



The Things that Make for Peace

Annual Conference 2017

10-12th March

Luther King House, Brighton Grove, Manchester, M14 5JP

Book now to avoid disappointment

Our upcoming annual conference will be a joint event with the Methodist Peace Fellowship and the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

Over the weekend we'll explore ways to take action for peace on local, national and international levels and how to feel more connected. Sessions will include speakers, creative workshops and an evening singalong. You can also join us for the Saturday only, or two full days.

Among contributors are:

- Elfrida Calvocoressi, chair of Christian International Peace Service
- Liz Firth, from the Faith and Peace and Women project at Bradford Peace Museum
- Ray Gaston on inter-faith work and Peace
- David Walker, Bishop of Manchester
- and Cities of Sanctuary.

The weekend will include our AGM. It's also a celebration of 80 years of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship – happy birthday from all of us!

To book your place, send in the enclosed form and a cheque to Tilly Martin, Peace House, 19 Paradise Street, OX1 1LD. Or pay by bank transfer, see form for details.

You can also book online at: things-make-for-peace.eventbrite.co.uk (booking fees apply).

If you want to come but won't be able to book for another couple of weeks, please let us know over phone or email, as we'd like to give preliminary figures to the venue.

Phone 01865 250781 or email tilly@anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk



The Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence

The church is called to recommit to the centrality of gospel nonviolence.

This was the powerful message from a conference in Rome in April 2016. **Pat Gaffney**, general secretary of **Pax Christi UK** was one of the participants in that conference.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation, together with Scottish Christians against Nuclear Arms [SCANA] and the Scottish Justice and Peace Commission, invited Pat to Scotland on 14 and 15 September to share her experience of the conference.

Pat spoke at two meetings in Glasgow and met members of the **Justice and Peace Commission**. The Jesuit Centre in Edinburgh hosted an evening meeting. The following day she spoke at a meeting of **Action of Churches Together in Scotland** and then met with members of the **Scottish Episcopal Church's Church and Society Committee**. Later she visited the Scottish Parliament at the invitation of Bill Kidd MSP, who is heavily involved in working to get the United Nations to outlaw nuclear weapons and finally met the Church of Scotland's full-time worker concerned with peace issues.

The Rome conference looked at all the ways in which Jesus proclaimed nonviolence. In words, where he called his disciples to love their enemies (Matthew 5:44), not to offer violent resistance to one who does evil (5:39) and to become peacemakers and reconcilers. In His relationships with people and in his life and example – treading the road to Calvary and leaving the legions of angels unsummoned – Jesus repudiated the way of violence.

Some of the conference participants were from countries riven by civil strife and violence. People from Uganda and Columbia shared their experiences of courageous negotiations with armed groups and of living with the threat of torture and kidnapping. Accompaniers from Israel/Palestine shared their insights, as did those engaged in nationwide peace education in the Philippines.

Arguments from “just war” proponents, suggesting that nonviolence was utopian and



Rev Ainslie Walton (SCANA) and Pat Gaffney with other participants at a meeting organised by the Roman Catholic Justice and Peace Commission in Scotland and sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Pax Christi. It was held in Glasgow

bound to fail if faced with uncivilised opponents, were powerfully refuted by those with direct experience of using nonviolence in such settings. Indeed recent academic research has shown that nonviolent resistance strategies are more than twice as effective as violent ones – and make post-conflict reconciliation much easier.

Pope Francis, in his message to the conference, had called for the need to ‘revitalise the tools of nonviolence, and of active nonviolence in particular’. The conference called on the church to invest far greater human and financial resources in promoting a spirituality and practice of active nonviolence and in forming and training Christians in effective nonviolent methods.

One outcome of the conference was that nonviolence became a major theme of the Roman Catholic Church's Peace Sunday in January

2017. And, in time, there may even be an encyclical on nonviolence which would help in weaning Christians away from relying on the “just war” theory – a doctrine which has neither scriptural nor dominical authority.

There is a fuller conference report at: www.nonviolencejustpeace.net

This also includes the final statement and a request for people to endorse the statement.

