment](http://www.pcusa.org/peace-discernment)  
You need to download and print out the pdfs.**

**2. Join PPF monthly phone calls.** Dates so far:  
Tues. Nov. 27 at 3 pm Eastern Time  
Fri. Dec. 28 at 5:30 pm ET  
Wed. Jan. 23 at 8 pm ET  
Thurs. Feb. 28 at 4 pm ET

The calls are to share experiences, plan for outreach, answer questions, etc. To sign up for the call, contact Christine Caton in advance for the phone number and code. [christine@presbypeacefellowship.org](mailto:christine@presbypeacefellowship.org)

**3. Ideas? Take Up Discernment for Lent-**  
Lent is a perfect season for discernment, Ash Wed. Feb 13 to Easter March 31. Or plan a conversation for a Sunday School class, Youth Group, a grandparents group, Presbyterian Women, Men's Groups, Advent or Epiphany study. Involve Christian Educators, seminarians, veterans, military chaplains and those in military industries. Make sure racial-ethnic Presbyterians and a variety of age groups are invited into the process

**4. Where do you send the reports?**  
Send your facilitator/scribe report and any written responses from participants, electronically, if at all possible to: [Carl.Horton@pcusa.org](mailto:Carl.Horton@pcusa.org) or to [www.pcusa.org/peace-discernment](http://www.pcusa.org/peace-discernment)

**5. What are the Resources?**

- A. An attractive flier that could be used as a bulletin insert or mailer to introduce the concept
- B. "Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment and Witness" (Interim Report of the Peace Discernment Team). The report reviews past positions of the church, the modern context of war, the biblical witness and the discernment process. Everyone reads the full report prior to the first session.
- C. "Facilitator's Guide" which outlines how to plan your group and lead the sessions, as well the questions for discernment and sample session agendas. See right, page 5, for the questions, divided into topic-sessions.
- D. A report form for the facilitator and group scribe, as well as response forms for participants
- E. "Seeking to be Faithful Together: Guidelines for Presbyterians in Times of Disagreements"
- F. Peace Reflections and Prayers
- G. A Bibliography (makes a great church, college or seminary library project or gift)
- H. Members & Staff of the Peace Discernment Team

**Notes scribbled** at the PPF National Committee, with nearly 50 Presbyterians sitting in a circle, saying: **"Who me? Me facilitate a discernment group?"**

Then National Committee members Bemene Piaro and Kevin Moran shared their experience of participating in and of leading a discernment discussion in Atlanta:

**Kevin:** "It's not that hard. Read the Facilitator's Guide, take some quiet time to center yourself and jump in. The hardest part is that you have to be quiet as the facilitator."

**Bemene:** "Well, we already know what we think. We need a broad spectrum. We had assumptions in our group about what each other thought. But people had much more complex views, such as concerns about family members in the defense industry. We shouldn't worry so much about getting diversity on the surface, because people will have diversity under the surface. We all have different experiences. Doing two two-hour sessions worked really well for us in a small group. Now one of the participants is leading four one-hour weekly sessions for a Sunday School class. The Peacemaking Committee of Greater Atlanta Presbytery will engage in the study. There are people who are motivated and inclined to participate."

**Kevin:** "But don't be hesitant if you haven't had training to lead this. The materials are very good and it's not that hard to carry it out. The written report is very important and takes a little time."

**Bemene:** "When I was asked to join the discernment process, I thought it would be hard because I'm not a professional ethicist. ***But you don't have to be a professional ethicist. Everyone has experience to bring to this.***"

**Roger Powers**, PPF Co-Moderator & Co-Staff for the Discernment Team, gave this overview:

In 2010 GA created a Discernment Team to design a way to involve the whole church in considering the issues of war, violence and nonviolence for today in relation to Jesus and to historic positions of the church.

The team produced a Facilitator's Guide that makes the process relatively easy to do. The process consists of reflection on about 20 questions. It is designed so that you can do it in a four hour retreat or in four shorter sessions, or with a more intense plan for five two hour sessions or in some other way. Ideally, a presbytery might have a full presbytery in small groups for a four hour conversation. Those who participate could be encouraged to organize discernment in their church. The process is designed for small groups of 6-10 people who really listen to each other and to the spirit. If you have more people, you create several small groups. In January, there will be a college and seminary Discernment Convocation at Montreat.