David Mumford
FoR Trustee
Brechin

Global Ban on Nuclear Weapons

Last October the United Nations adopted a resolution to launch negotiations on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons. 123 nations voted in favour of the resolution, with 38 against (including UK), 16 abstaining. The resolution will set up a UN conference beginning in March 2017. In the UK, there will be a **Lobby of Parliament** on March 1st. Details: Christian CND, tel 020 7700 4200 Email: christians@cnduk.org

“We are touched by the power of forgiveness”

Madina Lontina, pictured below, centre, with her three daughters, suffered what many of us, particularly those of more recent generations, can find hard to conceive of. She’s from Buma Village in the South Kivu district of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). During the Kivu Conflict her village was attacked by rebels who, looking for pro-government collaborators, identified her husband and sons; they were kidnapped and killed. What made this more difficult to bear was that the perpetrators were known to Madina, they were, in effect, neighbours.



In 2015 FoR awarded £5,000 to **Femmes et Education des Adultes** (FEDA), an NGO working in the South Kivu district who recognised the need, after two decades of war, to develop a means of establishing peace through reconciliation. Their ‘Peace Education Program’ offered training for community leaders and the young, such that they could become Peace Ambassadors. These ambassadors, on returning to their villages and communities, ran ‘Chambers for Peace’ in which perpetrators and victims of violence could come together with a view to reconciliation.

Madina attended the Chamber in Buma Village and upon having her story witnessed, called on the Chamber to solicit these neighbours for discussion. Fortunately, Madina now reflects that they came providing “the occasion for us to talk to them about what happened during the attack. It was very sad for us to see them, but through the work of the mediators all went peacefully. Finally, we forgave them, and now are coexisting and helping each other.”

The DRC has suffered greatly from an inability to address violence committed during wartime as part of post-war rebuilding. This failure conditioned the Second Congo War and the subsequent Kivu Conflict, which in turn affected and were affected by the conflict and genocide in Rwanda, bordering the Kivu Region. FEDA have sought to directly address this societal failure and for Madina, her daughters, along with those who were responsible for murdering her husband and sons, it has offered a lifeline, a vision of reconciliation and peaceful cohabitation that both have committed to.

Without your donations to FoR’s **International Peacemakers’ Fund** (IPF) FEDA could not establish its ‘Program’. Without the Program, Madina would not have had this opportunity to be “touched by the power of forgiveness.” On behalf of both I offer their gratitude to all those who have contributed. Thank you.

Regular donations are essential for FoR to commit to offer its £5,000 IPF award each year. I am asking, now, if you’d consider doing this. Help ensure that others get the chance of peace offered to Madina. There’s a Direct Debit Instruction form in this mailing, with an opportunity to dedicate your donations to the IPF, FoR General Funds, or a combination of the two. I invite you to look at it, in this moment, having read of Madina’s story, and consider if you can give something. If you’d like more information on this or any other aspect of the Fund, do contact me at the FoR office in Oxford.

In 2016 the IPF supported two projects: an inter-faith project in Faisalabad, Pakistan, and FoR Zambia’s work to support a peaceful Zambian presidential election campaign. I’ll report more on these in the next issue of Peacelinks.

Warm wishes
Padmakumara
FoR Staff

Hire
**Peace
House**
a national
resource



Peace House is a light-filled, accessible conference and events venue in the centre of Oxford, and is the home of FoR.

If you are interested in hiring the downstairs space (seats up to 30) or the upstairs library (seats eight people), please contact the office at:

office@for.org.uk or (01865) 250781.

Our rates are very competitive, and all profits go to FoR’s work.

“I’ve no hotline to heaven, but I’m as sure as I can be that that’s a calling.”

In the Autumn of 2016 **Peter Cousins**, Executive Director of **FoR Peace Presence (Colombia)** visited Peace House and spoke with Emma and Padmakumara about his life and peacemaking work.



Emma Anthony: Welcome to Peace House, Peter. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about how your faith influences your work.

Peter Cousins: I grew up in a Catholic family and my parents always had a commitment to their faith which was lived out through social action. That was always a given, but there was quite a concrete moment in my life when, after finishing my degree in Oxford I was accepted on to a programme of volunteer work known as the Jesuit Volunteer Community (JVC). It was a programme of voluntary work funded by the Jesuits [which] although not run by them directly was influenced by Jesuit spirituality. Being on that programme involved committing to four values: social justice; simple lifestyle; community lifestyle; and Ignatian spirituality. The programme involved living these values out in a small community with other volunteers. I was in Glasgow, one of four cities where I might have been sent; I didn't *choose* to go there. One of the beautiful things about that year was that there wasn't any choice, it was about your attitude.