**A key part of the process is the written report** that the facilitator and scribe return and any other responses submitted by participants. All of these will go to the national Discernment Team to (cont. p.6)

## Peace Discernment Questions

Reproduced from the Facilitator's Guide p. 10, these are the questions to use in a single long session or in several shorter sessions. Each group forwards their responses to the Discernment Team by May, 2013

**The Peace Discernment Process into which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is now being invited is concerned principally with the following four questions:**

1. How can the PC(USA) hasten the day when war and violence are no longer considered acceptable or inevitable means for resolving conflicts? What are the best means for providing protection and security?
2. Should the PC(USA) continue to rely on the "just war" tradition as its basis for restraining war, or have the conditions of modern warfare and the politics and economics of war rendered our historic stance obsolete? Are there new emphases and different biblical alternatives to consider?
3. Is the PC(USA) now being called to become a "peace church," not simply opposing particular wars but affirming nonviolence as a basic orientation toward conflict in our daily lives, in our communities, and in our world? If so, what would the implications of such a stance be for those in the military, those in military industries, and for our witness in society?
4. How can Presbyterians help transform complicated structures of injustice and oppression and address the threat of environmental degradation?

Discernment Group Questions for Four Sessions:

### **Jesus, the Early Church, and Nonviolence: Recovering a Lost Legacy**

5. How do we respond to the example of Jesus and the nonviolent church of the first three centuries after seventeen centuries of trying to restrain violence through just war categories? Is there a third way between fight and flight?
6. In what ways does the church today practice (or fail to practice) Jesus' message of nonviolence?
7. How do you understand the current just war tradition of the church? Do you agree with an expectation, or even acceptance, of some amount of war? Why or why not?
8. How do you feel about military force being used to keep peace and maintain security? What are the limits to military action and how can they be applied?

### **The Challenges of Violence, Terrorism and War**

9. Have the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan changed the way you think about war? If so, how? What lessons have you learned from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?

10. Do you, in your own life, see signs of a "military-industrial-congressional" complex supporting our tendency to use force or threat of force?

11. What effects do you see in the shift from the citizen-soldier model to the volunteer or professional soldier model with contractor support?

12. As Christians should we expect or encourage our political leaders to show mercy to our nation's enemies?

### **Living in a Culture of Violence and Fear**

13. How have your experiences with violence and/or war affected you, your faith, and/or your views about peacemaking?

14. How is discrimination against particular populations within our society (sexism, racism, classism, ethnic or religious prejudice, etc.) a form of violence? How would you define "structural violence"?

15. How do cultural practices such as violence in entertainment media impact us? Do you think they lead to greater violence or to more passivity? Why? Are we in some sense bullied and disempowered by the world of fantasy?

16. Are economic practices of unemployment, poverty-level wages, and work without health or retirement benefits forms of structural violence?

### **New Directions for Peacemaking: Nonviolent Action, Conflict Transformation, and Reconciliation**

17. Have you ever been offered an opportunity to take a bold stand for peace? If so, how did you respond? If not, do you wish you could have such an opportunity?

18. New forms of just peacemaking and nonviolence include accompaniment (where persons from outside a situation protect persons and communities under threat), truth and reconciliation commissions (an alternative to taking revenge), public expressions of confession and repentance by leaders, citizen diplomacy, shared reconstruction projects, as well as demonstrations and forms of large-scale noncooperation with undemocratic regimes. How effective can such measures be, and how essential is it for the church to encourage them?

19. Peace efforts based in international law usually involve the United Nations to develop and implement diplomatic consensus, although NATO and other regional bodies are sometimes also involved. How important are efforts at international policing or humanitarian intervention, and how different are these from wars initiated by individual nations?

20. How could the PC(USA) do a more effective job of teaching nonviolence to its members? What other characteristics would mark a "peace church" stance in today's world?

(cont. from p. 4) study and create a single report to be submitted in January 2014 to the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy. ACSWP will then prepare a proposal for the church from the discernment of the church. That proposal will go to the 2014 General Assembly, which will send any proposed church peacemaking positions back to the local church and presbytery level for more study and reflection before action at the 2016 GA.

## What is Discernment?

Discernment involves slowing down and listening together for God's voice speaking in our midst. Through discernment, we seek wisdom, clarity, and insight as to what God is calling us to be and do, here and now. In discernment, we try to see the world through God's eyes and align our words and actions with God's will.

There is a fruitful paradox at the heart of discernment: on the one hand, if discernment is to be genuine, it cannot have predetermined outcomes; on the other hand, we never come to discernment with a blank slate, but must always bring ourselves, our values, and our experiences.

Authentic discernment involves a fresh encounter with the Spirit of the Living Christ. So, while nonviolence is a clear option to be presented, our discernment process is open-ended. The outcome of this process is not predetermined. Nor do we expect all Presbyterians to agree with even a consensus view of the best approaches to different kinds of violence and conflict. Yet, just as individual members bring their own experience and conviction, so the faith that we share brings with it a tradition and wisdom about how to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ.