In the course of that year I was working with asylum seekers in Glasgow in the context of quite a politicised campaign to offer them a welcome, and to do public advocacy for their needs and so forth, and provide them with practical help where possible. I became aware of the field of conflict resolution in an academic and conflict resolution sense. I met the person who had worked in my role with the refugees prior to me on that programme [and] had gone off to Bradford and studied Peace Studies. One other person I met in that year was a Jesuit Priest working as a mediator in Northern Ireland and dealing with legacy stuff. Through the people I was meeting I became aware of conflict as a field and I know that it resonated inside me, so that when a couple of years later in a job that didn't

An IFoR volunteer accompanies a girl as she runs errands for her family work out, working in Cambridge with the homeless, I took the decision to move on and found that it wasn't difficult to know what to go and do: a Masters in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution.

How that relates to spirituality? Well, that's the clearest understanding I've had in my life of what a vocation is. I've no hotline to heaven, but I'm as sure as I can be that that's a calling. Everything has followed ... the opportunity to go and work in Colombia, which hasn't necessarily been in faith-filled spaces, but I've had a certainty that that is what I'm supposed to be doing. I cannot imagine moving away from that.

EA: How did it feel, that initial, what felt like a calling?

PC: That speaks to the circumstances I was in, just outside Cambridge in one of the Emmaus Communities. Although I was surrounded by community there was no social group around there, and the people I shared the space with were either people I couldn't form friendships with because of professional boundaries, or my colleagues, who were two middle-aged couples and kept themselves to themselves. It took me a long time to recognise that the circumstances [weren't right]. It took a colleague asking me one day "are you okay?" and I blurted out that "I feel trapped" and she said she was taken aback by the strength of that word. The difficulty of it was coming to a realisation that it was the wrong thing at the right time, in that it had to be then, it had to lead me into this other field, in which I realised I was quite comfortable, and which I jumped at. Everything about the job, working in service to others, should have been right, but it wasn't, and that was difficult to discern, but when I did, conflict resolution was already there.

continued at foot of next page

Silent Stars

Greenbelt Festival, 26-29th August 2016, Boughton House, Kettering

We arrived on Thursday at a busy site in Kettering which was preparing for Greenbelt. The festival theme was “Silent Stars”. The next morning we set up our stall with a select array of FoR resources and our new leaflet. We made a display and activity for visitors to the stall called “Silenced Stars”. There was a “night sky” background with pictures and stories of peacemakers and activists who were challenging the militarist narratives of their society. We gave visitors a paper star and asked them to write a quality that they felt a peacemaker would need, which was stuck onto the night sky. Some examples on the stars were love, compassion and courage.

I very much enjoyed my time volunteering on the stall. There was a steady stream of people coming to the stall that knew about, or wanted to know more about the Fellowship of Reconciliation. It was interesting to tell people about and hear their views on current FoR campaigns such as Trident, drones and the International Peacemakers’ Fund. It was also heartening to hear widespread agreement and support of our aims.

There was much interest in the Drones Quilt, a smaller version of which was displayed on the stall. Several people commented on how lovely and sad it was, and felt



David Pybus and Tim Wallis with the Peace Sunday resource at the FoR stall

moved remembering the unarmed civilians whose names are displayed. I sometimes sat when not talking to visitors and worked on my own square, encouraging a few people to take squares for themselves and their families.

FoR’s membership and outreach officer, Emma Anthony, gave two short talks at the Quaker stall, who were hosting 15-minute pop-up talks throughout the festival. She talked about drones and about encouraging our churches to act for peace. Several people signed up to hear more, and were especially interested in the new resource that FoR is working on as part of the Drone Campaign Network [now available from the FoR office, see order form on back page].

There was plenty of interest in the Peace Sunday resource and several people took a copy. The steady interest in FoR’s work led to several people leaving an email so that they could remain in touch with us. I was very pleased when we gained a new member.

I very much felt that the event had been a success, raising the profile of FoR and was a valuable outreach activity for the organisation over the 4 days. It was wonderful to be a part of it and heartening that so many Greenbelters showed an interest and possible commitment to FoR and its work for peace and justice.

Debbie Cates

FoR member from
Cambridgeshire

Peter Cousins interview *continued from previous page*

PC: I began to come to this realisation when taking a week at my parents in Cornwall. They couldn’t believe that I would entertain giving up the job, and they said, well, almost trying to catch me out, “what are you going to do if you resign?” and I said “well, I’m going to do a Masters in Peace Studies.” They looked at me as if I was mad (laughter) but [for me] there wasn’t a question: the only question was ...“

... Go to www.for.org.uk to listen to the rest of the recorded interview. If you don’t use the internet and wish to be sent a Compact Disc recording of it then contact Padmakumara at the FoR office in Oxford.

Information about FoR (Colombia) Peace Presence can be found at www.peacepresence.org

In April 2017 they are running a delegation programme and invite you to see, along with other members of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation [IFOR], their work first hand. Again, contact Padmakumara if you’d like more information on this.

Why I joined FoR

“... the human enterprise is about those exchanges and relations whereby we build one another up, we take responsibility for each other’s flourishing.”

– Rowan Williams

This quote goes round my head a lot of the time. I often feel pretty powerless, especially in this time of resurgent nationalism and militarism, but it gives me a degree of hope – that I can choose actions that build people up, rather than tear them down.

I’ve felt the need for pacifism, reconciliation and alternative conflict resolution for a long time, but I suppose its importance really struck me on a visit to America a few years back. In discussion with a friend about gay marriage debates, it seemed that the priorities of much of the Church were all out of order. When we’ve sorted war, and poverty, and inequality and... well, then, perhaps, we can start to care about the theological implications of gay marriage. If we’re more concerned with saving souls than saving lives, if we’re willing to preach morality whilst supporting a system that oppresses the weak and the poor, if we’re focused only on the end and not on the present, then it seems we’re discarding our lives, and those of others, prematurely. Have we then turned Christianity into a religion of death, resigned to the evils of the world, rather than a religion of community and of hope for a better world, as well as a world-to-come?

My earliest involvement in any kind of reconciliation work (in the broadest sense) was with the Interfaith Forum at the university union, in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Honestly, I’m not sure how much we achieved there, but it was an attempt to increase understanding and cooperation between faith groups at the university and led, tangentially, to a formative trip to Israel with the Council of Christians and Jews. Similarly, we failed on that trip to solve any conflicts in the Middle East, but it emphasised the importance of understanding, empathy and reconciliation, if those conflicts are to be resolved.

Why seek to join a community? What even constitutes a community, and how is that manifested? It seems clichéd, that in our increasingly connected world people are ever more isolated. It’s easier than ever to sign petitions, to share information and opinions, and yet, it’s so easy (and I have certainly been guilty of this) to become trapped in an echo chamber, divorced from the greater mass of humanity, and alternative opinions. I believe that becoming part of a community that seeks to engage with the wider world is very difficult to do alone.

Considering nationalism for a moment, I have always found it odd, this idea of nationhood. It seems profoundly unnatural to invent a community around an accident of birth, and what results seems not to be a community at all. What are ‘British values’? What is ‘Britishness’? There are certainly some commonalities between those of us born here, but that’s not the same as building a community through trust, time and common purpose.

I used to live in South Cumbria, where a lot of politics is dominated by the BAE shipyard in Barrow that builds Britain’s submarine fleet. It’s economically pretty depressed, and opposition to Trident renewal is rare as it’s seen as a huge threat to jobs. However, few politicians in the area ever propose any alternatives, any ways in which peaceful employment could be brought to the area and use the considerable skills of the local population. It’s quite possible that I’ve been watching too many Adam Curtis documentaries, but it seems that the Enlightenment ideals of changing the world for the better appear to have been lost, replaced by enslavement to an economic status quo. There seems to be plenty of anger from those left behind by this, as evidenced in part by the anger of Brexit and the Trump election. However, this anger scapegoats and “others”, seeks to tear down without a plan to build up. That’s what we need, to bring people together, to build communities, to acknowledge our shared humanity and the hope for a better, more equitable world. That won’t be achieved by hate.

I chose to join the FoR because I wanted to contribute to something beyond my immediate surroundings. I hope I manage to build people up there too; but otherwise I’m ranting into the void of Facebook, to people who I’m very fond of, but my ranting has little impact beyond that. I’d like, in some small way, to contribute to a more peaceful world. I know that there are alternatives to hate, and to violence; I know that people can be reconciled and conflicts resolved. Of course, the greater the conflict, the more people it involves and the greater the risks to vested political and economic interests, the harder it will be – which is why we need the FoR, and peacemaking communities in general. I can’t do this alone.

After all, as Martin Luther King said “We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools”.