--from the Interim Report "Encountering the Gospel of Peace Anew: An Invitation to Discernment & Witness"

## New Resources -- Films Books On-Line

**1. "Trigger: The Ripple Effect of Gun Violence,"** a documentary produced by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, shares the story of how gun violence impacts individuals and communities and examines the "ripple effect" that one shooting has on a survivor, a family, a community and a society. The film has been selected to be shown on NBC from Nov. 2012 through May 2013 as a part of its "Horizons of the Spirit" series, at the option of local stations. Call your local NBC station to ask them to schedule and show the film during a time to reach the most viewers. Ask others in your church and community to do so also---and then watch it together. Spread the word, thank the NBC station and use the film start a conversation in your community on what you can do to reduce gun violence. See action ideas at [www.presbyterianmission.org/gunviolence/](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/gunviolence/)

**2. "Body of War,"** a film by Ellen Spiro and Phil Donahue, premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival to standing ovations. It won Best Documentary from the prestigious National Board of Review, was nominated for Best Documentary from Producer's Guild of America and was short-listed for an Oscar nomination for Best Documentary. The film follows Tomas Young, 25 years old, paralyzed from a bullet to his spine - wounded after serving in Iraq for less than a week. "Body of War" is in part Tomas's coming home story as he evolves into a new person, coming to terms with his disability and finding his own unique voice against the war. The film also reviews the rush to war and cautions us to learn better ways to deal with conflict. Available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and Netflix.

**3. Conscience: Two Soldiers, Two Pacifists, One Family--a Test of Will and Faith in World War I** by Louisa Thomas, the beautifully-written story of the Thomas brothers at the turn of the twentieth century. At a time of



trial, each brother struggled to understand his obligation to his country, family, and faith. Centered on the story of the eldest, Norman Thomas, the book explores the difficult decisions the four brothers faced with the advent of World War I. Sons of a Presbyterian minister and grandsons of missionaries, they shared a rigorous moral upbringing, a Princeton education, and a faith in the era's spirit of hope. Available used at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

**4. America and Its Guns – A Theological Expose** by James Atwood, forward by Walter Brueggemann, Cascade Books. Atwood, an avid hunter (and PPF National Committee member), cautions that an absolute trust in guns and violence morphs easily into idolatry. Having spent 36 years as a Presbyterian pastor fighting against the easy access to firearms, one of which took the life of a friend, he uses his experience and his biblical and theological understanding to graphically portray the impact guns have on our society. Documenting how Americans have been deceived into believing that the tools of violence will provide security, the book is a wake-up call to the faith community to unmask the extremism of the Gun Empire. In print and Kindle at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

**6. Justice Unbound –an Online, Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice**, celebrates its first year as the inheritor of the legacy of *Church & Society Magazine* for a new generation. Read and submit articles, such as "Will the PC(USA) become a Peace Church?" by Sara Dorrien and "Gears, Forks and Grease—Conspiring in the Spirit with Church Polity" by Dylan Rooke. See [www.justiceunbound.org](http://www.justiceunbound.org)

# Nonviolence News

## PPF 2013 Peacemaker Award to Jewish Voice for Peace & Israel/Palestine Mission Network-

PPF announces that its 2013 Peacemaker Award will be shared by Jewish Voice for Peace and the Israel/Palestine Mission Network, to be presented at the 221st General Assembly in June 2014 in Detroit. Watch for a full story in our Winter 2013 Issue. Congratulations to JVP and IPMN for your courageous work for peace in the Middle East.

## What to do with your Presbytery/Congregation's Share of the Peacemaking Offering?

**Support the Colombia Accompaniment Program**, coordinated by PPF, in concert with the PC(USA) and the Presbyterian Church of Colombia. This ministry includes education-advocacy work as well as on-going training and sending Presbyterians to be with Colombian church members who work with refugees and other human rights tasks. Make an Extra Commitment Opportunity gift at [www.pcusa.org/give/E051763](http://www.pcusa.org/give/E051763) (ECO #051763). Or make one-time or monthly pledge gifts of any size at [www.presbypeacefellowship.org/giving](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/giving). PPF's site also has Accompaniers' Reports.

## Middle East Update:

**1. Boycott** Following on the call made by the PC(USA) to boycott Israeli goods made in the illegally occupied settlements, the denomination's Israel/Palestine Mission Network encourages us to specifically refrain from buying products of Ahava Cosmetics and Hadiklaim (Israel Date Growers Cooperative Ltd.). Both Ahava and Hadiklaim operate from settlements in the occupied West Bank and profit from the illegal exploitation of natural resources there. The Christian community in Palestine has begged American Christians to boycott these and other products. See a longer list of settlement products to refrain from buying at [www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org](http://www.israelpalestinemissionnetwork.org)

**2. Thank you, Rev. Grady Parsons**, Stated Clerk of the PC(USA), for joining with 15 ecumenical Christian leaders in signing a letter to Congress calling for an end to unconditional military aid to Israel. Virtually no US aid goes to other nations without conditions, except Israel. The letter called for the United States to withdraw military aid to Israel until Israel stops violations of Palestinian human rights and begins to act in accordance with U.S. and international law. Parsons has been authorized by PC(USA)'s General Assemblies to communicate this call for an end to the current aid. See PPF letter of support for Grady Parsons at <http://presbypeacefellowship.org/node/634>



## Rise and Fall of Apartheid: Photography and the Bureaucracy of Everyday Life-

Photographs of the 50-year struggle in South Africa: apartheid from 1948 to 1994, the rise of Nelson Mandela and the legacy today. On view till Jan. 6, 2013, the International Center of Photography 1133 Avenue of the Americas, NYC [www.icp.org](http://www.icp.org)

## PPF Opposes Lethal Use of Drones

**1.** At its Sept. meeting, PPF's National Committee voted to send a letter to the two presidential candidates to oppose the use of drones as weapons and to work for an overture to the 221<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to oppose drone use in war. In addition to concern for innocent civilians, the

letter reads in part: "While we recognize that, as president, you would never consider actions that would risk national security, the present policy of drone use does exactly that. As the *New York Times* has reported, 'drones have replaced Guantanamo as the recruiting tool of choice for militants.' Far from making us safer, the lethal use of drones is adding daily to the numbers of militants who wish to do harm to Americans and American interests." Find the full letter at [www.presbypeacefellowship.org/node/633](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/node/633)

**2.** More voices have been raised against lethal drone use by a group of 100 interfaith leaders, including several Presbyterians signing statement "A Call from the Faith-Based Community to Stop Drone Killings." Concerns include:

- The President and his aides draw up a Kill List. They play the role of prosecutor, judge, jury and executioner. People on this secret List have never been charged or convicted in a court of law, and are given no opportunity to surrender;
- Drone strikes kill not only their targets, but innocent people, including children, violating the sanctity of human life;
- Drone strikes violate other nation's sovereignty. • Drones in the hands of the CIA and the Joint Special Operations Command keep the program veiled in secrecy. The lack of transparency and accountability violate the basic tenets of a democratic society;
- Drones make killing more abstract, impersonal, antiseptic, convenient and "easy";
- The Administration insists that because drones do not risk American lives, Congress need not be consulted, leading to a dangerous abuse of executive power;
- The example being set by the United States that a nation can go anywhere it wants and kill anyone it wants on the basis of secret information is leading to a world of chaos and lawlessness. (*Editor's Note: and to a drone arms race?*)

For info, contact Medea Benjamin, author "Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control" [medea@globalexchange.org](mailto:medea@globalexchange.org)

## **All of You Who Walked in Darkness Hymn for Advent and Christmas** Isaiah 9:2-7

Tune: MENDELSSOHN 8.7.8.7.8.7.7.7 with refrain ("Hark! The Herald Angels Sing") Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

All of you who walked in darkness who have known the fear of night--  
Now rejoice and sing with gladness; come and see the wondrous light!  
God has turned your tears to songs, lifting burdens, righting wrongs.  
God sent us a tiny boy bringing hope and peace and joy.  
In one little baby's birth, God knelt down to love the earth.

Still Christ comes to save God's people, still he comes to those oppressed.  
To the folks who toil and struggle, God has sent the very best.  
To the young and to the old, to the homeless, tired and cold,  
To the lost, to those who mourn, to the world, a child is born.  
In one little baby's birth, God knelt down to love the earth.

In this time of celebration, may we show what life can be,  
As we care for God's creation, as we serve the Prince of Peace.  
Seeking justice everywhere, lifting burdens others bear,  
May we gladly serve and pray-- knowing why we live this way:  
In one little baby's birth, God knelt down to love the earth.

Arrangement by William H. Cummings, 1856 Text Copyright Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, 2012

**[www.carolynshymns.com](http://www.carolynshymns.com)**

**Iran and Syria - Reminder!** To call on the president and the congress for long-term diplomacy and other nonviolent approaches to Syria and Iran, see [presbypeacefellowship.org](http://presbypeacefellowship.org) and [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/washington](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/washington)



**Presbyterian Peace Fellowship  
17 Cricketown Road  
Stony Point, NY 10980**

**[www.presbypeacefellowship.org](http://www.presbypeacefellowship.org)**

**Fall 2012 Special Issue on the  
Peace Discernment Process**

**Steps for 2012-2013**

**“Imagine your congregation  
as a place where God’s people  
gather to actively ‘discern peace.’”  
Are you in?**

**SOA Vigil Nov. 16-19  
See p. 1**