Lyn Setchell
FoR member
from Manchester



Peacemaking calendar 2017

28th February **Pancakes for Peace**: groups to host a pancake party for local members/supporters. See for.org.uk/groups to see if there's one near you and get in touch with the local contact or the office. If you'd like to set up a group or just invite local peacemakers round for pancakes, email emma@for.org.uk

10-12 March **Annual Conference**: see front page or things-make-for-peace.eventbrite.co.uk

21st March **Fly Kites Not Drones**: Fly a kite in solidarity with those living in the shadow of armed drones. Excellent education resource produced by the Drone Campaign Network, order from us. Tweet your pictures @KitesNotDrones using #FlyKitesNotDrones

Lent/Easter: Prayers posted on for.org.uk to use in your church.

20-23 April: **Global Campaign on Military Spending** (GCOMS, new name for GDAMS). How would you spend £46bn to increase security? Arms or the NHS? Ask local people by holding a stall in your town. Find out how at for.org.uk/act and don't forget to let us know what you're doing and send in pictures. You can fill out the poll online at bit.ly/GCOMS2017

June/July: **RUSI conferences** at Church House Westminster. Every year, the venue which houses the administrative HQ of the CofE hosts two conferences sponsored by some of the world's biggest arms dealers. We try to stop them. The events aren't advertised yet (fingers crossed they've been cancelled!), so keep an eye on for.org.uk

25-28 August: **Greenbelt**: Help out on FoR stall, or write to the festival asking them to get more peace talks on the programme – otherwise they're just guessing as to what people want to hear.

12-15 September **DSEI**: Join FoR and others in London to witness against the arms trade. More details, including the Faith Day of Action, to come in e-news and the next Peacelinks.

24th September: **Peace Sunday**: Help to get your church taking action for peace. Please get it in the church calendar, including the collections rota if possible. Resources to follow.

7-14 October **Drones Week of Action**: Could you display the Drones Quilt or host a talk? Maybe you could have a craft day making new squares for the smaller quilt? Check out for.org.uk/drones

11/12 November **Remembrance Day/Remembrance Sunday**: Worship resources and suggestions for contemplative activities. Could you suggest a collection towards the work of FoR? Or order some white poppies? See for.org.uk/resources

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***"We are one in Christ
and can never be at war."***

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Peacelinks is free to members.

Some useful websites

for.org.uk - our main website

facebook.com/forepeace - our Facebook page.

twitter.com/forpeacemaker - FoR on Twitter.

facebook.com/groups/calledtobepeacemakers

- Young Peacemakers' Network.

for.org.uk/drones Drones Campaign and the Drones Quilt.

flickr.com/photos/forengland/with/13875423525/

- FoR's photographs web pages.

mpf.org.uk Methodist Peace Fellowship.

ifor.org - International Fellowship of Reconciliation and links to other branches around the world.

baptist-peace.org.uk - Baptist Peace Fellowship.

urc.org.uk/mission/peace-fellowship.html - United Reformed Church Peace Fellowship.

quaker.org.uk/working-peace Quaker Peace & Social Witness.

anglicanpeacemaker.org.uk Anglican Pacifist Fellowship.

ncpo.org.uk Network of Christian Peace Organisations.

Thank You

In 2016 FoR received £49,000 in legacy donations.
May all who've passed away abide in God's glory.

In 2016 our Chair's Appeal raised £3,231.
Thank you to all who gave to our peacemaking work.

Network Diary

March 1: Lobby Of Parliament for a Global Ban of Nuclear Weapons organised by Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

March 31: Brexit Day: UK government hopes to trigger Article 50.

April 26: Chernobyl Day.

May 15: International Conscientious Objectors' Day. Last year in the UK there were commemorative events in various places including London, Oxford, Liverpool and Carlisle.

May 24: International Women's Day for Disarmament.

June 4: International Day for Children as victims of war.

Contact UNICEF.

August 6 & 9: Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days/ Ideas and template at for.org.uk/act



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[] £7 [] Other (please write) £..... (additional copies £5 each)

I enclose a donation in support of the Fellowship's work (optional)

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Make Your Gift Go Further: 25p more to FoR for every £1 at no extra cost to you.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. FoR is charity number 207822.

giftaid it

I would like:

___ copies of the new Drones Briefing £3.00 each
(£2.50 each for 5 or more)

- [] to update my contact details
- [] to receive our short regular email newsletter
- [] to receive information about FoR's Young Peacemaker Network
- [] to receive information about becoming a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation
- [] information about the International Peacemakers Fund
- [] to receive a standing order form so I can give regularly to support the Fellowship

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Signature _____ Date _____

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